

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY



Personal Leave of Absence

Category: Human Resources

Responsible Department: Benefits

Responsible Officer: Vice President for Human Resources

Effective Date: 9/6/2016

Policy Summary

The purpose of this policy is to establish the practices governing the granting of personal leaves of absence that do not qualify under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Refer to the [Family and Medical Leave Act policy](#) for information on qualifications for FMLA leaves

Scope

This policy affects the following groups of the University:

- Hiring/Supervising Managers
- Full-Time Staff

This policy applies to full-time staff who have completed at least six (6) months of continuous full-time service and are performing satisfactorily. To be eligible for a personal leave of absence, an employee must not have been on a "Performance Improvement Plan" and/or have received a final written counseling at any time during the 12 months prior to the date of the leave request.

Policy

At the university's discretion, an unpaid personal leave of absence may be granted for unusual or extreme circumstances for up to a maximum of three (3) months. Examples of such circumstances include:

- Personal needs of a serious and urgent nature
- Educational opportunities
- Professional development

All personal leaves:

- Shall be without pay
- Are subject to management approval based on staffing needs and operational requirements

- Are subject to review and final approval by Human Resources

Reinstatement may not be available to an employee on a personal leave of absence if business needs or changed circumstances make it impossible or unreasonable to reinstate the employee.

Procedures

This section covers the procedures for undertaking a personal leave of absence and summarizes the responsibilities of the employee, the manager and Human Resources pursuant to such a leave.

Notice and Certification

Employees should provide their manager a minimum of 30 days advance notice for leave requests.

An employee requesting leave must complete a [Personal Leave of Absence Request](#) form and obtain the appropriate department head or manager's signature. The completed form should be submitted to Human Resources at least one week prior to the start of the leave.

The university may request documentation to support a request for a personal leave of absence and may deny a request if the documentation is not provided or is determined to be insufficient.

Length of Leave

Personal leaves of absence must be taken in a consecutive block of time (not intermittently) for a period no greater than three (3) months from the date the leave begins. No more than one (1) leave may be taken during a fixed 12-month period beginning with the first day of an approved personal leave of absence. No more than three (3) months of leave may be taken during a five (5) year period beginning within the first year in which an approved leave of absence is taken.

To return to work from a personal leave of absence, the employee must contact his/her manager at two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled end of a personal leave of absence to confirm the return to work date. The manager then notifies Human Resources. An employee who does not return on the scheduled date shall be deemed to have resigned.

Benefits Continuation

Coverage under the following university benefit plans may continue, subject to availability and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the applicable plan, during an approved personal leave of absence if employee contributions (where applicable) are paid or prepaid:

- Medical
- Dental
- Vision
- Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment
- Short and Long-Term Disability
- Adoption Assistance
- Employee Assistance Program
- Health Care Flexible Spending Account (HCFSA)
- Transportation Program
- Health Savings Account (HSA)
- Tuition Waiver

While on personal leave of absence, participation in the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA) will automatically cease as of the date the leave of absence begins. To re-enroll in the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account upon return from leave, the employee must notify the Benefits Department of Human Resources within 31 days of returning from the leave.

The employee is responsible for paying the employee contribution amount for those benefits that require an employee contribution. This can be done by arranging pre-payment via pre-tax (if appropriate) deductions prior to the leave or on an after-tax basis by personal check and forwarding such payment to the Benefits Department of Human Resources during the leave.

An employee has the option of terminating participation in any of the benefit plans at the beginning of the leave and reinstating coverage upon return from the leave.

If an employee discontinues coverage during a leave and wishes to resume coverage upon his/her return, the employee must re-enroll within 31 days of returning from the leave. Otherwise the employee must experience a qualifying event or wait until the open enrollment period to re-enroll. If an employee experiences a qualifying event during the leave of absence, the employee may increase or decrease coverage in accordance with that event. If an employee does not proactively elect to discontinue benefits, participation will continue during the unpaid leave and the employee is responsible for paying contributions due for the period of leave.

403(b) retirement plan, transportation program and health savings account contributions will be automatically suspended during an unpaid personal leave. Upon return from unpaid leave, contributions that have been suspended by Human Resources will re-start automatically. During an unpaid personal leave, an employee may make post-tax contributions directly to his or her health savings account (HSA).

Vacation and sick time do not accrue during the term of a personal leave of absence.

Performance Appraisals and Merit Increases

Scheduled performance review and merit salary increases (if any) will be postponed until the employee has returned to active work and will be effective prospectively.

Identification Cards and Keys

Identification cards and keys should be returned to the employee's manager before beginning a personal leave of absence. In addition, management may choose to disable any computer login access during the duration of the personal leave.

Employee's Responsibilities

- Request leave at least 30 days in advance of the requested start date.
- Complete the Personal Leave of Absence Request Form, obtain the appropriate department head or manager's signature, and submit the completed form to Human Resources at least one week prior to the start of the leave.
- Turn in identification cards and keys to the employee's manager before beginning a personal leave of absence.

- Obtain information on benefits continuation from Human Resources and arrange to pay or prepay employee premiums for any benefits that will be continued
- Notify the manager of any requested changes to the scheduled return date.
- Notify manager at least two (2) weeks prior to returning to work.
- Provide manager and Human Resources with contact information during the leave.

Manager's Responsibilities

- Consult Human Resources with any questions related to personal leave.
- Review completed Personal Leave of Absence Request form.
- Approve the Personal Leave of Absence Request form. The manager or employee submits the completed form to Human Resources at least one week prior to the start of the leave.
- Obtain employee's identification card and office keys prior to the beginning of the personal leave of absence.
- Keep in contact with the employee throughout the defined duration of the leave to verify that the employee is still on leave and determine if there has been any change to the scheduled return date.
- Advise Human Resources of any changes in the scheduled return date.

Human Resources' Responsibilities

- Upon notification that an employee wishes to take a leave, refer the employee to the Human Resources website for specific information related to the "Personal Leave of Absence" policy and Personal Leave of Absence Request form.
- Human Resources reviews the leave request documentation. If the leave is approved, Human Resources will issue a letter to the employee that indicates that the leave is approved, when it begins and when the employee is scheduled to return.
- Notify employee of any impact to benefits (if applicable)
- Work with the Payroll Department to suspend pay, continue benefits (if applicable), and record the leave.

Process the return from leave upon verification of employee's return to active status.

Divisional Collaborations

None

Contact Information

Office of Human Resources

Mailing Address:

1 East Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Office Location:

14 East Jackson Boulevard
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Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 362-8500

Appendices

[Personal Leave of Absence Request form](#)

[DePaul Leave of Absence website](#)

History/Revisions

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Next Review Date: N/A