Operating Procedure No. 5401P

Human Resources

SICK LEAVE PROCEDURE

Employees may use accrued sick leave for a qualified reason.

* To care for their own health or the health of eligible family members: spouse/domestic-partner or child (under the age of eighteen years of age or older than eighteen if incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability);
* A medical or dental appointment which can be scheduled only during normal working hours;
* For the period preceding and/or following the birth of the employee’s child;
* To care for a parent/parent-in-law, or grandparent/grandparent-in-law of the employee;
* An emergency condition;
* When the employee’s workplace or child’s school or place of care has been closed by a public official for any health-related reason;
* When the employee needs to be absent for reasons under the Domestic Violence Leave Act.

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**Conversion of Sick Leave Upon Retirement or Death**Staff may cash-out all accrued sick leave at the time of an eligible separation from employment as set forth in RCW 28A.400.210 and Chapter 392-136 WAC. An eligible employee may cash-out up to 180 days of accrued sick leave at the rate of twenty-five percent (25%), one hour's monetary compensation for every four hours of leave at the time of separation due to the reasons noted below:

**Retirement** - provided that the regular employee clearly indicates that they are retiring upon separation from district employment and provides documentation from the appropriate state retirement system that they are actively drawing retirement benefits within six months of separation from PSESD.

**Death** – provided that the administrator of the estate requests to cash out all accumulated sick leave within 12 months of the time of death of a deceased regular or non-regular employee. A certified copy of the death certificate must be submitted to the business office along with proper documentation of court appointment as administrator of the estate.

Funds received as a result of cash-out due to retirement or death will be deposited into a Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association (VEBA) account.

Any compensation received pursuant thereto shall not be included for the purpose of computing an employee’s retirement allowance under any applicable state retirement systems.

1. **Paid Sick Leave for Regular Certificated and Classified Employees**

Illness or disability will be reported to the employee's supervisor not later than two (2) hours prior to start time of each day's absence unless programmatic procedures differ as communicated by the supervisor. Variations to reporting requirements are acceptable due to hospitalization or other extenuating circumstances. Employees must enter sick leave used into Employee Access (EA) no later than the end of the month in which their leave is used.

A physician's certification of illness or injury is required when an employee is absent five (5) or more consecutive days, including clearance to return to work with or without restrictions. If an employee believes obtaining a physician’s certification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense, the employee may contact the supervisor or Human Resources Administrator, orally or in writing, within 10 calendar days of the absence. The supervisor will inform Human Resources upon receiving notification from staff.

Failure to report absence, enter leave taken into EA as noted above, provide required medical certification as required, or communicate unreasonable burden may result in a deduction from the employee’s available sick leave balance to cover the leave period, followed by a deduction in available annual leave before leave without pay is granted. Violation of these provisions may result in disciplinary action.

At the employee's option, sick leave may be used in lieu of annual leave to care for family members as defined in Chapter 296-130 WAC and RCW 49.12.270. Sick leave must be used prior to considering other provisions (i.e., shared leave, leave without pay, etc.).

Upon request, unused sick leave credits shall be transferred to and from one district to another, the office of superintendent of public instruction, offices of educational service district superintendents and boards, the state school for the blind, the Washington state center for childhood deafness and hearing loss, institutions of higher education, and community and technical colleges, to and from such districts, schools, offices, institutions of higher education, and community and technical colleges as covered by RCW 28A.400.300(viii). Requests for transfer are submitted by Human Resources to the employee’s qualified employer.

**Attendance Incentive**

In January of each year, employees with a minimum sick leave balance of four hundred eighty (480) hours will be given the opportunity to elect one of the options below for hours greater than four hundred eighty (480):

1. Receive pay at their regular hourly rate for all unused sick leave hours accumulated in the previous year (January through December), at a maximum of 96 hours, and one (1) hour for every four (4) hours. Sick leave for which employee receives pay will be deducted from their sick leave balance consistent with this conversion; or
2. Retain that year's sick leave in the employee’s accumulated sick leave account.

For purposes of this procedure, “regular hourly rate” is defined as the employees per diem rate of pay at the time of cash out. Per diem means the number of paid days minus the number of vacation days and holidays.

1. **Use of Accrued Sick Leave for Eligible Non-Regular Employees (Hourly, Occasional, On-Call)**

Employees may only use sick leave that has been accrued. Sick leave can be used when the employee needs to be absent, for a qualified reason, from an assignment for which the employee was scheduled to work.

Hourly and Occasional Employees:

1. If the absence is foreseeable (e.g., doctor’s appointment) and the employee will not be able to work/fulfill the assignment, the employee shall report the absence within 10 calendar days of the scheduled work assignment.

2. If the absence is unforeseeable (e.g., illness on day scheduled to work) and the employee is unable to work/fulfill assignment, the employee shall report the absence as soon as reasonably possible before the required start time. Illness or inability to work shall be reported to the employee’s supervisor before the required start time of each day’s absence unless programmatic procedures differ as communicated by the supervisor.  Variations to reporting requirements are acceptable due to hospitalization or other extenuating circumstances.

On-Call Employees:

1. May utilize accrued sick leave when *required* to work only. “Required to work” for an On-Call employee means that the employee accepted the work assignment and reported to work. Employees are required to provide a physician's certification of illness or injury for any absence of five (5) or more consecutive days, including clearance to return to work with or without restrictions. If an employee believes obtaining a physician’s certification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense, the employee may contact the Human Resources Administrator, orally or in writing, within 10 calendar days.

Failure to report absence, provide required medical certification as noted above, or communicate unreasonable burden may result in a deduction from the employee’s available sick leave balance to cover the leave period before leave without pay is granted. Excessive violation of these provisions may result in disciplinary action.

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