

POLICY 417 LEAVES – LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 1. Purpose.** To provide an option for employees to be off for reasons not eligible under family medical leave or due to extenuating circumstances for an extended period of time.
- 2. Definitions.**
 - 2.1 Paid Leave.** Leaves of absence where compensatory time, paid time off, and extended leave bank are utilized to continue receiving compensation when the employee is off for an extended period of time.
 - 2.2 Unpaid Leave.** Leaves of absence where no compensatory time, paid time off, or extended leave bank are available to an employee when the employee is off for an extended period of time.
- 3. Policy.**
 - 3.1** A leave may only be granted when it is reasonably expected that the employee will return to employment when the condition(s) necessitating the leave permit, subject to (with the exception of Disabled Veteran leave) the staffing needs of the department, and when granting a leave is in the best interest of the county.
 - 3.2** Leaves without pay may be requested after all compensatory time, paid time off, and extended leave bank (if applicable as defined in Policy 425) have been exhausted.
 - 3.3** Paid time off accrual and holiday benefits will be suspended during any unpaid leave and will resume upon the employee's return to their normal work schedule for one full pay period.
- 4. Authorization.**
 - 4.1 Short Term.** Leaves of 30 days or less. Any leave request for 30 days or less will be submitted in writing utilizing Appendix 417A to the department head. The department head may grant the leave and will notify the director.
 - 4.2 Extended Leave.** Leaves of over 30 Days. Any leave request extending over 30 days will be submitted in writing to the department head. The department head will submit their recommendation to the director for review and approval or denial.

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- 4.2.1 Employees who are not eligible for participation under the Family Medical Leave Act or who have exhausted their Family Medical Leave may be granted a leave of absence, supportable by medical evidence, of up to six (6) months inclusive of paid time off or extended leave bank.
 - 4.2.2 Employees who have exhausted their accumulated paid time off and extended leave bank may be granted a leave of absence, supportable by medical evidence, of up to six (6) months inclusive of paid time off or extended leave bank.
 - 4.3 Disabled Veteran leave. Employees who are a Veteran of the Armed Forces who have incurred a serious injury or illness while serving in the line of duty on active duty will be entitled to a leave of absence, of up to six (6) months inclusive of paid time off or extended leave bank to receive medical treatment for the service-connected disability. Requests must be supported by evidence of a service-connected disability and medical evidence supporting the need for leave.
 - 4.4 Personal leave. Personal leave may be granted by the director for up to three (3) months for the employee's personal convenience or to relieve hardship to the employee and his or her immediate family.
 - 4.5 Educational leave. The director may grant employees leave to further their education. Any expenses incurred will not be reimbursed by the county. Such leaves in aggregate will not exceed 24 months in any 5-year period.
 - 4.6 Political leave. Any employee becoming a candidate for any publicly elected office will be entitled to political leave of up to six (6) months to be effective no later than the date the board of canvassers certifies that the employee has won the primary election and will expire upon said board's certification of the general election results. Any employee assuming a county elected office will be considered to have resigned from their former position.
5. Procedure.
- 5.1 Any employee request for leave of absence will be submitted in writing to the department head at least 30 days in advance and will state the reason for such leave and the period of time to be absent. Employees requesting leave will utilize Appendix 417 A when submitting the request. The 30-day notice may be waived under emergency circumstances by the director.
 - 5.2 Advance notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable.

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- 5.3 Employees will make their own arrangements in advance for payment of benefits for any full calendar month they are on unpaid leave of absence by remitting monthly premium payments to the finance department. Insurances will be cancelled if the employee fails to remit payment upon notice of delinquency

6. Return to Active Employment.

6.1 An employee may return to work at an earlier date than scheduled if approved by the department head.

6.2 Any employee failing to return to work upon expiration of unpaid leave will be considered to have resigned, not in good standing.

6.3 The employee will be eligible for reinstatement to a vacant position or equivalent position, provided stated qualifications are met. If no vacant position is available the employee is qualified for, the employee will be terminated.

7. Leave restrictions.

7.1 Unpaid leave of absence will not be granted for periods exceeding 6 months to permit an employee to seek other employment or work at some other paid employment, except as provided in the above provision for political leave.

8. Appendices.

8.1 Unpaid Leave of Absence Request Form (Appendix 417 A)

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