

## UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION UNCLASSIFIED PERSONNEL GUIDELINES (UPG)

### UPG #8

#### SICK LEAVE USE AND REPORTS FOR UW-EXTENSION UNCLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

UW-Extension unclassified employees employed through a joint contract with a non-UW-Extension employer should review the terms of their contract or check with their appointing authority regarding how this policy applies to their appointment.

- 8.01 Policy Statement.** Paid sick leave is a significant fringe benefit for a UW System unclassified employee during periods of illness or injury. In the event of death or retirement, the accumulated sick leave value is used to pay for the state group health insurance premium.
- 8.02 Accrual of Sick Leave.** The following guidelines apply to the accrual of sick leave:
- (1) All unclassified staff expected to work at least one-third of what is considered full-time employment and whose expected duration of employment is at least one year shall earn sick leave. An employee not expected to work at least one-third time shall earn sick leave if that employee subsequently worked at least one-third time for at least one year during the immediately preceding 12-month period (see Chapter UWS 19.02(1)).
  - (2) An employee who once becomes eligible to earn sick leave, continues to earn sick leave regardless of any reduction in percent of time or length contract unless employment is terminated for 12 or more consecutive months or the employee receives a benefit that closes his or her retirement account (see Chapter UWS 19.02(1)).
  - (3) Employees whose initial appointments are for 9 months or more shall be credited with 22 working days of sick leave which they may draw upon as required consistent with par. 8.03. Part-time employees have an initial entitlement, earn and are charged sick leave in the same proportion as their appointment bears to a full-time appointment.
  - (4) In addition to sick leave credited under par. 8.02(1), after 1.5 years of service, each employee shall earn additional nonlapsing sick leave at the rate of 1 day per month for persons holding annual basis appointments and at the rate of 6 days per semester or 4 days per quarter for persons who hold academic year basis appointments, with a maximum annual accumulation limited to not more than 12 days.
  - (5) Unused sick leave shall accumulate from year to year in the employee's sick leave account.
  - (6) An employee utilizing paid sick leave shall continue to accumulate sick leave credits during the period of the sick leave absence.
  - (7) An employee does not accumulate sick leave credits while on an unpaid leave of absence.
  - (8) Accumulated sick leave is converted at the current rate of pay to an account to pay health insurance premiums upon the retirement, death or layoff of an insured employee. If the employee terminates employment with the University of Wisconsin System other than through retirement or death, unused sick leave shall

be terminated but shall be reinstated if the employee is reappointed to any position within the System within 3 years.

**8.03 Sick Leave Use.** The following definitions are used in implementing these policies:

"Child" means a natural, adopted or foster child, stepchild, or legal ward who is less than 18 years of age or 18 years of age or older and unable to care for himself or herself because of a serious health condition.

"Family member" includes an employee's and employee's spouse's immediate family members, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters and their spouses, children over the age of 18 and their spouses and any other relative who resides in the same household as the employee.

"Grandchild" means the child of a child.

"Grandparent" means the parent of a parent.

"Immediate family member" means the spouse, parents and children of an employee; and

"Parent" means a natural parent, foster parent, adoptive parent, stepparent or legal guardian of an employee or an employee's spouse.

"Spouse" means an employee's legal husband or wife or equivalent.

"Year" refers to the academic year for academic year basis appointments, and to the fiscal year for annual basis appointments. One semester of an academic year appointment is equivalent to one-half of an annual basis appointment.

Employees who have accrued sick leave are eligible to use such leave as follows:

- (1) For absence due to personal illness, injury, disability or pregnancy;
- (2) For attendance upon an immediate family member whose condition requires the employee's direct care.
- (3) For the death of a family member; and
- (4) Up to 30 days of such leave in any 12-month period may be used for parental leave as follows:
  - (a) For the birth of the employee's natural child, if the leave begins within 16 weeks of the child's birth; or
  - (b) For the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or as a precondition to adoption under section 48.90, Wis. Stats., but not both, if the leave begins within 16 weeks of the child's placement.
- (5) Certification of Medical Necessity Requirement for Faculty, Limited Appointees, and Academic Staff use of Sick Leave:
  - (a) UW institutions shall require written certification from a health care provider of the medical necessity for use of sick leave for absences of more than 5 consecutive full working days, except where the use of sick leave is authorized in advance, pursuant to the Wisconsin or Federal Family and Medical Leave Acts.
  - (b) Where an institution is aware of an emergency that prevents communicating with or obtaining information about the condition of the employee, such written certification shall not be required until such time as communication is possible and appropriate, given the condition of the employee.

- (c) In cases of suspected abuse of the sick leave privilege, the institution shall be authorized to require written certification from a health care provider to verify the medical necessity for the employee's absence regardless of the length of absence.

Use of sick leave for parental leave should be scheduled in advance. Parental leave may be taken in non-continuous increments.

**8.04 Options When Absent Due to an Illness or Injury.** UW System colleague coverage provisions are not applicable to UW-Extension faculty and academic staff. When an unclassified employee is absent because of illness or injury, as defined in 8.03, the following options should be used to cover the absence:

- (1) Charge sick leave against accumulated sick leave earnings;
- (2) Charge paid leave (vacation) credits (only annual pay basis employees appointed half time or more are eligible for paid vacation entitlement); or
- (3) Charge leave without pay if sick leave and vacation are not available. Leave without pay shall be charged in full day amounts in order to retain the exempt status of an unclassified employee from the overtime provision under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.
- (4) The UWS Catastrophic Leave Program provides an opportunity to give leave credit to and receive leave credit from another unclassified colleague. Consult the UW-Extension Office of Human Resources and/or divisional personnel offices about program details.

**8.05 Amount of Sick Leave to be Charged.** Sick leave for unclassified employees shall be charged in units of one-half days for full-time appointments. Sick leave charged to individuals holding part-time appointments will be prorated by the percent of appointment. Absences of one quarter day up to three fourths day shall be charged as one half day. Absences of three fourths day up to one and one quarter day shall be charged as one day. All UW-Extension employees are to use their sick leave usage on a regular five-day workweek standard.

**8.06 Guidelines for Reporting Sick Leave**

- (1) Every month, each UW-Extension faculty and academic staff member must submit a report detailing sick leave used (or vacation time in lieu of sick leave) to the department/unit's designated representative, as defined by the dean/director. The amount of vacation and sick leave used during the month is recorded to the nearest one-half day for each day of the month sick leave or vacation time was used. The faculty/academic staff member and the department/unit designated representative are both required to sign such reports monthly.
- (2) Monthly, a report summarizing sick leave and vacation time usage for each employee, checked for accuracy and signed by the department/unit designated representative, must be transmitted to the UW-Extension Payroll and Staff Benefits Office. A report must be submitted for each employee regardless of whether any sick leave or vacation time was used.
- (3) Monthly, the UW-Extension Staff Benefits Office provides each faculty/academic staff member with a report of his/her official sick leave and vacation balances. Each faculty/academic staff member should review his/her report for accuracy. Any errors must be promptly reported to and reconciled with the official records of the department/unit's designated representative.

**Adopted May 13, 1983**  
**Revised January 4, 1988**  
**Revised July 24, 1990**  
**Revised September, 1991**  
**Revised January, 1995**  
**Revised September, 2001**  
**Revised October, 2005**