

Educational Support Personnel

Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves ¹

Each of the provisions in this policy applies to all educational support personnel to the extent that it does not conflict with an applicable collective bargaining agreement or individual employment contract or benefit plan; in the event of a conflict, such provision is severable and the applicable bargaining agreement or individual agreement will control.

Sick and Bereavement Leave ²

Full or part-time educational support personnel who work at least 600 hours per year receive 10 paid sick leave days per year. Part-time employees will receive sick leave pay equivalent to their regular

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¹ State or federal law controls this policy's content. This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

This policy is consistent with the minimum requirements of State law. The local collective bargaining agreement may contain provisions that exceed these requirements. The introductory paragraph recognizes that an applicable collective bargaining agreement or individual employment contract will supersede a conflicting provision of the policy. Alternatively, if the policy's subject matter is superseded by a bargaining agreement, the board policy may state, "Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement."

Districts must coordinate leaves provided by State law and the local bargaining agreement with the leave granted by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (29 U.S.C. §2612), amended by Sec. 565 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Pub. L. 111-84). The FMLA grants eligible employees 12 weeks unpaid leave each year for: (1) the birth and first-year care of a child; (2) the adoption or foster placement of a child; (3) the serious health condition of an employee's spouse, parent, or child; (4) the employee's own serious health condition; (5) the existence of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on (or has been notified of an impending call to) *covered active duty* in the Armed Forces; and (6) to care for the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a covered service member with a serious injury or illness. The definition of *covered servicemember* includes a veteran "who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness" if the veteran was a member of the Armed Forces "at any time during the period of 5 years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes that medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy." 29 U.S.C. §2611(15). Districts are permitted to count paid leave (granted by State law or board policy) taken for an FMLA purpose against an employee's FMLA entitlement. 29 C.F.R. §825.207. See sample policy 5:185, *Family and Medical Leave*.

Many State laws grant leaves to employees of the State and municipalities, but are not applicable to school districts, including the Employee Blood and Organ Donation Leave Act (820 ILCS 149/), Local Government Disaster Service Volunteer Act (50 ILCS 122/), Organ Donor Leave Act (5 ILCS 327/), Civil Air Patrol Leave Act (820 ILCS 148/), and Paid Leave for All Workers Act (820 ILCS 192/). See sample policy 5:185, *Family and Medical Leave*, for a discussion of the Military Leave Act (820 ILCS 151/) and its applicability to school districts.

² This section contains the minimum benefits provided by 105 ILCS 5/24-6. Each specified number of days in this section is the statutory minimum. The School Code does not address whether an employee's 10 paid sick leave days are available upon employment, accrued over months, or after working for a certain period of time, e.g., one year. Also be aware that the Employee Sick Leave Act (ESLA) (820 ILCS 191/) allows employees to use employer-provided sick leave due to illness, injury, medical appointment, or *personal care* of a *covered family member*. See sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*, at f/n 2 for more information about the scope and application of the ESLA. Leave may be taken under the same terms for which the employee would be permitted to take leave for his or her own illness or injury.

Before adopting this policy or applying its provisions, the district should examine any applicable bargaining agreements. Strict accounting of unused sick days is important to avoid:

1. Employees accumulating sick time on a full-time basis when they are truly working part-time hours;
2. Inconsistent treatment; and

workday. Unused sick leave shall accumulate to a maximum of 180 days, including the leave of the current year.³

Sick leave is defined in State law as personal illness, mental or behavioral complications, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or the acceptance of a child in need of foster care. The Superintendent or designee shall monitor the use of sick leave.

As a condition for paying sick leave after three days absence for personal illness or as the Board or Superintendent deem necessary in other cases, the Board or Superintendent may require that the staff member provide a certificate from: (1) a physician licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, (2) a mental health professional licensed in Illinois providing ongoing care or treatment to the staff member (3) a chiropractic physician licensed under the Medical Practice Act, (4) a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, (5) a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority to perform health examinations by his or her supervising physician, or (6) if the treatment is by prayer or spiritual means, a spiritual adviser or practitioner of the employee's faith. If the Board or Superintendent requires a certificate during a leave of less than three days for personal illness, the District shall pay the expenses incurred by the employee.

Employees are entitled to use up to 30 days of paid sick leave because of the birth of a child that is not dependent on the need to recover from childbirth. Such days may be used at any time within the 12-month period following the birth of the child. Intervening periods of nonworking days or school not being in session, such as breaks and holidays, do not count towards the 30 working school days. As a

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3. Inaccurate reporting to IMRF (credit is given for full day unused sick days upon retirement). 40 ILCS 5/7-139(a)(8).

105 ILCS 5/24-6, amended by P.A.s 102-275, 102-697, and 102-866, required districts to return any sick leave days used by educational support personnel for a qualifying COVID-19 related reason during the 2021-2022 school year, provided the employee was "fully vaccinated against COVID-19" by 5-10-22. See sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*, at f/n 2, for more information.

³ As this policy is consistent with the minimum requirements of State law, this provision on the maximum number of sick days that may be accumulated is based on the minimum number required as stated in 105 ILCS 5/24-6, amended by P.A.s 102-275, 102-697, and 102-866. The number may be increased to meet or exceed the number IMRF will recognize for retirement credit purposes. The following alternative does this: "Unused sick leave shall accumulate to the maximum number of days that IMRF will recognize for retirement credit purposes."

The following optional provisions apply to boards that want to address the IMRF's requirement that public bodies must have a written plan allowing eligible employees to convert their eligible accumulated sick leave to service credit upon their retirement. See 40 ILCS 5/7-139(a)(8). See also IMRF General Memorandum #555 at:

www.imrf.org/en/publications-and-archive/general-memos/2007-general-memos/general-memo-555.

Option 1: No collective bargaining agreement applies and the board wants to publicize its written plan. Insert the following sentence: This policy is the District's written plan allowing eligible employees to convert eligible accumulated sick leave to service credit upon a District employee's retirement under the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund.

Option 2: A local collective bargaining agreement contains the written plan and the board wants to publicize it. Insert the following sentence: Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s) for the District's written plan allowing eligible employees to convert eligible accumulated sick leave to service credit upon an employee's retirement under the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund.

Option 3: A district maintains two separate sick leave plans, one for employees under a collective bargaining agreement, and one for non-unionized employees. Insert the text for both Option 1 and Option 2.

Note: If Options 1, 2, or 3 are chosen, add 40 ILCS 5/7-139 to the Legal References. If the board does not have a written sick leave plan for purposes of IMRF sick leave to service credit conversion or does not wish to include it in the policy, do not include any of the options above or add the citation to the Legal References.

condition of paying sick leave beyond the 30 working school days, the Board or the Superintendent may require medical certification. ⁴

For purposes of adoption, placement for adoption, or acceptance of a child in need of foster care, paid sick leave may be used for reasons related to the formal adoption or the formal foster care process prior to taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care, and for taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care. Such leave is limited to 30 days, unless a longer leave is provided in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, and need not be used consecutively once the formal adoption or foster care process is underway. The Board or Superintendent may require that the employee provide evidence that the formal adoption or foster care process is underway. ⁵

Vacation ⁶

Twelve-month employees shall be eligible for paid vacation days according to the following schedule:

<u>Length of Employment</u>		<u>Earned Per Month Accumulation</u>	<u>Maximum Vacation Leave Earned Per Year</u>
<u>From:</u>	<u>To:</u>		
Beginning of year 2	End of year 5	0.83 Days	10 Days per year
Beginning of year 6	End of year 15	1.25 Days	15 Days per year
Beginning of year 16	End of year	1.67 Days	20 Days per year

Part-time employees who work at least half-time are entitled to vacation days on the same basis as full-time employees, but the pay will be based on the employee's average number of part-time hours per week during the last vacation accrual year. The Superintendent will determine the procedure for requesting vacation.

Vacation days earned in one fiscal year must be used by the end of the following fiscal year; they do not accumulate. Employees resigning or whose employment is terminated are entitled to the monetary equivalent of all earned vacation. ⁷

Holidays ⁸

Unless the District has a waiver or modification of the School Code pursuant to Section 2-3.25g or 24-2(b) allowing it to schedule school on a legal school holiday listed below, District employees will not be required to work on:

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⁴ 105 ILCS 5/24-6.

⁵ 105 ILCS 5/24-6.

⁶ State law does not require districts to give employees vacations. This subhead should be customized based on local needs and conditions and in consultation with the board attorney. For example, some districts may wish to attract or retain employees by offering vacation during the first year of employment and/or by making vacation days available for use on the first day of employment, earned evenly throughout the year.

⁷ Required by 820 ILCS 115/5 and 56 Ill.Admin.Code §300.520 (Earned Vacations).

⁸ Holidays are listed in 105 ILCS 5/24-2(a), (e), amended by P.A. 103-467. For information on the waiver process allowed by 105 ILCS 5/24-2(b), see sample exhibit 2:20-E, *Waiver and Modification Request Resource Guide*. The General Assembly passed legislation adding General Election Day as a school holiday for 2020, 2022, and 2024. Language referring to a General Election holiday when required by law is maintained in this policy should this practice continue. Holidays not specified in the School or Election Codes may be added to the policy; however, boards adding additional holidays should monitor and review to ensure the list remains current.

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
Abraham Lincoln's Birthday
Casimir Pulaski's Birthday
Memorial Day
Juneteenth National Freedom Day
Independence Day

Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
General Election Day, when required by law
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

A holiday will not cause a deduction from an employee's time or compensation.⁹ The District may require educational support personnel to work on a school holiday during an emergency or for the continued operation and maintenance of facilities or property.

Personal Leave ¹⁰

Full-time educational support personnel have one paid personal leave day per year. The use of a personal day is subject to the following conditions:

1. Except in cases of emergency or unavoidable situations, a personal leave request should be submitted to the Building Principal three days before the requested date.
2. No personal leave day may be used immediately before or immediately after a holiday, or during the first and/or last five days of the school year, unless the Superintendent grants prior approval.
3. Personal leave may not be used in increments of less than one-half day.
4. Personal leave is subject to any necessary replacement's availability.
5. Personal leave may not be used on an in-service training day and/or institute training days.
6. Personal leave may not be used when the employee's absence would create an undue hardship.

Leave to Serve as a Trustee of the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund

Upon request, the Board will grant 20 days of paid leave of absence per year to a trustee of the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund in accordance with State law. ¹¹

Other Leaves

Educational support personnel receive the following leaves on the same terms and conditions granted professional personnel in Board policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*:

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A State-mandated school holiday on Good Friday is unconstitutional according to *Metzl v. Leininger*, 57 F.3d 618 (7th Cir. 1995). Closing school on religious holidays may be permissible for those districts able to demonstrate that remaining open would be a waste of educational resources because of widespread absenteeism. Also, districts may be able to close school on Good Friday by adopting a spring holiday rationale or ensuring that it falls within spring break. School districts should discuss their options, including the collective bargaining implications, with their board attorney.

⁹ 105 ILCS 5/24-2(a), amended by P.A. 103-395, states that "[n]o deduction shall be made from the time or compensation of a school employee, including an educational support personnel employee, on account of any legal or special holiday in which that employee would have otherwise been scheduled to work but for the legal or special holiday." This language has caused confusion and disputes in the field. Some unions have claimed this language means educational school personnel must be paid for holidays, in addition to the days worked in the regular work year. Consult the board attorney for guidance.

¹⁰ State law does not address personal leave. It is not uncommon for boards to grant educational support personnel the same number of personal leave days as are granted to professional staff.

¹¹ Required by 105 ILCS 5/24-6.3(b) and 40 ILCS 5/7-174.5. A similar leave exists for an elected trustee for the Ill. Teachers' Retirement System. See sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*.

1. Leave for Service in the Military. ¹²
2. Leave for Service in the General Assembly. ¹³
3. School Visitation Leave. ¹⁴
4. Leaves for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Gender Violence, or Other Crime of Violence. ¹⁵
5. Family Bereavement Leave. ¹⁶
6. Child Extended Bereavement Leave. ¹⁷
7. Leave to serve as an election judge. ¹⁸
8. COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave. ¹⁹
9. Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave. ²⁰

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.7b, 5/10-20.83, 5/24-2, 5/24-6, and 5/24-6.3.
 10 ILCS 5/13-2.5, Election Code.
 330 ILCS 61/, Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.
 820 ILCS 147/, School Visitation Rights Act.
 820 ILCS 154/, Family Bereavement Leave Act.
 820 ILCS 156/, Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act.
 820 ILCS 157/, Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act.
 820 ILCS 180/, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act.
School Dist. 151 v. ISBE, 154 Ill.App.3d 375 (1st Dist. 1987); Elder v. Sch. Dist. No.127 1/2, 60 Ill.App.2d 56 (1st Dist. 1965).

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence)

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¹² Military leave is governed by the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20.7b, 5/24-13, and 13.1); the Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (330 ILCS 61/, streamlining several job-related protection laws into one statute, mandating leave for *active service* and requiring the public employer to make up the difference between military pay and regular compensation); and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (38 U.S.C. §4301 *et seq.*).

¹³ Granting General Assembly leave to ESPs is optional.

¹⁴ 820 ILCS 147/. See sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*, and 5:250-AP, *School Visitation Leave*.

¹⁵ Required by Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (820 ILCS 180/, amended by P.A. 103-314) and 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 280. Important information about this leave is discussed in f/ns 22, 23 and 24 of sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*.

¹⁶ 820 ILCS 154/; 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 252. Important information about this leave is discussed in f/n 5 of sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*.

¹⁷ 820 ILCS 156/, added by P.A. 103-466. Delete this item and the Legal Reference to 820 ILCS 156/, Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act, if the district has fewer than 50 full-time employees. See sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*, and its f/ns 6 and 7 for important information about this leave.

¹⁸ 10 ILCS 5/13-2.5.

¹⁹ 105 ILCS 5/10-20.83. See sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*, and its f/n 29 for important information about this leave.

²⁰ 820 ILCS 157/, added by P.A. 104-259, eff. 6-1-26. See sample policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*, and its f/ns 30-33 for important information about this leave.