

Descriptor Term: CLASSIFIED STAFF LEAVES AND ABSENCES	Descriptor: GDC	Issued: Draft
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The following leave policy will be applicable to all classified staff with the exception of hourly personnel employed in the area of school food service.

SICK LEAVE: Each full-time classified staff will be credited with ten days sick leave at the beginning of each school year. Sick leave for employment of less than a full year will be earned at the rate of one day per month of employment for each complete month worked with a maximum of ten days per year. Should an employee terminate employment prior to actually earning the days advanced, a payroll adjustment shall be made to recover the full cost of excess leave days previously used. Any unused portion of annual sick leave will be carried over to the next year and credited to the employee. Accumulation of sick leave ~~by support staff~~ will be unlimited. No deduction from pay will occur as a result of absences caused by illness or physical disability until all leave allowance has been used. Situations for which sick leave may be granted **are as follows** ~~include~~:

1. A Family Medical Leave Act qualifying event or an actual period of temporary disability caused by a personal illness, injury, or other temporary disability that prevents an employee from performing his or her usual duties.
2. An illness in the employee's immediate family that necessitates the employee's attendance; immediate family is defined as spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child or stepchild. Verification may be required.
3. Medical or dental appointments.
4. Due to each death in the immediate family, an employee may use up to three (3) days of sick leave with full pay as bereavement leave. For purposes of this section only, immediate family is defined as spouse, parent, parent-in-law, stepparent, sibling, child or stepchild.

Should an employee's absence extend for **more than three (3)** ~~four (4)~~ consecutive workdays, the employee must submit **to Human Resources** on or before the **fourth** ~~fifth~~ day, a statement ~~to the employee's immediate supervisor~~ from a licensed physician or dentist concerning the illness. **The employee will be processed for FMLA if qualifying event exists.** The District reserves the right for the ~~supervisor of any employee~~ **Human Resources Director** to request a doctor's statement of verification of illness regardless of the length of absence, including one day. Sick leave charges are as follows:

1. The minimum sick leave that may be taken is one-half of one day in any given workday. Only sick days taken on actual workdays shall be charged in calculating the number of sick leave days taken.
2. The TPSD workers' compensation policy allows employees who sustain job-related injuries to use sick leave to make up the difference between their normal wage and the amount they are receiving under the workers' compensation award, **when the workers' compensation injury last four days or less. When the workers' compensation injuries lasts five or more consecutive days and qualifies for FMLA, an employee may only utilize sick time if both the District and the employee agree in writing to allow for its usage. Additionally, during absences where disability benefits are being paid, an employee may only utilize sick time if both the District and the employee agree in writing to allow for its usage.**
3. Upon termination of employment, unused sick days for which the employee is entitled to full pay will be counted as credible service for purposes of the retirement system to the extent provided in Section 25-11-103 of the Mississippi Code and the policies of the Public Employees' Retirement System.

PERSONAL LEAVE FOR ASSISTANT TEACHERS: Assistant teachers may take up to five personal leave days per school year. The District rate of pay for a substitute teacher shall be deducted from the pay of the absent employee. Personal leave shall not be taken on the first or last day of the school year, or on a day immediately prior to or following a holiday unless on such days an immediate family member of the employee is being deployed for military service. All personal leave will be subject to the prior approval of the immediate supervisor. When an employee is receiving workers' compensation or disability benefits, the employee will only be able to utilize personal days when both the District and the employee agree in writing. It is the intent of the Board that not more than ten percent of the classified employees of a school be granted personal leave on the same date. A suitable substitute shall be scheduled prior to the approval of a personal leave request.

VACATION LEAVE: Eligible full-time support staff employed for a period of twelve months annually will be credited with .84 days of vacation leave each month with a maximum accumulation of thirty (30) days. All vacation leave will be subject to the prior approval of the immediate supervisor. Unused vacation leave accumulated in excess of the maximum five days which may be carried over from one year to the next may be converted to sick leave in accordance with state law*.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE: The immediate supervisor of an employee may approve a maximum of five days per school year for professional development purposes related to the mission of the District. Any exceptions to the professional development leave allowance will require the prior written approval of the superintendent or designee.

EDUCATIONAL LEAVE: Employees of the District for a period of at least two continuous years may request a leave of absence for educational reasons. Requests for a temporary leave of absence must be submitted in writing by the employee explaining the reason for the leave. A leave of absence must be approved by the Board and will be granted for a period deemed to be in the best interest of the District.

LEGAL LEAVE: When an employee is subpoenaed to testify in court in which the employee is not a party or is summoned to serve on a jury, the employee will be granted leave upon verification of the summons or subpoena by the immediate supervisor. During such absence, the employee will be entitled to receive a regular rate of pay and fringe benefits normally received. Legal leave will not be granted in cases in which the employee is in litigation against the District.

MILITARY LEAVE: Employees who are members of a reserve component and who are required to attend annual military training while under contract are entitled to full salary for up to fifteen days while on military leave. The fifteen days of military leave is a separate period from the employee's regular leave, and may not be deducted as personal or sick leave.

EXHAUSTION OF LEAVE – Following the exhaustion of leave taken by an employee, the employee must return to work. If the employee does not return to work within 30 days following the exhaustion of leave, his/her employment may be terminated. However, the employee may petition the Board of Trustees to extend the period of unpaid leave, and if exceptional circumstances are found to exist, the leave may be extended.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE HOURLY EMPLOYEES: All hourly school food service employees will receive five paid vacation days per school year. For the purpose of holiday pay, employees will be paid based upon the regular hours worked during a normal workday.

Hourly school food service employees with at least one full year of continuous employment with the district will receive seven days sick leave at the beginning of the school year. Employees with less than one year of employment will receive 1.5 days per month for sick leave, not to exceed seven days. A sick leave day will be based upon the number of hours the employee is normally scheduled to work.

If a food service employee should resign or leave prior to the end of the school year and has used sick leave in excess of 1.5 days per month of employment, the District will deduct the amount due to the District in the last payroll check of the employee.

Any materially false statement by the employee as to the cause of absence may result in full deduction from salary for days absent or entry on the work record or other appropriate penalty deemed justified by the Board.

* State law allows for the conversion of unused vacation/personal leave to sick days not to exceed the following: Continuous service of 1-3 yrs: convert maximum of 18 days per year; 37 months-8 years: convert maximum 21 days per year; 97 months-15 years: convert maximum 24 days per year; over 15 years: convert maximum 27 days per year.