

Q&A FOR THE UNPAID LEAVE PROGRAM

- 1. Will all requests be approved?**
It will depend on the number of requests and the department involved, but all requests may not be granted. Decisions will be based on departmental and institutional needs. The ability to allow time off will likely vary from department to department.
- 2. How do I apply for the unpaid leave program?**
Complete the Request Form. It requires approval by your supervisor, department director and HR.
- 3. How many days of leave may I request?**
From one day up to 40 work days. Hourly, non-exempt staff may take time off in daily increments, salaried exempt staff may take time off in weekly increments.
- 4. Why do salaried employees have to take leave in weekly increments while hourly employees can take it daily?**
The method of pay for employees, whether hourly or salaried, is determined by a federal law called the Fair Labor Standards Act. This law provides standards under which employees are classified as non-exempt (hourly), and exempt (salaried). "Exempt" refers to "exempt from overtime and minimum wage requirements". Under this law, exempt employees cannot have their salary reduced in increments for less than one week, although there are special exceptions to this rule. Our program does not meet the criteria for a special exception. Therefore, in order to comply with the law, this program is only offered in weekly increments to salaried, exempt employees.
- 5. When do I have to use these unpaid days?**
All days must be used between the dates of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.
- 6. Will my pay be reduced if I am approved for unpaid leave?**
Yes. You will not be paid for these days.
- 7. Will I be allowed to take the same day off each week if I want to?**
Unpaid leave days must be approved by your supervisor. Your supervisor will review your request and approve or deny it based upon departmental needs.
- 8. If a supervisor has a number of employees requesting the same day or schedule of days off, how will the supervisor decide?**
In such a situation, any reasonable and non-arbitrary method of decision-making can be used. This could include, for example, random selection of employees, seniority, etc.
- 9. When will I know whether my request is granted?**
You will receive an approval notice from the Office of Human Resources.
- 10. Will my workload be adjusted to reflect my additional time away from the office?**
Participants in the unpaid leave program should review their assigned workloads with their supervisor to work out a corresponding reduction in workload or assignments if deemed necessary.
- 11. Can I check on my day-to-day responsibilities while I am using unpaid leave days?**
You are not being paid for these days. You should not participate in work related activities such as checking email, voice mail, project work, etc.
- 12. What will happen to my insurance premiums?**
Insurance premiums will continue to be deducted from your paycheck, unless there is no pay during that pay period. In these situations, employees must make arrangements with Elaina Machin, payroll technician, to pay for the premiums.
- 13. Will vacation, sick or holiday benefits be adjusted?**
Yes. The accrual of these benefits is directly tied to the number of hours that you work. If you work less, then these benefits will be reduced by a proportionate amount.
- 14. Is it possible the program could be extended beyond June of 2010?**
This special program is scheduled to conclude on June 30, 2010, and no extension is foreseen at this time.
- 15. Whom do I contact with specific questions?**
Please contact the Office of Human Resources at 269-4818 or the Office of the Treasurer at 269-3500. Staff in these areas can assist you with process-related questions.