

6.13 SICK LEAVE

6.13.01 Definition

Sick leave is used when an employee is incapacitated by sickness or injury; for medical treatment; when an employee is unable to perform regular duties, as certified by a licensed physician, during pregnancy or following childbirth; for necessary care and attendance or death of a member of the employee's family (defined as: spouse, son, daughter, parents, parents-in-law, siblings, grandparents, children for whom the employee has legal guardianship or is designated primary care giver, and any person who resides in the employee's home); or for exposure to a contagious disease when the attendance in the workplace jeopardizes the health of others. The use of paid sick leave in connection with a death of a family member will be limited to a maximum of three days. It is important for employees to maintain a sick leave balance to meet their own and family needs.

6.13.02 Accrual

Regular full-time employees accrue sick leave at a rate of four hours per bi-weekly payroll period. For a payroll period in which an employee is paid for less than the standard work hours, leave is accrued proportional to the number of hours worked, including paid leave.

6.13.03 Carryover

Sick leave accumulates without limit.

6.13.04 Granting Sick Leave

- A. Supervisors will grant sick leave to regular employees in accordance with the following provisions:
- (1) Ordinary sick leave will not exceed the total amount available to a regular employee at the time of absence;
 - (2) Leave without pay may be granted for sickness extending beyond the available balance pursuant to the Leave Without Pay policy;
 - (3) Regular employees may use annual leave credit for sick leave.

6.13.05 Granting Advance Sick Leave

- A. Advance sick leave, not to exceed 24 work days, may be recommended by the Division Director/Manager and the Human Resources Manager to the General Manager, who may grant leave to regular employees. Consideration of advance sick

leave will include the following situations when it is to the advantage of Fairfax Water to do so:

- (1) The nature, seriousness, and extent of illness or disability;
 - (2) The probable return to duty and prospect for continued employment;
 - (3) The probability of the employee returning to work and ability to re-accrue the leave to be advanced based on prior use history;
 - (4) The employee's past leave record.
- B. Advance sick leave may only be granted after an employee has used any annual leave balance.
- C. Advance sick leave is not granted to a regular employee during the new hire probationary period.
- D. When there are justifiable factors to grant advanced sick leave, as determined by the Division Director/Manager and the Human Resources Manager, a Personnel Action Form will be prepared stating the circumstances and the need for such leave, the time and date when the accrued sick leave will be exhausted, the number of hours of advance sick leave requested, and the date to which such leave will extend.
- E. Advance sick leave will be charged against future accruals of sick leave.
- F. When an employee who receives advance sick leave separates from the employment of Fairfax Water before the advance sick leave has been fully recovered, Fairfax Water may seek to be reimbursed, based on the employee's hourly rate, for the uncovered portion of advance sick leave unless such reimbursement is waived by the General Manager.

6.13.06 Granting Extraordinary Sick Leave

- A. When the above provisions relating to the granting of ordinary and advance sick leave do not allow sufficient leave for the illness or injury of a regular employee, and when the employee's Division Director/Manager and the Human Resources Manager believe that it is appropriate to do so, the General Manager may grant the employee extraordinary sick leave not to exceed one-half day for each month of service, unless an exception is determined by the General Manager.
- B. A Personnel Action Form will be prepared stating the circumstances and the need for such leave, the time and date when the accrued sick leave will be exhausted, the number of hours of extraordinary sick leave requested, and the date to which such leave will extend.

- C. An employee granted extraordinary sick leave is not required to reimburse Fairfax Water for such leave.

6.13.07 Debiting Sick Leave

The amount of sick leave to be debited is computed on the basis of the number of days or hours an employee is scheduled to work in the period when leave is taken.

6.13.08 Other Factors Relative to Sick Leave

- A. Employees may use sick leave for reasons outlined in this policy and will notify their respective supervisor at least two hours prior to their usual reporting time, if he/she is physically able to do so.
- B. A supervisor or designee may require documentation when an employee is requesting the approval of sick leave. Circumstances that may warrant additional information include, but may not be limited to:
 - (1) Sick leave requested before or after a holiday or other scheduled day off;
 - (2) Sick leave requested in excess of three consecutive work days; unless related to an approved FMLA status;
 - (3) When the employee's sick leave record reflects repetitious usage of short amounts of sick leave, unless related to an approved FMLA status;
 - (4) Other circumstances which raise questions about the validity of the request.
- C. Sick Leave Documentation may be required as follows:
 - (1) Medical certification from the employee's physician;
 - (2) Employees returning from extended sick leave will be required to obtain a release to return to work;
 - (3) A request for the employee to seek assistance through Fairfax Water's Employee Assistance Program may be made by the Division Director/Manager or Human Resources Manager.
- D. False or fraudulent use of sick leave may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- E. When an employee becomes sick while on annual leave, the employee may present a medical certification, giving the dates of illness or injury and may have that portion of annual leave converted to sick leave.

- F. Sick leave use for annual leave is not permitted and will be considered fraudulent use of sick leave when such use is discovered.**

6.14 UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCES

- A. An unapproved absence occurs when an employee is absent from duty without notifying or getting supervisory approval. When this type of absence occurs, non-exempt employees will not receive pay for the duration of the unauthorized absence. Additionally, all employees absent from work without approval may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Discipline may include unpaid disciplinary suspension. It is recognized that there may be extenuating circumstances for unauthorized absence and due consideration may be given.**
- B. Expiration of authorized leave occurs when an employee fails to report to work at the expiration of an authorized leave and that employee has not requested and received approval for an extension of an authorized leave. The employee will be considered to be on an unauthorized absence and may be considered to have abandoned his/her job.**
- C. Job Abandonment is an unauthorized absence. Fairfax Water expects employees to report to work on time for scheduled work shifts. An employee who is unable to report to work at the designated time is required to notify his/her supervisor in accordance with leave policies. Employees who fail to report to work for three consecutive days without notifying their supervisor of the absence will be considered as having constructively resigned or abandoned their job.**
- D. If an employee is unable to contact his/her supervisor due to extreme circumstances (such as a medical emergency or natural disaster that prohibits the employee from contacting the organization within three days), the employee or representative for the employee must contact Fairfax Water as soon as practical to explain the situation. In such extreme circumstances, the employer will consider the explanation and its timing before determining if the constructive resignation will be upheld.**