

## Chapter 5 - Time Off

Authority for rules promulgated in this chapter is found in §§24-50-104 (1)(g) and (7), 24-50-109.5, 1-6-122, 1-7-102, 8-13.3-101 through 104, 12-34-101.5, 13-71-119 and 134, 19-5-211, 24-10-103, 24-11-101 and 112, 24-32-2202 and 2223 through 2228, 24-34-402.7, 24-50-401(1), 28-1-102 through 106, 28-3-601 through 612, 31-30-1131, and 24-50 Part 3, C.R.S. Board rules are identified by cites beginning with "Board Rule".

### General Principles

- 5-1. Employees are required to work their established work schedule unless on approved leave. Employees are responsible for requesting leave as far in advance as possible. The leave request must provide sufficient information to determine the type of leave. (5/1/10)
- A. The appointing authority shall respect the employee's privacy rights when requesting adequate information to determine if family/medical leave (FML) is appropriate.
  - B. Appointing authorities are responsible for approving all leave requests and for determining the type of leave granted, subject to these rules and any additional departmental leave procedures. Departmental procedures shall be provided to employees.
  - C. Unauthorized use of any leave may result in the denial of paid leave and/or corrective or disciplinary action.
  - D. Requiring an employee to have a specified leave balance is prohibited except under a leave sharing program or a corrective or disciplinary action.
- 5-2. Paid leave is to be exhausted before an employee is placed on unpaid leave unless the reason for leave does not qualify for the type of leave available, or during a mandatory furlough. (5/1/10)
- 5-3. Departments shall keep accurate leave records in compliance with rule and law and be prepared to report the use of any type of leave when requested by the Director. (5/1/10)

### Accrued Paid Leave

- 5-4. Annual leave is for an employee's personal needs and use is subject to the approval of the appointing authority. The appointing authority may establish periods when annual leave will not be allowed, or must be taken, based on business necessity. These periods cannot create a situation where the employee does not have a reasonable opportunity to use requested leave that will be subject to forfeiture. If the department cancels approved leave that results in forfeiture, the forfeited hours must be paid before the end of the fiscal year. (5/1/10)
- 5-5. Sick leave is for health reasons only, including diagnostic and preventative examinations, treatment, and recovery. Accrued sick leave may be used for the health needs of the employee, employee's child who is under the age of 18 or an adult child who is disabled, parent, spouse, injured military service member as established under rule 5-20, legal dependent, or a person in the household for whom the employee is the primary care giver. The appointing authority may require documentation of the familial relationship. (1/1/14)
- A. Appointing authorities may send employees home and charge sick leave if an employee comes to work with what an appointing authority determines to be an illness or injury that either impacts the employee's ability to perform the job or the safety of others. Annual

leave shall be charged if sick leave is exhausted; unpaid leave if both annual and sick leave are exhausted.

B. Employees must provide a *State of Colorado Medical Leave Form* (or other official document containing the same information) for an absence of more than three consecutive full working days for any health reason. Appointing authorities have the discretion to require a Medical Leave Form for absences of less than three days when the appointing authority has a reasonable basis for suspecting abuse. (7/1/13)

1. This form (or other official document containing the same information) must be completed by a health care provider. The completed form must be returned within 15 days from the appointing authority's request. (7/1/13)
2. Failure to provide the form (or other official document containing the same information) shall result in denial of leave and possible corrective/disciplinary action. (7/1/13)

#### **Exhaustion of Leave and Administrative Discharge**

5-6. If an employee has exhausted all credited paid leave and is unable to return to work, unpaid leave may be granted or the employee may be administratively discharged by written notice following a good faith effort to communicate with the employee. Administrative discharge applies only to exhaustion of leave. (5/1/10)

- A. The notice of administrative discharge must inform the employee of appeal rights and the need to contact the employee's retirement plan on eligibility for retirement.
- B. An employee cannot be administratively discharged if FML or short-term disability leave (includes the 30-day waiting period) apply, or if the employee is a qualified individual with a disability under the ADA who can reasonably be accommodated without undue hardship.
- C. A certified employee who has been discharged under this rule and subsequently recovers has reinstatement privileges.

5-7. (7/1/13)

Monthly Leave Earning, Accrual, Payout, and Restoration for Permanent Employees							
Annual Leave				Sick Leave			
Years of Service*	Hrs./Mon.	Max. Accrual**	Payout	Hrs./Mon.	Max. Accrual*	Restoration	Payout
1st through 5th	8	192 hrs.	Upon termination or death, unused leave is paid out up to the maximum accrual rate.	6.66	360 hrs.	Previously accrued sick leave up to 360 hrs. is restored when eligible for reinstatement or reemployment.	Upon death or if eligible to retire, 1/4 of unused leave paid out to the maximum accrual rate. PERA's age and service requirements under the Defined Benefit plan are applied regardless of the plan actually enrolled in.
6th through 10th	10	240 hrs.					
11 <sup>th</sup> through 15th	12	288 hrs.					
16 <sup>th</sup> and above	14	336 hrs.					
* Years of service is computed from the 1st calendar day of the month following hire unless the employee began work on the 1st working day (then include that month). Employees with prior permanent state service, in or out of the state personnel system, earn leave based on the total whole months of service, excluding temporary assignments.				* Over-accrued sick leave up to 80 hrs. is converted to annual leave each 7/1 on a 5:1 ratio (5 hrs of sick converts to 1 hr. annual leave). An employee may have an individual maximum accrual rate that is greater than 360 hours if continuously employed in the state personnel system prior to 7/1/88 (6/30/88 accrual plus 360 hrs.).			
** Over-accrued amounts are forfeited each 7/1.							
<p><b>General Provisions:</b></p> <p>Employees must be at work or on paid leave to earn monthly leave. Leave is credited on the last day of the month in which it is earned and is available for use on the first day of the next month, subject to any limitations elsewhere in this chapter. A terminating employee shall be compensated for leave earned through the last day of employment.</p> <p>Part-time employees who work regular, non-fluctuating schedules earn leave on a pro-rated basis based on the percentage of the regular appointment, rounded to the nearest 1/100 of an hour. Leave for part-time employees who work irregular, fluctuating schedules and full-time employees who work or are on paid leave less than a full month is calculated by dividing the number of hours worked by the number of work hours in the pay period. The percentage is then multiplied by the employee's leave earning rate to derive the leave earned. Overtime hours are not included in leave calculations.</p> <p>Leave payouts at separation are calculated using the annualized hourly rate of pay (annual salary divided by 2080 hours for full-time employees).</p> <p>Borrowing against any leave that may be earned in the future or "buying back" leave already used is not allowed.</p> <p>Forfeiture of leave as a disciplinary action or a condition of promotion, demotion, or transfer is not allowed.</p> <p>Use of annual leave cannot be required for an employee being laid off.</p> <p>Make Whole: When an employee is receiving workers' compensation payments, accrued paid leave is used to make the employee's salary whole in an amount that is closest to the difference between the temporary compensation payment and the employee's gross base pay, excluding any pay differentials. Leave earning is not prorated when an employee is being made whole.</p> <p>STD: Employees are required to use paid leave during the 30-day waiting period for short-term disability benefits, including the use of accrued annual leave once sick leave has been exhausted. Any remaining sick leave beyond the 30-day waiting period must be exhausted prior to eligibility for benefits payments.</p>							

## Leave Sharing

- 5-8. Leave sharing allows for the transfer of annual leave between permanent state employees for an unforeseeable life-altering event beyond the employee's control, subject to the discretionary approval of a department head. Departments must develop and communicate their programs prior to use, including criteria for qualifying events. The authority to approve leave sharing shall not be delegated below the department head without advance written approval of the Director. (5/1/10)
- 5-9. Employees must have at least one year of state service to be eligible. Leave sharing is not an entitlement even if the individual case is qualified. Donated leave is not part of the leave payout upon termination or death. (5/1/10)
- A. Donated leave is allowed for a qualifying event for the employee or the employee's immediate family member as defined under rule 5-5. In order to use donated leave, the employee must first exhaust all applicable paid leave and compensatory time and must not be receiving short-term disability or long-term disability benefits. The transfer of donated leave between departments is allowed only with the approval of both department heads.

## Holiday Leave

- 5-10. Permanent full-time employees on the payroll when the holiday is observed are granted eight hours of paid holiday leave (prorated for part-time work or unpaid leave in the month) to observe each legal holiday designated by law, the Governor, or the President. Appointing authorities may designate alternative holiday schedules for the fiscal year. (5/1/10)
- A. Department heads have the discretion to grant employee requests to observe César Chávez day, March 31, in lieu of another holiday in the same fiscal year. The department must be open and at least minimally operational for both days and the employee must have work to perform.
- B. Each department shall establish an equitable and consistent policy to ensure that all permanent employees are awarded their full complement of holidays.

## Other Employer-Provided Leaves

- 5-11. The types of leave in this section do not accrue, carry over, or pay out. (5/1/10)
- 5-12. Bereavement leave is for an employee's personal needs and use is subject to the approval of the appointing authority. The appointing authority may provide up to 40 hours (prorated for part-time work or unpaid leave in the month) of paid leave to permanent employees at the time of death of a family member or other person. Employees are responsible for requesting the amount of leave needed. The appointing authority may require verification of the death. (7/1/13)
- 5-13. Military leave provides up to 15 paid workdays in a fiscal year to permanent employees who are members of the National Guard, military reserves, or National Disaster Medical Service to attend the annual encampment or equivalent training or who are called to active service, including declared emergencies. Unpaid leave is granted after exhaustion of the 15 workdays. The employee may request the use of annual leave before being placed on unpaid leave. (5/1/10)
- A. In the case of a state emergency, the employee must return upon release from active duty. In the case of federal service, the employee must apply to return and is entitled to the same position or an equivalent position, including the same pay, benefits, location, work schedule, and other working conditions. This leave is not a break in service.

- 5-14. Jury leave provides paid leave to all employees; however, temporary employees receive paid leave for a maximum of three days of jury leave. Jury pay is not turned over to the department. Proof may be required. (7/1/13)
- 5-15. Administrative leave may be used to grant paid time when the appointing authority wishes to release employees from their official duties for the good of the state. In determining what is for the good of the state, an appointing authority must consider prudent use of taxpayer and personal services dollars and the business needs of the department. Activities performed in an official employment capacity, including job-related training and meetings, voluntary training, conferences, participation in hearings or settlement conferences at the direction of the Board or Director, and job-related testimony in court or official government hearings required by an appointing authority or subpoena are work time and not administrative leave. Administrative leave is not intended to be a substitute for corrective or disciplinary action or other benefits and leave. (5/1/10)
- A. Administrative leave that exceeds 20 consecutive working days must be reported to the department head and the Director.
  - B. An appointing authority may grant administrative leave up to five days for local or 15 days for national emergencies per fiscal year to employees who are certified disaster service volunteers of the American Red Cross.
  - C. If a department head adopts a policy granting one period of administrative leave for the initial call up to active military service in the war against terrorism, it shall not exceed 90 days and applies after exhaustion of paid military leave. It is only used to make up the difference between the employee's base salary (excluding premiums) and total gross military pay and allowances. The employee must furnish proof of military pay and allowances. This leave does not apply to regular military obligations such as the annual encampment and training.
  - D. A department shall adopt a policy to address whether or not to grant administrative leave for employee participation in community or school volunteer activities.
- 5-16 Administrative leave must be granted for the following.
- A. Two hours to participate in general elections if the employee does not have three hours of unscheduled work time during the hours the polls are open.
  - B. Up to two days per fiscal year for organ, tissue, or bone donation for transplants.
  - C. To serve as an uncompensated election judge unless a supervisor determines that the employee's attendance on Election Day is essential. The employee must provide evidence of service.
  - D. Up to 15 days in a fiscal year when qualified volunteers or members of the Civil Air Patrol are directed to serve during a declared local disaster, provided the employee returns the next scheduled workday once relieved from the volunteer service.
- 5-17. Unpaid leave may be approved by the appointing authority unless otherwise prohibited. The appointing authority may also place an employee on unpaid leave for unauthorized absences and may consider corrective and/or disciplinary action. Probationary and trial service periods are extended by the number of days on unpaid leave and may be extended for periods of paid leave. Unpaid leave is calculated based on the monthly hourly rate. (1/1/14)
- A. Short-term disability (STD) leave is a type of unpaid leave of up to six months while either state or PERA STD benefit payments are being made. To be eligible for this leave, employees must have one year of service and an application for the STD benefit must be

submitted within 30 days of the beginning of the absence or at least 30 days prior to the exhaustion of all accrued sick leave. The employee must also notify the department at the same time that a benefit application is submitted.

- B. Voluntary furlough is unpaid job protection granted for up to 72 workdays per fiscal year when a department head declares a budget deficit in personal services. The employee may request such absence to avoid more serious position reduction or abolishment. Employees earn sick and annual leave and continue to receive service credit as if the furlough had not occurred.
- C. Victim protection leave is unpaid job protection granted for up to 24 hours (prorated for part-time employees) per fiscal year for victims of stalking, sexual assault, or domestic abuse or violence. An employee must have one year of state service to be eligible and have exhausted all annual and, if applicable, sick leave. All information related to the leave shall be confidential and maintained in separate confidential files with limited access. Retaliation against an employee is prohibited; however, this rule does not prohibit adverse employment action that would have otherwise occurred had the leave not been requested or used.

5-18. Parental Academic leave provides up to 18 hours (prorated for part-time) in an academic year for parents or legal guardians to participate in academic-related activities. Those activities are parent-teacher conferences; or meetings related to special education services, response to interventions, dropout prevention, attendance, truancy, and disciplinary issues. A department shall adopt and communicate a policy on whether the leave will be unpaid or paid. If paid, the policy shall address the amount and type of paid leave, specifically the substitution of annual leave or use of administrative leave. (5/1/10)

#### Family/Medical Leave (FML)

5-19. The state is considered a single employer under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and complies with its requirements, the Family Care Act, and the following rules for all employees in the state personnel system. Family/medical leave cannot be waived. (1/14/15)

5-20. FML is granted to eligible employees for: (1) birth and care of a child and must be completed within one year of the birth; (2) placement and care of an adopted or foster child and must be completed within one year of the placement; (3) the serious health condition of an employee's parent, child under the age of 18 or an adult child who is disabled, spouse, partner in a civil union, or registered domestic partner for physical care or psychological comfort; (4) an employee's own serious health condition; (5) active duty military leave when a parent, child, or spouse experiences a qualifying event directly related to being deployed to a foreign country; or, (6) military caregiver leave for a parent, child, spouse, or next of kin who suffered a serious injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty. Military caregiver leave includes time for veterans who are receiving treatment within 5 years of the beginning of that treatment. Definitions of a serious health condition and health care provider are in the "Definitions" section of the "Organization, Responsibilities, Ethics, and Definitions" chapter. (1/14/15)

5-21. To be eligible, an employee must have 12 months of total state service as of the date leave will begin, regardless of employee type. A state temporary employee must also have worked 1250 hours within the 12 months prior to the date leave will begin. Time worked includes overtime hours. (5/1/10)

- A. Full-time employees will be granted up to 520 hours per rolling 12 month period. The amount of FML is determined by the difference of 13 weeks and any FML leave taken in the previous 12 month period from date of the most recent request. The amount of leave is prorated for part-time employees based on the regular appointment or schedule. Any

extension of leave beyond the amount to which the employee is entitled is not FML and is subject to other rules in these chapters. This section 5-21 A is effective July 1, 2014.

- 5-22. Military caregiver leave is a one-time entitlement of up to 1040 hours (prorated for part-time) in a single 12-month period starting on the date the leave begins. While intermittent leave is permitted, it does not extend beyond the 12-month period. In addition, the combined total for military caregiver and all other types of FML shall not exceed 1040 hours. (5/1/10)
- 5-23. All other types of leave, compensatory time, and make whole payments under workers' compensation run concurrently with FML and do not extend the time to which the employee is entitled. The employee must use all accrued paid leave subject to the conditions for use of such leave before being placed on unpaid leave for the remainder of FML. An employee on FML cannot be required to accept a temporary "modified duty" assignment even though workers' compensation benefits may be affected. (7/1/13)
- 5-24. Unpaid leave rules apply to any unpaid FML except the state continues to pay its portion of insurance premiums. An employee's condition that also qualifies for short-term disability benefits must comply with the requirements of that plan.
- 5-25. Employer Requirements. It is the appointing authority's responsibility to designate and notify the employee whether requested leave qualifies as FML based on the information provided by the employee, regardless of the employee's desires. Departments shall follow all written directives and guidance on designation and notice requirements. (5/1/10)
- 5-26. Employee Requirements. Written notice of the need for leave must be provided by the employee 30 days in advance. If an employee becomes aware of the need for leave in less than 30 days in advance, the employee shall provide notice either the same day or the next business day. Failure to provide timely notice when the need for leave is foreseeable, and when there is no reasonable excuse, may delay the start of FML for up to 30 days after notice is received as long as it is designated as FML in a timely manner. Advance notice is not required in the case of a medical emergency. In such a case, an adult family member or other responsible party may give notice, by any means, if the employee is unable to do so personally. (5/1/10)
- 5-27. The employee shall consult with the appointing authority to: establish a mutually satisfactory schedule for intermittent treatments and a periodic check-in schedule; report a change in circumstances; make return to work arrangements, etc. (5/1/10)
- 5-28. Employees shall provide proper medical certification, including additional medical certificates and fitness-to-return certificates as prescribed in Rules 5-29 through 5-32. If the employee does not provide the required original and additional medical certificates, the leave will not qualify as FML and will be denied. (5/1/10)

#### **Medical Certificates**

- 5-29. When seeking FML, employees must provide a completed State of Colorado Medical Certification Form. Appointing authorities have the discretion to require medical certification to determine if FML applies or when the appointing authority has a reasonable basis for suspecting abuse. Medical certification for FML may be required for the first leave request each fiscal year. Additional medical certification may be required every 30 days or the time period established in the original certification, whichever is longer, unless circumstances change or new information is received. (7/1/13)
  - A. The medical certification must be completed by a health care provider as defined in federal law. The completed medical certification must be returned within 15 days from the appointing authority's request. (7/1/13)

- B. Failure to provide the medical certification shall result in denial of leave and possible corrective/disciplinary action. (7/1/13)
- 5-30. When incomplete medical certification is submitted, the employee must be allowed seven days to obtain complete information, absent reasonable extenuating circumstances. (7/1/13)
- A. Only the human resources director or FMLA coordinator in the department's human resource office and/or statewide leave coordinator designated by the Director may have direct contact with an employee's health care provider following the seven days or sooner with the employee's written permission. Such contact is limited to verifying the authenticity and clarifying the content of the medical certification. (7/1/13)
- 5-31. When medical certification is submitted to demonstrate that the leave is FML-qualifying, the department has the right to request a second opinion on the original certification. If the original and second opinion conflict, the department may require a binding third opinion by a mutually agreed upon health care provider. Under both circumstances the cost is paid by the department. Second and third opinions are not permitted on additional certification for recertification purposes. (7/1/13)
- 5-32. If an absence is more than 30 days for the employee's own condition, the employee must provide a fitness-to-return certificate. The fitness-to-return certificate may be required for absences of 30 days or less based on the nature of the condition in relation to the employee's job. The department may also require a fitness to return certificate from employees taking intermittent FML every 30 days if there are reasonable safety concerns regarding the employee's ability to perform his or her job duties. (7/1/13)
- A. When requested, employees must present a completed fitness-to-return certificate before they will be allowed to return to work. Failure to provide a fitness-to-return certificate as instructed could result in delay of return, a requirement for new medical certification, or administrative discharge as defined in Rule 5-6. (7/1/13)
- 5-33. Benefits coverage continues during FML. If the employee is on paid FML, premiums will be paid through normal payroll deduction. If the FML is unpaid, the employee must pay the employee share of premiums as prescribed by benefits and payroll procedures. (5/1/10)
- 5-34. Upon return to work, the employee is restored to the same, or an equivalent, position, including the same pay, benefits, location, work schedule, and other working conditions. If the employee is no longer qualified to perform the job (e.g., unable to renew an expired license), the employee must be given an opportunity to fulfill the requirement. (5/1/10)
- A. If the employee is no longer able to perform the essential functions of the job due to a continuing or new serious health condition, the employee does not have restoration rights under FML and the appointing authority may use Rule 5-6 subject to any applicable ADA provisions.
  - B. The employee does not have restoration rights if the employment would not have otherwise continued had the FML leave not been taken, e.g., discharge due to performance, layoff, or the end of the appointment.
- 5-35. FML does not prohibit adverse action that would have otherwise occurred had the leave not been taken. (5/1/10)



- 5-36. The use of FML cannot be considered in evaluating performance. If the performance plan includes an attendance factor, any time the employee was on FML cannot be considered. (5/1/10)
- 5-37. Records. Federal law requires that specified records be kept for all employees taking FML. These records must be kept for three years. Any medical information must be maintained in a separate confidential medical file in accordance with ADA requirements and chapter 1. (5/1/10)
- 5-38. Injury Leave. A permanent employee who suffers an injury or illness that is compensable under the Workers' Compensation Act shall be granted injury leave up to 90 occurrences (whole day increments regardless of the actual hours absent during a day) with full pay if the temporary compensation is assigned or endorsed to the employing department. (5/1/10)
- A. If after 90 occurrences of injury leave an employee still is unable to work, the employee is placed on "make whole", using sick leave first, then annual leave. Once all paid leave is exhausted, employees may be given unpaid leave. Workers' compensation payments after termination of injury leave shall be made to the employee.
  - B. The appointing authority may invoke Rule 5-6 if the employee is unable to return to work after exhausting all accrued paid leave and applicable job protection. Termination of service under that rule will not affect continuation of payments under the Workers' Compensation Act.
  - C. If the employee's temporary compensation payment is reduced because the injury or occupational disease was caused by willful misconduct or violation of rules or regulations, the employee shall not be entitled to or granted injury leave. Any absence shall be charged on a "make whole" basis or, at the appointing authority's discretion, unpaid leave may be granted and the temporary compensation payments shall be made to the employee.
  - D. If an employee has a compensable injury or illness, but the first 24 hours are not paid for by the provider, the employee shall not be entitled to or granted injury leave for those 24 hours.
  - E. If a holiday occurs while an employee is on injury leave, the employee receives the holiday and the day is not counted as an injury leave occurrence.