



POLICY

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Policy Title	EMPLOYEE LEAVES OF ABSENCE				

Council Resolution	GMCS	CC	Cross Reference	Effective
No. 59-07 Date: February 13, 2007			HR 004/HR 011	January 1, 2007

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for Leaves of Absence for Parkland County employees as outlined in this policy.

POLICY

Parkland County provides leaves of absence (LOA) for illness, family matters, bereavement, maternity / parental and other types of leave as specified below.

Where a collective agreement varies from the provisions of this policy, the collective agreement reference prevails.

PROCEDURES

Parkland County establishes the administrative provisions for each of the types of leave, and coordinates benefits with the carriers in support of leaves where applicable.

1. SICK LEAVE

- a. With the exception of Emergency Communication Centre (ECC) staff, permanent full-time employees accumulate 1-½ days per month of sick leave. This leave is for employees who are unable to work due to personal illness or injury. Maximum accumulation for sick leave is 120 days or specified in the Collective Agreement (where applicable).
- b. Permanent part-time employees accrue sick leave credits in proportion to the number of hours they are regularly scheduled to work.
- c. Permanent full-time ECC employees accrue twelve (12) hours of sick leave per month, to a maximum accumulation of nine hundred (900) hours. Permanent part-time ECC employees accrue sick leave credits in proportion to the number of hours they are regularly scheduled to work.
- d. When the maximum sick leave credit is accrued, there is no further accumulation until the total accumulation is reduced below the maximum.
- e. Employees using their sick leave credits will be paid according to their Regular Earnings.
- f. The number of days/hours of paid sick leave will be deducted from their accumulated credits, up to the total of accumulated credits at the time sick leave commenced.
- g. If sick leave credits are used entirely, and the employee is unable to return to work, they may apply for the appropriate income protection plan (EI Sickness Benefits or Long Term Disability) for which they are eligible.
- h. Sick leave and vacation credits are not accrued for any period of illness/injury or Leave of Absence in excess of thirty (30) calendar days. This includes periods of paid sick leave and/or LTD.
- i. Employees may be required to provide satisfactory evidence of illness, from a licensed physician in order to receive sick leave benefits. Management may waive this requirement in extenuating circumstances.
- j. Sick leave credits are also used for the purpose of traveling to or attending medical and dental appointments or treatments.

- k. If an employee becomes ill while on authorized vacation leave, they may use sick leave credits in place of vacation leave if they provide evidence of a minimum three-day period of hospitalization; and/or restricted bed rest ordered by a physician.
- l. If an employee becomes ill prior to the commencement of a scheduled vacation, and provides evidence of a minimum three-day period of hospitalization; and/or restricted bed rest ordered by a physician, they may use sick leave credits if the illness continues into the vacation period. In this event the vacation can be canceled and rescheduled.
- m. All permanent employees are eligible for this benefit, accessible from their start date of employment, provided they have a sufficient accumulation of sick leave in their bank.

2. FAMILY LEAVE

- a. An employee will be provided with up to five (5) days leave each calendar year for attending to illness in the employee's immediate family, or for attending dental, optical, or medical appointments with them. This may include a critical illness in an employee's immediate family. A medical certificate may be required indicating that the employee's presence is necessary. (See the definition below, under Bereavement leave, for immediate family).
- b. Days taken as family leave are to be recorded as such, and are deducted from the employee's sick bank. These days are not carried over from year to year.
- c. All permanent employees are eligible for this benefit, accessible from their start date of employment, provided they have a sufficient accumulation of sick leave in their bank.

3. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- a. An employee will be provided with up to three (3) working days in the event of the death of a member of an employee's immediate family. An employee may be provided with up to two (2) working days for travel time if required. The Manager, General Manager, or County Commissioner shall approve such leave(s).
- b. Immediate family is defined as: spouse, children, stepchildren, parent (in-law), brother/sister (in-law), son/daughter (in-law), grandparent, grandchildren, or relative who is a member of the employee's household.
- c. If an employee experiences the death of a family member while on authorized vacation leave, they may use bereavement leave in place of vacation leave as per the above. Bereavement leave replacing vacation leave may be used only after the employee has returned home.
- d. Bereavement leave up to one (1) calendar day per year may be granted in the event of a death of a person other those listed above.
- e. All permanent employees are eligible for this benefit, accessible from their start date of employment.

4. COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

- a. Employees are eligible for up to eight (8) weeks of unpaid leave to provide care and support to a gravely ill or dying person as defined by Employment Standards.
- b. During this unpaid leave, employees may apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits for compassionate care.
- c. All requests must be made in writing, and include a medical certificate stating there is a significant risk of death within 26 weeks.
- d. Group benefits and pension will be maintained for the duration of the leave provided that the employee pays their share of premiums.
- e. All employees are eligible for this benefit, accessible from their start date of employment.

5. JURY / WITNESS DUTY

- a. An employee's regular rate of pay is maintained for normally scheduled days of work when attending jury selection or acting as a juror, or when subpoenaed as a witness, provided that any fees paid are assigned to Parkland County.
- b. All permanent employees are eligible for this benefit, accessible from their start date of employment.

6. MATERNITY / PARENTAL LEAVE

The general conditions pertaining to unpaid leave of absence for maternity / parental leave shall be in accordance with the Employment Standards Code. The following provisions are also provided:

- a. Birth mothers are eligible to take up to 52 weeks unpaid Maternity/Parental leave.
- b. Adoptive parents and fathers are eligible to take up to 37 weeks unpaid Parental Leave. Parental Leave may be taken by one parent or shared between two parents but the total combined leave cannot exceed 37 weeks.
- c. Employer paid group benefits and pension are only available for the health-related portion of the maternity leave.
- d. If the employee wishes to maintain benefits for the remainder of the leave, they will be required to pay 100% of the premiums.
- e. Pension contributions may be continued or suspended for the non-health related portion of the leave. If the employee opts to continue pension contributions after the health-related portion of the leave, the employer is also required to make contributions for up to one year of all combined leaves. If the employee chooses to discontinue contributions, they will be given the opportunity to purchase the service upon return to work.
- f. Employees returning from leave shall either be reinstated in their former position or be provided with a comparable position.
- g. Permanent employees are eligible to access the Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB) Plan.
- h. A father is granted one day of leave (with pay) to attend the birth of his child, should it occur on a regularly scheduled workday.
- i. All employees are eligible for this benefit, provided they have worked for the County for 52 consecutive weeks.

7. SUPPLEMENTARY UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT (SUB) PLAN

- a. This Plan covers permanent staff who qualify for Maternity Leave above.
- b. The Plan is to supplement Employment Insurance (EI) benefits received by an employee for temporary unemployment caused by a health-related reason related to pregnancy during maternity leave. The SUB shall only be payable for days on which the employee would have worked had she not been absent for the health-related portion of maternity leave. Verification of the health-related portion by a physician is required. Fees (greater than \$25) associated with the employer's forms for this purpose may be reimbursed.
- c. In order to receive payment under the SUB Plan an employee must complete the pre-delivery and post-delivery SUB plan forms.
- d. The total amount of SUB benefits and EI benefits will not exceed 95% of the employee's weekly regular earnings.
- e. The Plan will be financed by the employer's general revenues. There will be no deduction from sick leave bank.
- f. The SUB will be paid for the duration of absence from duties for a health-related reason related to pregnancy during maternity leave while in receipt of EI benefits up to a maximum value of days equal

to the employee's sick leave entitlement or fifteen (15) weeks, whichever is the lesser. After ninety (90) consecutive calendar days of disability the employee may be eligible for Long Term Disability Insurance benefits.

- g. While an employee is on the health-related portion of maternity leave benefits and pension contributions will be maintained, provided that the employee pays their share of benefits.
- h. Payments in respect of guaranteed annual remuneration or in respect of deferred remuneration or severance pay benefits will not be reduced or increased by payments received under the Plan.

8. OTHER LEAVE(S)

- a. Employees attending their own wedding, convocation or graduation from a post-secondary institution may be granted one (1) day, with pay, providing the event occurs on a working day.
- b. Applications for leave of absence without pay for up to five (5) consecutive days (other than those specified previously) must be made in writing and are subject to approval by the Department Manager, Assistant General Manager or General Manager (as applicable). Applications for leave of absence without pay in excess of five (5) consecutive days (other than those specified previously) must be made in writing and are subject to approval by the County Commissioner.
- c. Any application for leave of absence with pay, regardless of duration, (other than those specified previously), must be made in writing and may be granted at the discretion of the County Commissioner.
- d. The employee shall not work for gain during the period of leave of absence except with the express consent of the County Commissioner.
- e. Employees on leave of absence without pay are not eligible for statutory holidays.
- f. Vacation and sick leave credits will not accrue during a leave without pay.

Leaves of absence (for any reason) greater than six months will result in anniversary date changes as specified in Policy HR 004 – Salary Administration, and Policy HR 011 – Employee Vacation.