

Memo to: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders

UH-Downtown/PS 02.A.13

From: William Flores, President

Issue No. 4

Effective date: 03/25/2015

Subject: Leave Without Pay Policy

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1. PURPOSE

This PS outlines the guidelines regarding leave of absence without pay for eligible University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) employees.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Benefits-eligible employee: An employee who is employed to work at least 20 hours per week for at least 4.5 continuous months, excluding students employed in positions that require student status as a condition of employment.

3. POLICY

3.1 Leave of absence without pay may be granted to benefits-eligible UHD employees for purposes of education or research and writing, in order to enhance the employee's contribution to the institution. Also, benefits-eligible employees requesting leave for personal reasons may qualify depending upon the circumstances.

3.2 Approval also will be contingent upon the department's ability to satisfactorily reschedule the workload. Such leaves are the prerogative of the University and are not an inherent right of employment.

3.3 In cases where a benefits-eligible employee or a member of his/her immediate family is being treated for a serious health condition, leave of absence without pay may be approved or the employee may qualify for leave under [PS 02.A.11, Family and Medical Leave Policy](#).

3.4 Leave without pay cannot be authorized until leave time for which the employee is eligible has been exhausted with the exception of workers' compensation. Sick leave may only be used as described in [SAM 02.D.01, Vacation and Sick Leave](#).

3.5 Employees unable to return to work on the specified return date must provide documentation for an extension which is acceptable to the appropriate administrative officer. This documentation should be submitted prior to the expiration of the original leave or as soon as possible thereafter. Failure to comply with the conditions of the leave will result in forfeiting the privileges of the leave and may be considered as voluntary resignation of employment.

3.6 Employees on leave of absence without pay are governed by the following rules and regulations:

- 3.6.1 Leaves will be limited in duration to twelve months and shall have specific effective dates
- 3.6.2 Seniority is not interrupted, but pay increases and associated benefits are
- 3.6.3 Vacation and sick leave do not accrue and employees are not eligible for holiday pay
- 3.6.4 As required by State law, all accrued paid leave entitlements must be exhausted; sick leave may be used only if the employee is eligible for sick leave
- 3.6.5 Group insurance may be continued provided that the payment of full premiums is paid by the employee. Payments must be paid directly to [ERS](#). During the leave period, the employee will be responsible for payment of the total premium since the monthly state contribution ceases for any full calendar month of leave, unless the employee is on approved Family and Medical Leave. Upon returning to work, the employee will be automatically enrolled in basic health only; optional coverages such as Life Insurance, Short Term Disability or Long Term Disability will require proof of insurability.
- 3.6.6 Teacher Retirement or Optional Retirement programs are suspended unless provided by another eligible employer and are automatically reinstated upon the employee's return to work; however, faculty members should contact Employment Services and Operations (ESO) regarding options for continued participation in Teacher Retirement.
- 3.6.7 Funds cannot be withdrawn from Teacher Retirement or Optional Retirement programs.
- 3.6.8 Social security coverage ceases unless the employee is covered by another employer.
- 3.6.9 Tax deferred annuities become inactive.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Requests for extended leave of absence without pay may be initiated through the employee's supervisor.
 - 4.1.1 The request should outline the purpose of the leave.
 - 4.1.2 The request should include the specific start date and return date of the leave.

- 4.1.3 The leave request should be submitted in advance allowing sufficient time for administrative consideration and/or the appointment of temporary replacement if necessary.
- 4.1.4 Upon approval by the immediate supervisor, the request will be forwarded to the department/unit manager, and the appropriate Vice President.
- 4.1.5 A copy of the approved/disapproved request will be submitted to Employment Services and Operations for the employee's personnel file.
- 4.2 A Personnel Action Request (ePAR) must be submitted through the normal approval process to place the employee on leave of absence without pay prior to the effective date of the leave. For leave of absences that are Family and Medical Leave, ESO will initiate the ePAR.
- 4.3 An employee approved for leave of absence without pay should contact ESO immediately to discuss benefits during the leave.
- 4.4 Employees approved for extended leave of absence without pay (4.5 months or longer) must complete the separation clearance process as outlined in [PS.02.A.22, Termination Clearance Guidelines](#).
- 4.5 The employee must contact the supervisor prior to returning to work.
 - 4.5.1 A mutually acceptable return date must be agreed upon if not done at the start of the leave.
 - 4.5.2 If the leave was for medical reasons, the employee must provide an acceptable doctor's release to ESO in order to return to work.
 - 4.5.3 A Personnel Action Request (ePAR) must be initiated by the employing department to return the employee to active status.

5. EXHIBITS

There are no exhibits associated with this policy.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Vice President for Employment Services and Operations

Review: Every three years on or before April 1st.

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

7. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 04/25/94

Issue #2: 09/20/06

Issue #3 04/05/11

8. REFERENCES

UH SAM 02.D.03

[UH SAM 02.D.01](#)

[PS.02.A.22](#)

[PS 02.A.11](#)