



TITLE

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**SCOPE**

Provincial

**DOCUMENT #**

1110

**APPROVAL AUTHORITY**

Corporate Services & Human Resources Executive Committee

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**SPONSOR**

People, Legal and Privacy

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Not Applicable

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January 01, 2021

**NOTE:** The first appearance of terms in bold in the body of this document (except titles) are defined terms – please refer to the Definitions section.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the information in this document, please contact the Policy & Forms Department at [policy@ahs.ca](mailto:policy@ahs.ca). The Policy & Forms website is the official source of current approved policies, procedures, directives, standards, protocols and guidelines.

## OBJECTIVES

- To outline the requirements for unpaid and paid leaves of absence for Alberta Health Services' (AHS) employees.

## PRINCIPLES

AHS may grant employees leaves of absence (with or without pay) to participate in or attend to personal and/or educational obligations. A leave request must be approved before a leave commences. **Managers** will balance an individual's needs with AHS' staffing and operational requirements when considering whether to approve leave requests.

## APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this policy is required by all AHS employees. Applicable collective agreements, *Non-Union Exempt Employees Terms and Conditions of Employment*, or written employment contracts take precedence in the case of a conflict with this policy.

## ELEMENTS

### 1. Approval Requirements

- 1.1 Except as outlined in an applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, written employment contract, or applicable legislation, employees must complete one (1) year of continuous employment prior to being considered for a leave of absence.
- 1.2 Notwithstanding section 1.1, employees must complete 90 days of continuous employment prior to being considered for leaves of absence pertaining to compassionate care, maternity/parental, adoption, personal and family

responsibility, bereavement, long-term illness and injury, domestic violence, citizenship ceremony, death or disappearance of a child, or critical illness, pursuant to the *Employment Standards Code* (Alberta).

- 1.3 Employees requesting a non-medical leave of absence must submit a request to their manager for approval through e-People Employee Self-Service, in accordance with the applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or written employment contract. The request for leave must include the:
  - a) reason for the leave;
  - b) leave begin date;
  - c) anticipated return date; and
  - d) expected due date (for maternity leaves only).
- 1.4 For medical leaves of absence, the employee shall contact the manager.
- 1.5 Commencing or overstaying a leave of absence without approval may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## 2. Non-discretionary Leave Approvals

- 2.1 Leaves of absence pertaining to court appearance, jury duty, reservist duty, and any leaves listed in section 1.2 will be granted in accordance with the *Employment Standards Code* (Alberta), other applicable legislation and relevant collective agreements.
- 2.2 For leave requests pertaining to living organ and surgical bone marrow donation please see the *Living Organ Donor Wage Replacement Policy*.

## 3. Discretionary Leave Approvals

- 3.1 Each request for a leave of absence will be assessed on its own merit by the respective manager and approved in accordance with the *Delegation of Approval Authority* policy. Criteria to determine the appropriateness of approving a leave of absence request include, but are not limited to:
  - a) the terms of the applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or written employment contract;
  - b) operational ability to ensure the ongoing provision of patient/client service;
  - c) ability to find coverage within the work unit (where necessary);
  - d) number of concurrent requests within the work unit;
  - e) impact on other staff in the work unit;

- f) value of the extended leave to the organization (e.g. education leave);
  - g) value of the extended leave to the individual employee (e.g. education or extended bereavement leave);
  - h) duration of the leave;
  - i) season impacts (e.g. staff shortfalls can occur during Christmas and summer); and
  - j) any exceptional circumstances.
- 3.2 If a non-medical leave of absence request is denied, the manager will indicate so using e-People Manager Self-Service, which will trigger an automatic notification to the employee of the denial. The manager will include the rationale for denying the request in the comments tab of the leave of absence request in e-People.
- 3.3 **Extended leaves** are typically approved as unpaid time off from work. A paid extended leave may be granted:
- a) in extenuating circumstances only and with approval from the applicable Vice President (or above) in consultation with Human Resources; or
  - b) as outlined in an applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or written employment contract.

#### 4. Accruals

- 4.1 Except where limited by the applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, written employment contract, or applicable legislation, employees must use all accrued vacation time, statutory holiday time, overtime, and any other applicable banks of time prior to commencing discretionary leaves of absence.
- 4.2 Use of accrued time is not required prior to commencing leaves of absence specified in sections 1.2 and 2.1, or educational leaves.
- 4.3 Accruals of vacation, sick, and statutory holiday cease after 30 calendar days of unpaid leave, subject to applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or written employment contract.

#### 5. Returning to Work

- 5.1 Employees must confirm their intent to return to work from a leave of absence in accordance with the applicable collective agreement, terms and conditions of employment, or written employment contract.
- 5.2 Employees not returning as agreed from a leave of absence or extended leave may be deemed to have abandoned their employment with AHS.

## 6. Working While on a Leave of Absence

- 6.1 Working for financial gain while on a leave of absence without the written approval of the respective **department's** manager is not permitted and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

### DEFINITIONS

**Department** means any department, division, unit, program, portfolio, section or service within the AHS organizational structure.

**Extended leave** means a leave of absence anticipated to be in excess of 30 consecutive calendar days and starts on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of a leave of absence. A leave of absence may be either paid or unpaid.

**Manager** means the individual(s) who has the delegated human resource authority for directly planning, monitoring, and supervising direct (employee) reports.

### REFERENCES

- Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
  - *Delegation of Approval Authority (#1168)*
  - *Delegation of Human Resources Authority Matrix*
  - *Living Organ Donor Wage Replacement Policy (#1182)*
- Alberta Health Services Resources:
  - *Collective Agreements*
  - *Non-Union Exempt Employees Terms and Conditions of Employment*
  - *e-LOA: View and Manage an Employee's Non-Medical Leave of Absence Status and 'Return from Leave'*
  - *e-LOA: Approve and Manage an Employee's Non-Medical Leave of Absence Request*
  - *e-LOA: Submit and Manage Your Non-Medical Leave of Absence Request*
  - *e-LOA: View Your Non-Medical Leave of Absence Status and Confirm Your 'Return From Leave'*
- Non-Alberta Health Services Documents:
  - *Employment Standards Code (Alberta)*

### VERSION HISTORY

Date	Action Taken
June 27, 2016	Non-substantive change
January 1, 2018	Revision effective date (Posted January 2, 2018)
February 13, 2018	Non-substantive change
April 3, 2019	Non-substantive change