

FAMILY LEAVE

Every employee of the district who has worked for the district at least one year and for at least 1,250 hours in the preceding year is entitled to twelve (12) workweeks of family leave during any twelve (12) month period to:

- A. Care for a newborn child, an adopted child of the employee who is under the age of eighteen at the time of placement for adoption, or a newly placed foster child; or
- B. Care for a spouse, parent or child of the employee who has a serious health condition, or the employee may obtain leave for a personal health condition if it renders the employee unable to perform his or her job.
- C. Respond to a qualifying exigency occurring because the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent is on active duty or has been notified of pending active duty in support of a contingency operation.

Leave taken for newborn or adopted child care shall be completed within one year after the date of birth or placement for adoption. Family leave authorized under this policy must be taken full-time and consecutively unless an alternative schedule is approved by the superintendent or where intermittent or reduced leave is medically necessary. Instructional staff may not take reduced or intermittent leave when it would constitute 20% of the number of working days in the period during which the leave would extend without the approval of the superintendent. An instructional employee may be transferred to an alternative equivalent position that would accommodate reduced or intermittent leave, if such a position is available.

A period of family leave is in addition to any sick leave taken due to the employee's temporary disability attributable to pregnancy or childbirth, pursuant to the Policy 5402, Maternity Leave.

If both parents of a newborn or newly adopted child are employed by the school district, they shall be entitled to a total of twelve workweeks of family leave during any twelve month period, and leave shall be granted to only one parent at a time. There is no pooling effect for spouses if the family leave is related to a serious health condition.

The superintendent may require written verification from the employee's health care provider.

The district may obtain the opinion of a second health care provider, at district expense, concerning any information pertinent to the employee's leave request. If the opinions of the health care providers differ on any matter determinative of the employee's eligibility for family leave, the two health care providers shall select a third provider, whose opinion, obtained at the employer's expense, shall be conclusive.

Military Caregiver Leave

An employee who is the spouse, son or daughter, parent or next of kin of a service member who is recovering from a serious illness or injury sustained while on active duty is entitled to twenty six (26) weeks of unpaid leave in a 12 month period to care for the service member.

Return to Work

Any employee returning from an authorized family leave shall be entitled to the same position held by the employee when the leave commenced, or to a position with equivalent benefits and pay.

Reinstatement of an employee returning from family leave need not occur if: a) the specific job is eliminated by a bona fide restructuring, or a reduction-in-force resulting from lack of funds or lack of work, b) an employee on family leave takes a position with another employer outside the home, or c) the employee fails to provide the required notice of intent to take family leave or fails to return on the established ending date of leave. If an employee fails to return from family leave, the district may recover the costs of the employee's health benefits paid during the leave. Instructional staff may be required to delay their return from family leave to the beginning of the next semester under the following circumstances:

- A. The employee began leave five or more weeks before the end of the semester, the leave is for more than three weeks, and the employee would otherwise return to work within three weeks of the end of the semester.
- B. The employee began family leave (except for a personal health condition) less than five weeks before the end of the semester, the leave is for more than two weeks, and the employee would otherwise return to work within two weeks of the end of the semester.
- C. The employee began family leave (except for a personal health condition) three or fewer weeks before the end of the semester and the period of leave are more than five working days.

Legal References: Ch. 49.78 RCW Family Leave
 Ch. 296-134 WAC Family Leave
 P.L. 103-3 Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

Adoption Date: 01.30.14
Southside School District
Classification: Essential