

## **G. Leaves of Absence**

The Clinic provides leaves of absence without pay to eligible employees who wish to take time off from work duties for medical reasons or to fulfill personal obligations. Employees in one of the following employment classifications who have been employed by the Clinic for six months or more are eligible to request personal leave as described in this policy:

- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

As soon as an eligible employee becomes aware of the need for a personal leave of absence, they should request a leave from the Owner or Practice Manager. If the amount of time is insufficient, consideration will be given to a request for an extension. An employee may take any available accrued vacation as part of the approved period of leave.

The Clinic will discontinue vacation accrual and holiday pay during an employee's unpaid leave of absence.

The Clinic will continue to provide employee pet discounts to eligible employees for a maximum of 90 days from the start of leave.

Health insurance benefits for eligible employees will continue for a maximum of 90 days from the start of leave. Employees will continue to be responsible for paying their employee portion and any added dependent portion of their health insurance premium while on leave. The employee must make arrangements for payment through the personnel department prior to beginning leave without pay.

When the employee returns from leave, all benefits provided before the employee went on leave will again be provided by the Clinic unless the employee's job classification has changed, thus affecting their eligibility for benefit programs.

When a personal leave ends, every reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same position, if it is available or to a similar available position for which the employee is qualified. However, the Clinic cannot guarantee reinstatement in all cases.

If an employee fails to report to work promptly at the expiration of the approved leave period, the Clinic will assume the employee has resigned.

Some examples of personal leave are defined below. Other examples of personal leave may include medical or care of a family member. These examples may not be all types of personal leave that might be eligible for leave of absence. It is up to the Owner's discretion to determine what qualifies as an excused leave of absence.

Below are options for accounting for time off for a leave:

- a.) Employees may use accrued vacation time for their leave time.

- b.) If an employee does not have enough accrued vacation time to cover this requirement, then this time should be taken unpaid.
- c.) If an employee does not want to use his/her vacation time, a voluntary leave of absence (unpaid) may be granted.

NOTE: It is assumed and encouraged that an employee will use all available accrued vacation towards their leave of absence prior to taking voluntary leave of absence without pay in order to continue receiving maximum benefits for which they are eligible.

Any employee of the Clinic who is absent from the workplace for six consecutive months will be terminated. No leave of absence may exceed six consecutive months for any reason unless required by law. This policy applies to all the Clinic's employees, regardless of the reason(s) for their absence from work.

Decisions regarding the Clinic employees who are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (the ADA) and require as a reasonable accommodation a leave of longer than six consecutive months will be made based on medical documentation provided by the employee's healthcare provider. Such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Before returning to work after a medical leave of absence, the employee must provide written certification from their physician that they have been medically released to return to work. If there are restrictions on what they can do at work, those must also be listed on the medical release.

## **1. Jury Duty/Witness in Court Case Leave**

An employee will be permitted time away from work to meet the terms of a summons or subpoena served to him/her for jury duty or as a witness. If you are summoned for either of these, your time off for this purpose will be categorized as an "excused" absence.

Employees are required to fill out a Schedule Change Request form stating the dates they are scheduled for jury duty or to be a court witness. If employees are required to take off longer than originally recorded on the Schedule Change Request form, they must let the Owner or Practice Manager know of the change. When they return, they need to fill out another Schedule Change Request form for the extra days spent at court.

Employees must show the jury duty summons/court summons to the Owner or Practice Manager as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to accommodate their absence. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Either the Clinic or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in the Clinic's judgment, the employee's absence would create serious operational difficulties. You will be expected to cooperate with the Clinic in making such a request, if necessary.

## **2. Bereavement Leave**

In the event of a death in your immediate family, you will be granted up to three (3) days off with pay for bereavement leave, subject to the discretion of the Owner or Practice Manager. The determination to grant bereavement leave as well as the number of days allowed will be based on a number of factors, including, but not limited to such things as amount of travel involved, workload at the Clinic, and/or relationship to the deceased. Evidence of the need for bereavement leave may be requested.

For purposes of this policy, “immediate family” includes: your spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, or grandparent.

Bereavement leave will not be paid for a day when the employee would have otherwise not been scheduled to work. For example, an employee who is normally scheduled to be off on a Monday would not receive bereavement leave pay for that day should the employee's bereavement leave include a Monday. In the same manner, employees already on vacation leave or other leave at the time of death of immediate family member would not qualify for bereavement leave as the leave was already planned and in action of being taken.

### **3. Military Leave**

When an employee belonging to the Reserves, National Guard, or one of the Armed Forces has to spend time in active duty, they must inform the Owner or Practice Manager promptly upon receipt of notice for military service.

When the employee returns to work, the Clinic must be provided with an appropriate voucher which records the dates spent on duty.

### **4. Pregnancy-Related Absences**

The Clinic will not discriminate against any employee who requests an excused absence for medical disabilities associated with a pregnancy. Such leave requests will be made and evaluated in accordance with the personal leave policy provisions outlined in this handbook and in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws.