

Category: 300

Number: 363

Subject: **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

1. **PURPOSE:** It is the purpose of this policy to establish a system of uniform and appropriate regulations for employee leaves of absence.
2. **AUTHORITY:** The Saginaw County Board of Commissioners.
3. **APPLICATION:** The rules and regulations herein set forth apply to all employees paid by Saginaw County, pursuant to Policy # 301.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY:** The Controller/CAO of Saginaw County shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy. It shall be the responsibility of Department Heads, and Agencies of Saginaw County to administer this policy.
5. **DEFINITIONS:** NONE
6. **POLICY:**
  - 6.1 **Policy.** Leaves of absence may be approved for employees who request time off for personal reasons. Leaves of absence are without pay and benefits unless otherwise specified in the County personnel policies or collective bargaining agreement. Employees shall first be required to utilize any Paid Time Off (PTO) available to them prior to requesting or taking an approved leave of absence. However, employee may elect to maintain a maximum balance of no more than forty (40) hours in his/her bank through the leave of absence, if requested and granted through the Benefit Division of the Controller's Office prior to approval of the leave of absence. All employee benefits shall remain in place so long as PTO is being utilized by the employee. Leaves of Absence to pursue other employment opportunities are prohibited.
  - 6.2 **Approval.** Department Heads are encouraged to approve leave requests based upon the merit of the request and the work requirements of the department. Leaves of absence are granted at the sole discretion of the Employer. All leaves of absence of 31 days or more must be approved by the Controller. Requests for a leave of 30 calendar days or less must be approved by the Department Head.
  - 6.3 **Military Leave.** The County shall observe the provisions of the Federal regulations regarding re-employment rights and leaves of absence.
    - 6.3.1 In addition, the County adopts the following additional benefits in response to the War on Terrorism. These benefits may continue up to two years, or until the involuntary service ends, whichever comes first.

- 6.3.1.1 The County will grant a leave of absence to an employee who is reporting for full-time active federal military service.
- 6.3.1.2 The employee, while on active duty, continues to accrue “years of service” credit, as if the employee were on continuous service with the County. The returning veteran will be entitled to the same privileges that would have been granted had the employee not entered military service.
- 6.3.1.3 The veteran must apply for re-instatement within ninety days of release under honorable conditions or ninety days following hospitalization associated with active duty. (The hospitalization may be up to one year after release.)
- 6.3.1.4 The County will pay the difference between regular salary and military pay for employees who are called up to active duty from the National Guard or Reserves, or who are involuntarily inducted. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide the Personnel Department with their military pay vouchers.
- 6.3.1.5 For employees who are involuntarily inducted or for National Guard or Reserve call-up, insurance benefits for the employee and his/her dependants will be continued with the employee making the normal contribution, if military health insurance is not immediately available.
- 6.3.1.6 Annual leave will continue to accumulate for the first six months of active duty.
- 6.3.1.7 An employee, as a member of the County’s retirement plan at the time of entry into active military service, will receive retirement credit for the time in military service as if it were County service with the employee making the normal contributions, if applicable.
- 6.3.1.8 The following actions must be taken by the employee prior to beginning active duty, or within two weeks upon beginning active duty, and after release from active duty:
  - 6.3.1.8.1 Notify the Department Head upon receipt of official military orders to report to full-time duty and provide a copy of the induction notice or military orders.

6.3.1.8.2 The Department Head arranges for an exit interview with the Personnel Director, if time allows.

6.3.1.8.3 Apply for re-instatement within ninety days of release from active duty to the Personnel Department.

6.3.1.8.4 Present a copy of the official discharge or separation papers to the Personnel Department.

6.3.1.9 This policy applies to employees who are members of the National Guards or Reserves who are called up to active duty or for employees who are involuntarily inducted for their first tour of duty. It does not apply to non-active duty service such as the normal two weeks per year training commitment normally required of Reserve personnel.

6.4 Special Leave. An employee may request a special leave of absence for any reason not specified elsewhere subject to approval in accordance with Section 6.2.

6.5 Extension. An employee may request an extension of a leave of absence for any reason not specified elsewhere subject to approval in accordance with Section 6.2.

6.6 Benefits. No PTO or vacation leave shall accrue to an employee during an unpaid leave of absence. Coordination of Health, Dental, Optical and Life Insurance benefits during an unpaid leave of absence shall follow applicable continuation of insurance language in Employee Insurance Policy, # 343, Section 6.7.5.

6.7 Continuous Length of Service. Time spent on leave of absence shall be included as continuous length of service, if the leave does not extend beyond 180 days. Leaves extending beyond 180 days shall not be included in continuous length of service, except Military Leaves in compliance with federal law.

6.8 Return From Leave of Absence. When granted a leave of absence the employee commits himself to returning to work immediately at the end of the leave. If an employee fails to return to work immediately at the expiration of a leave of absence, or extension thereof, the failure to return shall be considered a resignation from County employment.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES: None.

8. CONTROLLER/CAO LEGAL COUNSEL REVIEW: The Controller/CAO has determined that this policy as submitted to the Board of Commissioners contains the necessary substance in order to carry out the purpose of the policy. County Civil Counsel has determined that this policy as submitted contains content that appears to be legal activities of the Saginaw County Board of Commissioners.

Approved as to Substance:  
Saginaw County Controller/CAO

Approved as to Legal Content:  
Saginaw County Civil Counsel

ADOPTED: April 23, 2002

AMENDED: October 25, 2005; November 20, 2018