

# Georgia Highlands College

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|-------------------|--|----------------------|---------------|
| <b>Policy</b>     | Sick Leave                               | <b>Number</b>        | HR.352        |
| <b>Section</b>    | Human Resources                          | <b>Date Created</b>  | Prior to 2012 |
| <b>Subject</b>    | Employment Benefits, Leaves and Services | <b>Date Reviewed</b> | February 2015 |
| <b>Applies to</b> | Employees                                | <b>Date Issued</b>   | March 2015    |

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## See Also:

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Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)  
Vacation/Annual Leave  
Military Leave  
Educational and Professional Leave  
Personal Leave Without Pay  
Miscellaneous  
Employment Classifications

## Leaves of Absence

For various reasons an employee may be absent from work. This policy defines Sick Leave.

### 1. Sick Leave with Pay

#### 1.1. Eligibility

- 1.1.1. Regular employees scheduled to work 20 to 40 hours per week shall earn paid sick leave.
- 1.1.2. A regular employee scheduled to work 40 hours shall earn paid sick leave at the rate of 8 hours per month. The accrual rate for sick leave for an hourly employee will be based upon the standard work commitment.
- 1.1.3. A regular employee scheduled to work 20 hours or more but less than 40 hours shall accrue sick leave prorated based on full-time employment.
- 1.1.4. Academic year and 12-month faculty shall earn paid sick leave at the rate 8 hours per month.
- 1.1.5. Academic year faculty (10-month) teaching during the summer months will earn sick leave. Full-time summer employment has been determined to be 9 credit hours. Faculty teaching 9 credit hours will accrue 8 hours paid sick leave per month. Faculty teaching fewer than 9 credit hours will accrue paid sick leave on a prorated basis.
- 1.1.6. An employee scheduled to work less than one-half time (20 hours) shall not be eligible to accrue sick leave.
- 1.1.7. Temporary employees are not eligible to earn paid sick leave.
- 1.1.8. The use of approved sick leave must be recorded on institutional leave records. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

#### 1.2. Approval of Sick Leave

- 1.2.1. Sick leave may be approved at the discretion of the College and upon approval by the supervisor for an employee's absence for any of the following reasons:
  - illness or injury of the employee
  - medical and dental treatment or consultation
  - quarantine due to a contagious illness in the employee's household
  - illness, injury, or death in the employee's nuclear family or the employee's parent requiring the employee's presence, where nuclear family is defined as legal spouse (does not include common law spouse or domestic partner) and children (including stepchildren, adopted children, or children for whom the employee assumes legal guardianship)
  - bereavement leave
- 1.2.2. Absenteeism or tardiness that is unexcused or excessive in the judgment of Georgia Highlands College is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### 1.3. Sick Leave Procedure

- 1.3.1. If an employee is unable to work because of illness, he or she must promptly notify his or her supervisor or department head.
- 1.3.2. If an employee is able to anticipate using sick leave for more than one (1) workweek or five (5) working days, he/she should notify Human Resources and the supervisor as soon as practicable. Note: This is to the employee's advantage because some types of leave pay take several weeks to process (i.e. short-term disability).
- 1.3.3. For sick leave extending beyond one (1) day, the employee must notify his/her supervisor or department head each day of absence, unless granted an authorized medical leave for which different notification procedures apply.
- 1.3.4. For sick leave extending beyond one (1) workweek or five (5) working days, the supervisor or department head must notify Human Resources so eligibility for Family Medical Leave can be reviewed.
- 1.3.5. If sick leave is claimed for a continuous period for more than one (1) workweek or five (5) working days, a physician's statement is required to permit further claim of sick leave rights by the employee-patient.
- 1.3.6. An employee returning to work after being absent for more than one (1) workweek or five (5) working days must provide to Human Resources a return-to-work statement from a physician. The College also reserves the right to require the employee to submit to an examination by a physician indicating the employee is able to return to work.
- 1.3.7. The College may require the employee to either submit a physician statement or to be examined by a College-designated physician in other instances at its discretion, such as where policy abuse is suspected (e.g., where an employee's record indicates a pattern of short absences and/or frequent absences before or after holidays and weekends).
- 1.3.8. Upon return to work, the employee must record the sick time used in the appropriate system (i.e. ADP Self-Service eTime portal). Failure to record sick time used is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### 1.4. Disposition at Termination or Transfer

- 1.4.1. A terminating employee shall not accumulate sick leave or be entitled to receive sick pay after the last working day of employment.
- 1.4.2. Upon the transfer of an employee among USG institutions, accumulated sick leave will be transferred if there is no actual break in service. If there is a break in service, sick leave is forfeited.
- 1.4.3. Upon retirement, employees participating in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be able to apply their sick leave balance toward service time as dictated by TRS guidelines and regulations.
- 1.4.4. All other terminating employees forfeit accrued sick leave.

## 2. Sick Leave without Pay

- 2.1. Any employee unable to return to work after exhausting all accumulated sick leave and accrued vacation leave may be granted sick leave without pay for a period not to exceed one (1) year.
- 2.2. The employee must request in writing approval for sick leave without pay. The request should be submitted in writing to Human Resources who will route it to the President for consideration. Failure to request Sick Leave without Pay will be considered a resignation of employment.
- 2.3. If sick leave without pay is approved, the employee will be given the opportunity to continue his/her health benefits at the employee's expense, and the institution will continue its share of the cost for such period. All other benefits are prohibited which otherwise would accrue to the employee.

- 2.4. Employees seeking sick leave without pay must contact Human Resources to arrange for payment of the employee portion of medical benefits. Payments must be made at least monthly. Failure to submit timely payments will result in termination of benefits.