

**Sick Leave Usage  
Frequently Asked Questions  
Updated September 16, 2009**

Frequently, questions arise about the appropriate use of different types of leave for Classified and Administrative employees. This guide is arranged in a Question and Answer format with points for Classified or Administrative employees, where the leave usage differs by employee type. References are made to the Classified and Administrative Staff Handbooks found at [www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/resources](http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/resources) with current page references as of this writing.

**Sick Leave (page 102 Classified Staff Handbook); (page 56 Administrative Staff Handbook)**

Q Can sick leave be used for care of a family member or to take a family member to the doctor?

A Yes, note that the definition of an immediate family member differs slightly between Administrative and Classified Staff. See page references above for those definitions.

Q Can sick leave be used for absence due to the death in the family?

A Yes, sick leave may be used to cover absences due to a death in the immediate family. Note that definition of immediate family can be found on page 57 of the Administrative Staff Handbook or on page 102 of the Classified Staff Handbook. This leave is limited to ten (10) days. Sick leave may also be used to attend the funeral of a friend. This leave is limited to one day or 8 hours.

Q Can sick leave be used to cover late arrivals?

A Generally, no, unless the reason for the late arrival was due to an illness of the employee or a member of the immediate family.

Q Can sick leave be used in conjunction with Family Medical Leave (FMLA)?

A Yes. Family Medical Leave provides protection for the employee's job and benefits while caring for his/her serious medical condition, the serious medical condition of a parent, child or spouse or the adoption/birth of a child; however, it does not provide for payment to the employee during an absence. Refer to the following page for more information on FMLA [www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/benefits/page11364/html](http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/benefits/page11364/html). Also see page 49 of the Administrative Staff Handbook or page 96 of the Classified Staff Handbook. Sick leave provides for pay while an employee is absent and can be used concurrently with FMLA.

Q If my employee has exhausted his/her sick leave balances and continues to call in sick, or if he/she seems to call in sick after every pay day, what can I do?

A Generally, if an employee has exhausted all sick leave balances and continues to call in sick, or if there is a pattern of sick leave usage, performance and productivity are impacted. For this reason, you may need to consider developmental or disciplinary

measures to correct the behavior and or request the position be released for fill. Please call HR at 2-2228 or 2-2113 for assistance.

**Personal Leave ( page 100 Classified Staff Handbook; page 55 Administrative Staff Handbook)**

Q My employee wants to use personal time to cover a late arrival. Is this an appropriate use of personal leave?

A No. Personal leave is similar to vacation time, in that it must be approved prior to use by the supervisor.

Q Can personal leave be used in conjunction with vacation time?

A Yes, so long as the leave request is approved by the supervisor in advance of its usage. As a reminder, note that personal time may only be used in increments of one (1) hour.

**Vacation Leave (page 113 Classified Staff Handbook; page 59 Administrative Staff Handbook)**

Q My employee says that I must approve a vacation request, even though doing so will leave my unit short staffed. Must I approve this request?

A No. Vacation time must be requested in advance of its usage by the supervisor. Supervisors may deny vacation requests if they interfere with the operation of the work unit.

Q My employee wants to use vacation time to cover a scheduled doctor's appointment. Is this an appropriate use of vacation time?

A Yes, if the employee wishes to use vacation time to cover a doctor's appointment and receives prior approval from the supervisor. Note that employees do not have to disclose the nature or purpose of the vacation time request, so long as it is approved in advance.

**Compensatory Time ( page 38 Classified Staff Handbook; Administrative employees are not entitled to compensatory time)**

Q My employee arrives a half hour early each day. Must I pay him/her for this time?

A If your employee is a member of the Classified staff, the answer is yes. If your employee is a member of the Administrative staff, the answer is no. Remember, as the supervisor, you set the work hours. You may need to remind your Classified Staff member to arrive shortly before the regularly scheduled start time.

Q Must I pay my Classified Staff member for staying over just fifteen (15) minutes to finish a project at my request? .

A Yes. Please remember working over must be approved by the supervisor. In addition, overtime is considered for full time classified to be anything over 40 hours in a work week. , If the staff member stays over on his/her own, you may need to remind him/her of the regular end time of the work day

Q Our department really cannot afford to pay our Classified Staff members for required overtime. Is it OK to give them compensatory time instead?

A No. The Fair Labor Standards Act requires that the employee determine how overtime is recorded. That is, the employee may choose pay or compensatory time. If you can not afford the overtime pay, then you must ask yourself if the work requires any overtime.

Q My employee has requested to use compensatory time to cover a late arrival. Is this an appropriate use of comp time?

A No. Compensatory Time is similar to vacation time, in that it must be approved in advance by the supervisor.

### **Leave Without Pay (LWOP)**

Q My employee wants to “reserve” his/her vacation time for a later date and is requesting leave without pay to attend a family gathering. Is this an appropriate use of LWOP?

A No. Leave without pay is to be used only when the employee has exhausted all other available paid leaves. Leave without pay may be granted at the discretion of the supervisor, not the employee. *Leave without pay should not be used for the purpose of reserving other forms of leave.* Use of Leave without pay in this manner increases the cost of operations and decreases productivity.

Q What is the difference between LWOP (Leave Without Pay) and AWOL (Absent Without Leave)?

A LWOP is approved leave that the supervisor grants when no paid leave balances are available. AWOL is *unapproved* leave and may be subject to disciplinary action. You may wish to call HR at 2-2228 or 2-2113 for assistance to discuss the appropriate type of leave in a particular circumstance.