

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental)

Program Overview

It is our mission to provide the highest quality services to the employees of the Polk County Public Schools (PCPS) as efficiently and as cost effectively as possible. We are committed to retain as many experienced employees as possible. It is our intention to provide employees the information necessary to assist them during times they may need to be out for medical purposes.

Program Explanation

The Leave of Absence program run by Risk Management is designed to assist PCPS employees who are temporarily unable to work due to a serious personal illness/injury or the serious illness/injury of a family member. The Risk Management Department strives to ensure employees out due to a medical necessity are placed on the appropriate leave of absence as timely as possible in an attempt to eliminate the possibility of an overpayment to the employee.

Program Goals

- To provide accurate leave information to PCPS employees.
 - To ensure PCPS employee leave requests are processed in a timely basis following receipt of the request.
 - To timely communicate with employee's work location (i.e. principal, principal secretary, or director) informing of the employee's leave request and the status of request (approval/denial).
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Types of Leave Available

- Leaves processed by Risk Management
 - Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
 - Medical Leave
 - Parental Leave
 - Leaves processed by Employee Relations (*please contact Employee Relations with any questions*)
 - Charter Leave
 - Personal Leave
 - Teacher Intern w/Benefits
 - Educational Leave
 - Military Leave
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Reasons an Employee May Request FMLA, Medical Leave or Parental Leave

Family Medical (FMLA), Medical or Parental leave can be requested by an employee for several reasons, but not limited to:

- Maternity/Paternity
 - Adoption or Foster Care
 - Serious health condition of self or family member - spouse, son, daughter, or parent
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Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), cont'd

Reasons an Employee May Request FMLA, Medical or Parental Leave, cont.

- Care of the employee's in-laws (must be a member of their household) or members of their household (*This option is only available under Medical Leave*)
 - Military – Qualifying Military Exigency or Service Member (*This option is provided under FMLA and would only be available to employees who are deemed eligible for FMLA*)
 - To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin.
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What is FMLA?

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a United States federal law requiring covered employers to provide employees job-protected and unpaid leave for qualified medical and family reasons. Qualified medical and family reasons include: personal or family illness, family military leave, pregnancy, adoption, or the foster care placement of a child.

FMLA provides qualified employees with up to twelve (12) workweeks (sixty (60) working days) or 26 workweeks of military caregiver leave in a single twelve (12) month period of unpaid, job-protected leave a year, and requires group health benefits to be maintained during the leave as if the employees continued to work instead of taking leave.

Who is eligible for FMLA?

Who is eligible for FMLA?

- Per Federal law employees must meet the following requirements to be eligible for FMLA.
 - Must have been employed with the District for at least twelve (12) months in the last seven (7) years.
 - Must have worked at least 1250 hours in the twelve (12) months immediately preceding the leave request.
 - **CBA-bargained employees** meeting the hours requirement for FMLA may take up to twelve (12) workweeks of FMLA during a school year.
 - **Non-CBA bargained employees** meeting the hours requirement for FMLA may take up to twelve (12) workweeks of FMLA during a single twelve (12) month period.
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How often can an employee request FMLA?

An employee may request FMLA at any time but per federal law may take no more than twelve (12) workweeks (sixty (60) working days) or 26 workweeks of military caregiver leave within the period designated above.

Can an employee take an intermittent leave of absence?

Intermittent leave is available only for employees eligible for FMLA. **Intermittent leave is NOT available under Medical or Parental Leave.**

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), *cont'd*

What is a Medical Leave?

Employees may be granted up to one (1) year of medical leave for illness to themselves or members of their households.

What is a Parental Leave?

A parental leave of absence may be granted for the purpose of child rearing to commence at the birth of a child or the date of the adoption of a child and may continue for up to twelve (12) months.

Whose responsibility is it to request leave paperwork?

While ultimately it is the employee's responsibility to notify the District and request the appropriate paperwork for a leave of absence the District and the employee's work location must also do its due diligence. **Regardless if an employee has accumulated leave or not if an employee misses work at least three (3) consecutive days for medical purposes the work location needs to immediately notify Risk Management via email at leaveofabsence.pcsb@polk-fl.net or call 863-519-3858 opt. 4.** Upon Risk Management's notification the appropriate leave paperwork will be sent to the employee mailing address on file.

Why is it important to notify Risk Management?

Timely notification of an employee's need for a leave of absence is vitally important to avoid potential payroll overpayment. Employees have **fifteen (15) calendars days** from the date the leave forms are sent to return the forms to Risk Management. **If an employee does not submit the paperwork within this period they may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.**

Can employees obtain the leave forms on their own?

Yes, the employee can email Risk Management at leaveofabsence.pcsb@polk-fl.net or call 863-519-3858 opt. 4 for a *Leave of Absence Request Form*.

What information must an employee communicate to their work location?

Employees must communicate with their work location informing them of their impending need for a leave of absence. This communication is important as it allows the employees work location to prepare if a substitute is required during the employees absence. Employees are not required to disclose to work location the nature (i.e. condition) of leave request.

What should I do if an employee returns leave forms to work location?

If an employee returns their *Leave of Absence Request Form* to their work location please fax this information to Risk Management at **863-519-3740** and send in the original via courier to Risk Management route E. Please have the employee keep a copy of forms for their records. **DO NOT EMAIL THESE FORMS.** As a reminder PCPS email is subject to Public Record requests and these forms contain personal medical information.

Should I create an epaf?

No, DO NOT process an epaf. The Risk Management employee processing the leave request will create the appropriate epaf's related to an employee's leave request.

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), cont'd

What can I expect from Risk Management?

Following receipt of an employee's leave request you can expect the following from Risk Management.

- Employee's request to be processed within 2-3 business days
 - Upon processing Risk Management will notify via email the employees work location of the following:
 - Leave approval/denial
 - Anticipated return date of employee (if known)
 - If employee is approved for intermittent FMLA you will be provided with an estimate of the amount of time employee may miss work.
 - Notification will be sent to the employee informing them of their leave approval/denial and their anticipated return date.
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Approved Leave Effective Date

An employee's leave of absence approval date is determined by documentation provided by their physician. For example, if an employee's physician indicates an employee is unable to work on a specific date leave approval will be granted effective this date. Employees granted a FMLA, medical or parental leave have the option to utilize any available paid leave days (sick, personal chargeable to sick, and/or vacation) concurrently with their approved leave. Utilization of an employee's accumulated leave does not alter the effective date of leave. If employee exhausts or does not have any accumulated leave, employee becomes inactive in SAP and is placed on unpaid leave.

Intermittent Leave

Intermittent leave is only available if employee is eligible for FMLA and leave request is FMLA qualifying. Approved intermittent leave requests are granted only for the period of time indicated and are not open ended. Intermittent leave requests for chronic conditions or conditions with an unknown end date may be granted intermittent for a maximum twelve (12) months. If an intermittent leave needs changes (i.e. frequency of absence or employee needs to be out completely) during their approved leave time employee must submit updated medical information to Risk Management for review. **If you feel an employee is missing more time for FMLA purposes than indicated in the approval email please contact Risk Management immediately. Risk Management will request medical recertification as allowed per FMLA regulations**

Keying Designated Intermittent Leave

Employees with an approved intermittent FMLA leave are responsible for informing their work location if an absence is for FMLA purposes or non-FMLA purposes. For example, an employee with intermittent FMLA for asthma flare-ups would be able to designate absences related to a flare-up for FMLA purposes but would be unable to designate an absence as FMLA related if they are out for the flu. Employees on intermittent leave are allotted the same sixty (60) days of FMLA leave time as an employee completely out on FMLA leave. If an employee exhausts their maximum allotted days of FMLA they may be subject disciplinary action up to and including termination. To ensure accurate accountability of

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), cont'd

Keying Designated Intermittent Leave, cont.

used FMLA time it is vital that designated FMLA days are keyed appropriately in SAP (TCode: CAT2 – Time Sheet: Intial Screen).

Intermittent FMLA Wage Types for CATS

- 0153 – FMLA unpaid
- 0190 – FMLA sick leave
- 0191 – FMLA vacation leave

Employees with an approved intermittent FMLA as with any missed work time must complete an *Employee Application for Leave*. Any days the employee misses related to an approved intermittent FMLA must be properly designated on their completed *Employee Application for Leave* days not properly designated will not be protected by FMLA from potential disciplinary action. Below is an example of how to appropriately designate a day for FMLA.

The School Board of Polk County, Florida
EMPLOYEE APPLICATION FOR LEAVE



DATE 06/24/2019
 NAME Susie Doe EMP. NO. 000000
 POSITION HELD Teacher
 NAME OF SCHOOL, AREA OR DEPARTMENT GJHS

In compliance with §1012.61, Florida Statutes, and the Policies of the School Board of Polk County, I hereby make an application for compensation due me on account of absence:

Employee utilizing sick pay must still complete this box.

Employee must mark this box to designate time as FMLA.

Employee must mark this box to designate time as intermittent FMLA

Employees without accumulated pay must select this box if they have intermittent FMLA and are out.

	DATE(S)	TOTAL HOURS	(Office Use Only) INPUT DATE/INITIAL	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sick Leave* <i>If being used concurrently with an approved FMLA, Medical or Parental Leave, please check here <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></i>		No. Days: Hours:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Leave of Absence – Chargeable to Sick Leave		No. Days: Hours:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Vacation* <i>If used concurrently with an approved FMLA, Medical or Parental Leave, check here <input type="checkbox"/></i>		No. Days: Hours:		
Intermittent FMLA Leave <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paid Intermittent <input type="checkbox"/> Unpaid Intermittent <i>Must have an approved FMLA established with Risk Management.</i>		No. Days: Hours:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bereavement Leave <i>Attach appropriate documentation.</i>		No. Days: Hours:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Leave Without Pay ** May not exceed 3 days		No. Days: Hours:		
** If claiming Personal Leave Without Pay, provide details of emergency necessitating the absence:				
For questions regarding compensation, please refer to your Polk County Public Schools Employees Handbook. * If application is for sick leave please indicate the appropriate reason for which the absence was necessary: I certify that the absence was necessary due to: <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Illness or Illness or Death of My <input type="checkbox"/> Father, <input type="checkbox"/> Mother, <input type="checkbox"/> Brother, <input type="checkbox"/> Sister, <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse, <input type="checkbox"/> Child, <input type="checkbox"/> Other Close Relative, or <input type="checkbox"/> Member of own household.				

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), *cont'd*

Keying Absences for Approved FMLA

If an employee will be completely out of work on an approved FMLA leave of absence it is important to know if the employee will be utilizing any accumulated sick or vacation leave they have available.

Employee will be using accumulated sick/vacation leave:

- Calculate how much time the employee will be utilizing and use the following codes when keying time in CAT2.
 - 0190 – FMLA Sick Leave
 - 0191 – FMLA Vacation Leave (12 month employees only)
- As a reminder you should only key time thru the end of the current month. If the employee has time that will go into future months you **MUST** wait until that month to key the time.
- If the employee will be out beyond the time they have accumulated leave Risk Management will create an epaf to place the employee in an inactive status.
- Payroll cutoff:
 - If the employee has enough accumulated leave thru the end of the month - verify time has been keyed with the appropriate codes designated above.
 - If the employee does not have enough accumulated leave thru the end of the month - verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA- Unpaid Family Medical* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key 0153 – FMLA Unpaid from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
- Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**

Employee has accumulated sick/vacation leave but will not be utilizing it:

- Email Risk Management at leaveofabsence.pcsb@polk-fl.net of the employees decision to not utilize their accumulated leave.
- An epaf will be created by Risk Management to place the employee inactive in SAP.
- Payroll cutoff:
 - Verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA- Unpaid Family Medical* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), *cont'd*

Keying Absences for Approved FMLA, *cont.*

- If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key 0153 – FMLA Unpaid from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
- Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**

Employee does not have accumulated sick/vacation leave:

- Leave processed prior the the payroll deadline
 - Upon processing the leave request Risk Management will create an epaf to place the employee inactive in SAP.
 - Payroll cutoff:
 - Verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA- Unpaid Family Medical* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key 0153 – FMLA Unpaid from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
 - Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**
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Keying Absences for Approved Medical Leave

If an employee will be completely out of work on an approved Medical leave of absence it is important to know if the employee will be utilizing any accumulated sick or vacation leave they have available. **Please note employees in AFSCME positions must utilize their accumulated sick and vacation leave.**

Employee will be using accumulated sick/vacation leave:

- Calculate how much time the employee will be utilizing and use the following codes when keying time in CAT2.
 - 0162 – Sick Leave
 - 0188 – Vacation Leave (12 month employees only)
- As a reminder you should only key time thru the end of the current month. If the employee has time that will go into future months you **MUST** wait until that month to key the time.
- If the employee will be out beyond the time they have accumulated leave Risk Management will create an epaf to place the employee in an inactive status.

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), cont'd

Keying Absences for Approved Medical Leave, cont.

- Payroll cutoff:
 - If the employee has enough accumulated leave thru the end of the month - verify time has been keyed with the appropriate codes designated above.
 - If the employee does not have enough accumulated leave thru the end of the month - verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA-Unpaid Medical Leave* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key 0152 – Personal Chg w/o Pay from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
- Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**

Employee has accumulated sick/vacation leave but will not be utilizing it (option only available for non-AFSCME positions):

- Email Risk Management at leaveofabsence.pcsb@polk-fl.net of the employees decision to not utilize their accumulated leave.
- An epaf will be created by Risk Management to place the employee inactive in SAP.
- Payroll cutoff:
 - Verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA-Unpaid Medical* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key 0152 – Personal Chg w/o Pay from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
 - Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**

Employee does not have accumulated sick/vacation leave:

- Leave processed prior the the payroll deadline
 - Upon processing the leave request Risk Management will create an epaf to place the employee inactive in SAP.

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), cont'd

Keying Absences for Approved Medical Leave, cont.

- Payroll cutoff:
 - Verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA- Unpaid Family Medical* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key0152 – Personal Chg w/o Pay from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
 - Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**
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Keying Absences for Approved Parental Leave

If an employee will be completely out of work on an approved Parental leave of absence it is important to know if the employee will be utilizing any accumulated sick or vacation leave they have available.

Employee will be using accumulated sick/vacation leave:

- Calculate how much time the employee will be utilizing and use the following codes when keying time in CAT2.
 - 0162 – Sick Leave
 - 0188 – Vacation Leave (12 month employees only)
- As a reminder you should only key time thru the end of the current month. If the employee has time that will go into future months you **MUST** wait until that month to key the time.
- If the employee will be out beyond the time they have accumulated leave Risk Management will create an epaf to place the employee in an inactive status.
- Payroll cutoff:
 - If the employee has enough accumulated leave thru the end of the month - verify time has been keyed with the appropriate codes designated above.
 - If the employee does not have enough accumulated leave thru the end of the month - verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA- Unpaid Medical Leave* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key 0152 – Personal Chg w/o Pay from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.

Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), *cont'd*

Keying Absences for Approved Parental Leave, *cont.*

- Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**

Employee has accumulated sick/vacation leave but will not be utilizing it

- Email Risk Management at leaveofabsence.pcsb@polk-fl.net of the employees decision to not utilize their accumulated leave.
- An epaf will be created by Risk Management to place the employee inactive in SAP.
- Payroll cutoff:
 - Verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA- Unpaid Medical* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key 0I52 – Personal Chg w/o Pay from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
 - Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**

Employee does not have accumulated sick/vacation leave:

- Leave processed prior to the payroll deadline
 - Upon processing the leave request Risk Management will create an epaf to place the employee inactive in SAP.
 - Payroll cutoff:
 - Verify the action placing employee on unpaid leave has been finalized by checking SAP IT0000 (Actions) in TCode PA20 Displace HR Master Data. An action for *LOA- Unpaid Family Medical* will be created for the employee's first unpaid day.
 - If action has been finalized – No further action is needed.
 - If no action has been finalized – In CAT2 key0I52 – Personal Chg w/o Pay from the employee's last working day through the end of the current month.
 - Verify the employee's employees paycheck is correct and the employee is not being overpaid. The employee should only get paid for days worked that month. **Contact Payroll immediately if it appears the employee is being overpaid.**
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Leave of Absence (FMLA/Medical/Parental), *cont'd*

What should I do if employee is out and leave has not been processed yet?

Employees have fifteen (15) days from the date they are sent leave request forms to return them to Risk Management.

- If an employee has not returned their completed forms or their leave request is not processed prior to the payroll cutoff and you know the employee will not be returning prior to the end of the month you need to key the appropriate time through the end of the month.
 - 0152 – Personal Chrg w/o pay
 - 0162 – Sick Leave
 - 0188 – Vacation Pay (twelve (12) month employees only)
- When running your Gross to Net report you want to verify employees out on unpaid leave of absence do not receive a paycheck and employees with a leave of absence in process are not being overpaid.

Returning from Leave of Absence

Employees returning from FMLA, Medical, or Parental leave must contact Risk Management and submit the appropriate documentation within 7 days of their anticipated return. (This information must be received whether the employee is out on a paid or unpaid leave of absence.) **Employees should not be allowed back to work unless Risk Management has received the appropriate paperwork.**

Required Documentation:

- Out for personal medical – must submit a note from physician releasing employee to return to work. If employee has any restrictions they must be verified by Risk Management that the work location is able and willing to accommodate prior to employee being allowed to return.
- Out for family member medical – must submit a note from employee stating the date they will be returning.
- Maternity/Parental – must submit a note from physician releasing employee to return to work along with a note stating the date employee will be returning.
- Paternity/Parental – must submit a note from employee stating the date they will be returning.
- Bus Drivers and Bus Attendants must submit a completed return to work release form signed by physician.

Who do I contact with questions regarding a leave of absence?

If you or an employee have any questions regarding FMLA, Medical, or Parental leaves please contact Risk Management at 863-519-3858 opt 4 or via email at leaveofabsence.pcsb@polk-fl.net.
