

# Paid Time Off (PTO) - FAQ



Effective Jul 1, 2021, employees are no longer required to distinguish between sick and personal leave when entering an absence. Instead, those two types of leave are now combined into a single 'PTO Leave' (paid time off). PTO does provide employees with more flexibility on how they use their earned leave within the parameters outlined in the professional agreements and also addressed below.

## Q: What is Paid Time Off (PTO)?



PAID TIME OFF (PTO) may be used for illness, accident, or recuperation from the same for the employee or a member of their immediate family, and personal leave for business matters which cannot be scheduled outside the school/work day. PTO is a combination of what was previously called sick and personal leave. PTO cannot be combined with Leave Without Pay.

## Q: How much PTO do I accumulate annually?



Employees will earn 11 PTO days (prorated by FTE) per year. This 'replaces' the 10 sick + 1 personal. The days will be earned as follows: 3 days in Sep & 1 day each month, Oct-May.

## Q: Is PTO pro-rated for part-time employees?



Yes. PTO, bereavement, and sabbatical, for part-time benefit eligible employees shall be prorated according to the percent of full-time equivalency and is the only leave allowed for part-time educators.

## Q: Is there still a sick bank for employees? If so, how is that impacted by PTO?



Yes. The sick leave program will not change and to be eligible to participate you will need to donate one PTO day to the pool.

# PTO - FAQ (Cont.)

## **Q: If an employee does not use all 11 days, do they roll over to the next year?**

Yes. Just like sick leave previously, unused PTO balances will roll forward from year to year and will be paid out upon separation from the district based on years of service. Policy 7130, Sick Leave Incentive, still applies and the terminology will be updated to refer to PTO instead of sick leave. Policies that currently refer to sick and/or personal leave will be updated to reflect PTO over the coming months.

## **Q: What happens if I end up taking more PTO than I have accumulated?**

PTO leave taken beyond the accumulated amount shall result in deduction of pay equal to the educator's daily rate of pay for that period.

## **Q: What happens to accumulated sick and personal days that employees have acquired over time from past years worked?**

Accrual balances as of Jun 30, 2021 were/will be transferred to PTO. This means the ending balance for both sick & personal will roll forward to a beginning PTO balance, and sick & personal will be zeroed out. For example, if an employee ended last year with 125 hours of sick leave and 3 hours of personal leave, they will begin this year with 128 hours of PTO.

## **Q: What are my responsibilities if I miss more than four consecutive days of work?**

If an employee misses five (5) consecutive days of work for any reason other than Bereavement, PD, approved vacation for 12 month employees, or LWOP, a physician's statement verifying the medical cause of the educator's absence must be submitted to Human Resources. Notification is essential to be in compliance with FMLA.

## **Q: When is it necessary to submit the "Request to be Absent from Work Location" at the school site?**

The first step to initiate a pre-planned absence is to complete the "Request to be absent from Work Location" form. The form is online and available from the school secretary. Employees will continue to submit the form for personal and sick leave reasons, just as they have done in the past, and select PTO on the form. The requests need to be submitted and approved prior to the planned absence.

# PTO - FAQ (Cont.)

## **Q: How many PTO consecutive days are allowed for personal reasons?**

Employees may take no more than four (4) consecutive PTO days annually with pay for personal reasons.

## **Q: What are the blackout dates for PTO?**

PTO leave is not allowed the day before or after a school holiday or during the first and last week's five (5) days of school. Life events such as, but not limited to graduations, marriage, births, unanticipated moves, illness and emergency may require leave during this time. The approval process begins with the site administrator.

PTO leave may be used by educators who wish to observe religious holidays during blackout days.

## **Q: If I need to use Leave Without Pay (LWOP), instead of PTO, how do I request the leave?**

Approval of leave without pay for up to a total of four days per year may be approved by the principal and requests, using the online "Request to be absent from Work Location" form, must be submitted at least three days ahead of time and pre-approved. Leave without pay may not be combined with any other paid leave.

Leave without pay requests exceeding four (4) consecutive contract days must be submitted at least 30 days ahead of time, except in case of emergency or exceptional circumstance, and must be approved

## **Q: How do I account for PTO in the ESS or sub system?**

The name PTO has replaced both sick & personal, so there is no longer a sick or personal leave option in Employee Self Serve (ESS) or the sub system. Employees simply select PTO for an absence that, in the past, would have been coded to sick or personal. Continue using the same system as you have in the past to record your leave.

## **Q: What leave do I use for COVID 19?**

Employees will submit PTO for time away from work while they are recuperating from Covid or isolating because of exposure. The medical provider and/or local health department will advise the employee on their appropriate return to work date. Employees must notify HR for tracking purposes if they test positive for covid. As we transition to the "new normal", Covid will be treated like all other medical conditions in regards to employee leave.