



Policy Series #: 4000P – Human Resources
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Sick Leave Procedures

To support the Sick Leave Policy, Riverland Community College has implemented the following procedure when reporting leave:

Staff and faculty members must contact their supervisor to inform him/her of any and all absences and must complete a leave form prior to a scheduled absence or immediately upon return of an unplanned absence.

The employee will make direct contact with his or her supervisor or follow individual directions that the supervisor has supplied for reporting absences.

SICK LEAVE ABSENCES

Medical Leave Procedures: After the fourth-consecutive day of absence, the supervisor will provide the employee with the proper paperwork in case the absence is a FMLA qualifying event. If the medical absence does not fall into a qualifying event category, the employee need not return the paperwork. The supervisor must inform Human Resources that the paperwork was given to the employee. To determine if the absence is a FMLA qualifying event, the employee must return the completed paperwork with supporting physician documentation to the College Human Resources office. Upon returning from a medical leave, the employee must furnish the supervisor or the Human Resources Department with a return-to-work slip from his/her attending physician. This certification may be documented on the physician's official correspondence.

Use of Vacation Leave In Lieu of Sick Leave

Employee must use their sick leave accruals for absence requests (allowing for use of sick leave accruals) pursuant to labor contract provisions. Vacation leave will not be granted in lieu of sick leave except in the following instances.

1. Employees who have exhausted their sick leave accruals may request to use vacation leave in lieu of sick leave in accordance with labor contract provisions. Such vacation requests shall be for the total hours of the employee's work schedule and for consecutive scheduled days of work for the total hours of vacation requested by the employee up to the extent of the employee's vacation accruals. Vacation leave will not be granted on a stop and start basis with leave without pay time in between vacation time.
2. Employees may be allowed to substitute vacation leave for sick leave when they are subject to losing vacation accruals while absent due to vacation cap restrictions. Such use shall be only to the extent necessary to prevent loss of the employee's vacation benefits.

All labor contract provisions, policies, and work rules governing sick leave requests will continue to apply to requests for vacation in lieu of sick leave.

FACULTY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

A faculty member who finds it necessary to be absent shall communicate with the college in the following manner:

Call **433-0514** to notify Academic Affairs. This is a voicemail box that is checked regularly. (Please do not notify campus receptionists.)

Notification should be made before 7:30 a.m. for a day class and by 1:00 p.m. for an evening class. It is the instructor's responsibility to provide information about day, time, location, and if appropriate, the contact person for the class/classes being cancelled.

Cancellation notices will be posted on the web and on campus (room). Faculty members are encouraged to use "calling trees" (if applicable post on D2L) to minimize inconvenience for the students.

Faculty members are responsible for submitting leave requests for approval by the appropriate dean. The college is not responsible for approving paid leave if instructors do not use the notification procedure. Leave slips can be obtained from the academic affairs faculty assistants or the payroll department. Contact the Human Resources Office (ext. 0529) regarding sick leave allowance.

College Supervisory Responsibilities Include:

1. Analyze Attendance Records: Supervisors should regularly review employee attendance records for evidence of abuse or excessive use.
2. Ensure Appropriate Use: Supervisors should ensure that the reason for the use of sick leave is allowable under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement or plan.
3. Ensure Confidentiality: Supervisors should maintain the confidentiality of the reasons for employees' use of sick leave.
4. Recognize Good Attendance: Supervisors should recognize good attendance through appropriate methods.
5. Manage Sick Leave: Supervisors should regularly monitor and manage all of the sick leave used by employees in accordance with the following guidelines.

Use of Sick Leave Where No Abuse Has Occurred

1. Monitoring Use of Sick Leave
Supervisors should monitor the amount of sick leave used by employees and should review sick leave usage for individual employees when use exceeds six (6) separate instances in a fixed twelve (12) month period.

Instances shall include: All actual sick leave used as well as other types of leave used in lieu of sick leave (e.g. same-day vacation leave requested in lieu of sick leave, leave without pay taken for sick leave reasons).

Instances shall not include: Any FMLA qualifying time or time taken for prescheduled doctor's appointments, bereavement leave, workers compensation, or sick leave used in conjunction with the birth or adoption of a child or for the period of time that a doctor certifies a female employee unable to work because of pregnancy.

This standard does not define excessive use, but rather the point at which the

supervisor should begin to consider #2 below.

2. Recognizing Sick Leave Use Problems

If an employee meets the standard set out in #1 above, the supervisor needs to consider the following to identify sick leave use problems:

- a. The frequency of and the reasons for sick leave use. (Absences necessitated by chronic long-term illnesses/disabilities may require different considerations than casual, intermittent absences.)
- b. The employee's unused sick leave balance.
- c. The impact of the employee's absences on the workplace (e.g., disruptions in work schedules, overtime costs, incomplete projects).

3. Responding To Sick Leave Problems

If the supervisor determines a problem exists then the supervisor shall:

- a. Counsel the employee on his/her use of sick leave.
- b. Refer the employee to the Employee Assistance Program, if appropriate.
- c. Check with the Human Resources office about possible alternative arrangements for the employee (e.g., part-time work schedules, disability leaves of absence), if appropriate.
- d. Document all of these actions.

If the above methods are unsuccessful, a supervisor should consider the effect that the sick leave use has on the employee's performance and the operations of the employer. Discipline may be taken on the basis of the absences affecting the employee's performance, or the operations of the employer, and may be taken even when the reasons for sick leave use have been legitimate.

If the employer is in the course of progressive discipline with an employee, the six instance standard in a twelve month period is not renewed.

4. Performance Reviews

Supervisors should also reflect how the employee's attendance has affected his/her ability to complete the tasks on the employee's performance review.

Sick Leave Abuse

Abuse of sick leave is defined as the use of sick leave for purposes other than those in the collective bargaining agreements or plans.

1. Supervisors should periodically analyze attendance records for evidence of possible abuse (e.g., patterns of absences on Fridays/Mondays, seasonal absences, absences when a vacation request has been denied).
2. Sick leave should be denied when there is evidence or reason to believe abuse has occurred until or unless the employee provides satisfactory evidence of legitimate use of sick leave. Where a supervisor has reason to suspect that an employee is abusing sick leave, the supervisor may require the employee to provide doctor's statements for a fixed duration to verify legitimate use of sick leave.
3. Discipline employees for the abuse of sick leave.

Employee Assistance Program

The State has in place a formal Employee Assistance Program to assist employees in addressing problems which may affect an employee's performance, including absenteeism. Employees are encouraged to seek assistance for these and other problems before they negatively impact attendance and other aspects of job performance. Participation in this program is voluntary and confidential.

LIST RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES OR PLANS HERE: *(if any)*

Riverland Community College Sick Leave Policy

Revised Statewide Policy on Sick Leave

<http://www.mmb.state.mn.us/doc/persl/1337.pdf>

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Date & Subject of Revisions: