

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE OVERVIEW

### Overview

With Governing Board approval, employees are allowed to take leaves from District employment for up to one year, every three years. Leave may be granted for reasons related to health and hardship, study/travel, FMLA (Family Medical and Leave Act), military or political office. **An employee's supervisor must approve all leaves.** Proof of the need for leave (such as a medical certification) may be required. Certain conditions and restrictions apply to each form of leave. **Among these restrictions is the stipulation that an employee on leave cannot hold other employment during the leave without Governing Board approval.** Leaves of absence may not exceed one year.

### Paid Leave Time

The District requires all employees on FMLA to utilize all available paid leave balances concurrently with their leave. To reduce any ambiguity, employees must enter their own paid leave for the length of the absence (sick, personal, vacation, and/or comp time) into the appropriate employee portal (Time Clock Plus, Red Rover, and/or Okta). If extenuating circumstances exist, or in an emergency, the employee's supervisor will enter appropriate paid leave. Please reach out to your supervisor for assistance.

### Benefit Continuation and District Contributions

The District's contributions toward group insurance benefits of an employee on unpaid leave stop on the last day of the month in which the employee's unpaid leave begins, unless any of the leave time is qualified under the Family and Medical Leave Act. The determination as to whether an employee's leave qualifies under the Family and Medical Leave Act is made by the Benefits Department.

When the District's contributions toward insurance premium costs stop, an employee on unpaid leave has the right under federal COBRA laws to continue medical, dental and/or vision insurance coverage by assuming all premium costs. Continuation under COBRA, up to 18 months, will be mailed to you from our COBRA provider.

The District also allows an employee on unpaid leave the right to continue his/her District life insurance coverage by assuming all premium costs. Continued life insurance coverage is available during the leave period only. If the employee terminates District employment at the end of the leave, continuation of group term life insurance is not available, but the employee does retain the right to purchase life insurance directly from the insurance provider by converting the group coverage to an individual policy, if done with 30 days of termination.

If the employee elects NOT to continue one or more group insurance benefits when the District contribution toward premium costs stops, the coverage is terminated on the last day of the month in which District contributions stop.

The District will provide you with information concerning payment procedures if a balance is owed for the insurance you have had in place.

### Return To Work

**In order to return from a medical leave, clearance from your doctor is required.** Upon returning from leave status to active employee status, the employee must re-enroll in group insurance benefits, with the District's contribution toward premium costs resuming at that time. Benefits restart the first of the month following 30 days after returning from leave. For instance, if an employee returns from leave on October 11, benefits would restart on December 1.

When an employee is granted a leave of absence, all rights provided under law and by the District's policies and regulations (such as retirement rights, accrued leave with pay, and previously earned salary increments) are preserved and are available to the employee after the leave is terminated and upon reinstatement to District employment, subject to the provisions of District policy.