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| **YCFCA%20emblem** | **FLINT HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT**  GENERAL POLICY |

**Policy Number:** 232.04

**Policy Title:** Time Away from Work

**Adopted:** 4/24/2024

**Rescinds:** 1/1/2024

**Approved By: (Chief)**

1. **PURPOSE:**

This policy establishes the guidelines for time away from work for full-time employees of the Flint Hill Fire Department (FHFD). It does not apply to part-time staff.

1. **DISCUSSION:**

Full-time employees of the Flint Hill Fire Department receive fringe benefits as part of their employment. Some of these fringe benefits include pay for time when the employee is not physically at work or is not performing their normal duties. Common examples include vacation leave, sick leave, holiday pay, and optional training pay. Fringe benefits may be changed as circumstances warrant.

Some time away from work is not compensated. Examples include disability, sick, and vacation leave beyond the employee's accrued time.

1. **POLICY:**

It is the responsibility of employees to record all paid time off in the department's time reporting system. Employees cannot be accurately paid unless time off is properly documented. See POLICY 800.04 TIME RECORDING for details.

**Compensated Time Off**

1. Paid vacation leave is awarded according to the following schedule. New hires may be granted years of service credit for vacation leave based on experience and other factors considered at the time of employment.
   1. Schedule.
      1. For the first year of employment, awarded vacation leave is prorated from the hire date until the following July 1st.
      2. 96 hours per year starting July 1st each year for the first five (5) full years of employment.
      3. 144 hours per year starting July 1st after an employee has reached their 5th anniversary of employment.
      4. 192 hours per year starting July 1st after an employee has reached their 10th anniversary of employment.
   2. Vacation leave is accrued at the start of each fiscal year (July 1). However, vacation leave is earned monthly (one-twelfth of the annual award is earned on the first day of each month).
   3. As a benefit to employees, vacation leave may be used before it is earned. If an employee leaves employment, any unearned vacation leave already taken will be deducted from their final paycheck.
   4. Upon termination, any unused vacation leave will be paid to the employee in their final paycheck.
   5. Employees may carry over a maximum of one-half year of vacation leave from one fiscal year to the next (48, 72, or 96 hours based on the employee's current years of service).
      1. Vacation leave hours above the carryover maximum on July 1st are converted to personal leave hours. See the personal leave section of this policy for details.
      2. The fire chief may adjust the vacation leave carry over maximum on a case-by-case basis after considering special circumstances (e.g., an employee is planning an extended overseas vacation in a future fiscal year).
   6. Vacation leave is granted on a first-come, first-served basis so it is in the employees’ best interest to enter vacation leave requests as soon as possible.
   7. Vacation leave must be pre-approved by the fire chief. Vacation leave requests may be denied due to staffing needs (e.g., needing adequate supervision or minimum staffing) or other factors as determined by the fire chief.
2. Employees are awarded 96 hours of sick leave per year starting July 1st, prorated during their first year of employment from their hire date.
   1. For hourly employees, unused sick leave hours are converted to personal leave hours on July 1st.
   2. Unused sick leave is forfeited upon termination of employment.
3. Personal leave is designed to assist hourly employees with longer-term, unanticipated, emergency needs for paid time off. The primary purpose of personal leave is to provide full pay during the 30-day elimination period of the department sponsored short-term disability insurance policy. It may also be used for some family emergencies. Personal leave is not an extension of sick leave.
   1. The fire chief determines if an event qualifies for personal leave.
      1. Examples of qualifying events.
         1. Non-work-related injury/illness resulting in prolonged lost work time for an employee.
         2. Caring for a seriously ill immediate family member (spouse, child).
      2. Examples of non-qualifying events.
         1. Use of all annual sick leave by an employee.
         2. Caring for a child who is not seriously ill.
         3. Caring for seriously ill people who are not immediate family.
         4. Newborn childcare.
   2. There is no cap on the amount of personal leave that can be accumulated.
   3. Upon employment, hourly employees are awarded enough personal leave to satisfy a 30-day short-term disability insurance elimination period, allowing employees to receive full pay for the first 30 days of a non-work-related disability before the typical short-term disability insurance policy begins paying benefits at 65% of weekly income. FHFD sponsors an optional employee-paid short-term disability insurance policy. See POLICY 230.05 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS for details about this policy.
      1. Hourly shift employees are awarded 240 hours of personal leave. This provides employees with 10 shift days of full pay which equates to 30 calendar days under the 48/96 work schedule.
      2. Hourly weekly employees are awarded 184 hours of personal leave. This provides employees with 23 days of full pay which is the maximum number of workdays in 30 calendar days under a 40-hour/week work schedule.
   4. Employees build their personal leave bank through the accumulation of unused sick and vacation leave.
      1. Employees are strongly encouraged to purchase short-term disability insurance to cover the 60-day income gap between the 30 days FHFD provides full pay and the start of the FHFD funded long-term disability insurance at 90 days.
   5. The use of personal leave is capped at 90 days for each qualifying event with a cap of 90 days per year for family emergencies.
   6. Unused personal leave is forfeited upon termination of employment.
   7. Hourly employees must request personal leave as far in advance as possible. If there is not enough time to prepare for the leave after it is approved the start will be deferred until preparations can be made.
   8. Hourly employees must use 144 hours of sick and/or vacation leave before personal leave begins.
      1. If the employee does not have 144 hours of sick/vacation leave the difference between the hours they have and 144 will be unpaid.
4. Employees in the military are granted up to 144 hours of paid military leave per year to be used for military training, reserve duty, drills, maneuvers, etc., starting July 1st. Military leave is prorated during their first year of employment from their hire date. Military leave over 144 hours per year (or the prorated amount for the first year of employment) will be granted but is unpaid leave.
   1. The employee's employment rights will be preserved while the employee is on military leave. Pay increases, vacations, and other benefits that would have accrued had the employee not been on military leave will be given to the employee upon returning to FHFD after the military leave is over.
   2. If the employee should be called to active duty, the employee may take up to 5 years of unpaid active-duty military leave.
   3. Unless circumstances change so drastically while the employee is on annual or active-duty military leave that reinstatement is impossible or impractical; when the employee returns after military leave, the employee will either be reinstated to the position the employee held before taking military leave or be placed in a similar position with the same seniority, status, and pay. The following conditions must be met:
      1. Proof of honorable discharge from duty.
      2. Proof of ability to resume the position.
      3. Notice of intention to return is given.
   4. Military leave does not carry over from one fiscal year to the next.
   5. Unused military leave is forfeited upon termination of employment.
5. Shift employees are granted 8 hours of holiday pay for the following holidays. Holiday pay is a fringe benefit and as such is not subject to FLSA overtime calculations. Holiday pay is included in the pay period the holiday occurs in.
   1. New Year’s Day
   2. Presidents Day
   3. Easter Sunday
   4. Memorial Day
   5. Independence Day
   6. Labor Day
   7. Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
   8. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
6. Non-shift employees are granted the following paid holidays. When a holiday falls on a weekend the employee will choose to take the day off on either the preceding Friday or the following Monday. Only floating holidays should be entered as time off in the time recording system because fixed holidays are assumed.
   1. New Year’s Day
   2. Easter (Friday or Monday)
   3. Memorial Day
   4. Independence Day
   5. Labor Day
   6. Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
   7. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
   8. Two floating holidays
7. Bereavement leave of up to 2 working days for hourly shift employees and up to 5 working days for hourly weekly employees per occurrence may be granted by the fire chief for the death of an immediate family member. An immediate family member is a spouse, child, parent, grandparent, or parent-in-law.

1. Cooperating with the judicial system is a part of good citizenship and a practical demonstration of being a professional who cares for their community. As such, employees are paid their regular salary or hourly rate of pay for the time they are serving on jury duty. An employee called for jury duty must notify their supervisor as soon as they receive notice. While on jury duty employees are expected to return to work during the periods they are not required to be present in court or remain in the immediate area of the court.
2. Employees may be granted a reasonable amount of paid time off for doctor appointments and other personal obligations that may occur during an employee’s scheduled work time. Employees are encouraged to schedule these types of events away from work hours as much as possible. Employees are expected to make up as much of this unscheduled time away from work as possible. Any unscheduled time away from work must be recorded in the department time reporting system and must be approved by the fire chief in advance. Failure to notify the fire chief will result in an AWOL for the employee.

**Uncompensated Time Off**

1. Employees are granted disability leave (short or long-term) according to the circumstances of each incident and applicable laws. The fire chief works with the employee, healthcare providers, insurance companies, etc. to determine the parameters of the leave. Typically, the fire chief or designee will record disability leave in the time recording system on behalf of the employee.
2. Employees may be approved for unpaid sick and military leave by the fire chief on a case-by-case basis. Unpaid sick and military leave is used after an employee has exhausted their annual accrued paid sick or military leave.
3. Employees may be approved for occasional unpaid personal time off (different from personal leave) by the fire chief on a case-by-case basis.