

3 - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

3.5 - Leaves of Absence and Job Abandonment

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Eligibility for leave under the *Family and Medical Leave Act* is outlined in Section 3.9 of this manual and is a different issue than leave covered by this section. Personal or Special Leaves cannot be used to extend Family and Medical Leave.

A leave of absence is defined as any unpaid time **voluntarily** spent away from work during regularly scheduled working hours.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Because of the inconvenience that time away from work may cause co-workers and the public, an employee leave of absence shall only be granted for good and sufficient personal reasons and shall only be granted upon advance written approval from the employee's Department Director. All requests for personal leaves must be submitted in writing to the employee's Department Director. The request should be made at least five working days prior to the beginning of the proposed leave unless an emergency situation exists.

Prior to the time the leave begins the employee must have used all available paid leave time such as vacation, personal time, and comp time. Upon written approval from the employee's Department Director vacation that has accrued during the employee's current anniversary year may be used.

A personal leave of absence under this policy shall normally not exceed 30 working days in any calendar year. The employee shall not engage in other employment during the period of absence.

SPECIAL LEAVE

With the approval of the City Administrator a Department Director may authorize special leaves of absence for any period of time for the purpose of training or education that will benefit the City and the employee.

EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Group health, life, and Long Term Disability insurance coverage will end on the first day of a voluntary unpaid leave of absence that will extend for more than 30 continuous calendar days.

Coverage will be cancelled retroactively to the first day of voluntary unpaid leave if a leave was originally approved for less than 30 days but extends to more than 30 continuous calendar days. In accordance with provisions of the master insurance plan documents and any other applicable laws, continuation of coverage might be available at the employee's own expense.

Vacation shall not accrue and sick leave will not be earned for any pay period in which the employee does not receive a payroll check.

ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE

If an employee is voluntarily absent from work without proper authorization for part or all of a workday, such absence shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

JOB ABANDONMENT

It is the employee's responsibility to notify his or her supervisor of his or her absence from work **prior to** the beginning of the workday. If the supervisor is unavailable, the employee must contact another supervisor in his or her department or the Department Director. Because there is no assurance that voice mail messages will be listened to or that email messages will be read, the employee is required to speak **directly** with a supervisor or Department Director.

Employees who are absent from work for two consecutive workdays without giving proper notice will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment with the City. Extenuating circumstances, which made it impossible for the employee to contact the City, may be given consideration.