

Consistent with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) as amended, the Board of Education shall provide up to twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid leave in a twelve (12) month period for its eligible employees. In addition, FMLA provides eligible employees with 26 workweeks of leave in a single 12 month period to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty.

An eligible employee must have been employed for at least twelve months, have worked at least 1,250 hours during the prior twelve months, and be employed at a worksite where at least 50 employees are employed by that employer within a 75 mile radius of that worksite.

The district shall use a “forward rolling” twelve (12) month period to compute FMLA leave entitlement. Accordingly, an employee’s annual entitlement to FMLA leave will be computed forward for one year from the first day of such use.

Right to Benefits During Leave

An eligible employee is entitled to a combined total of twelve workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave. Any employee who uses the unpaid leave shall have his/her health benefits continued during the leave, shall not have any previously accrued benefits altered and shall be returned to an equivalent position according to established board policies and collective bargaining agreements. The employee is not entitled to accrue seniority during the leave.

An employee may elect, or the district may require, an employee to use available paid leave time for purposes of a family or medical leave. However, an employee may only use accrued medical/sick leave in accordance with an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Family and Medical Leave

Family leave is available when a child is born to the employee, adopted by an employee or one is placed with the employee for foster care. Medical leave is available in order for the employee to take care of a spouse, child, parent who has a serious health condition, when the employee has a serious health condition rendering him/her unable to perform the functions of the employee’s job. Military caregiver leave is available to employees who are family members of covered service members with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty on active duty. Additionally, this applies to covered veterans who require care and have been other than dishonorably discharged from service within the last five (5) years. Military caregiver leave is a special entitlement that allows the employee to extend FMLA leave to 26 workweeks. Qualifying exigency leave is available to employees when a family member is notified of impending call or called to active duty in support of a contingency operation.

A child shall include any individual whether biological, adopted, a foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child standing in loco parentis who is under eighteen years of age or, if over eighteen, is incapable of self-care due to a mental or physical disability. A parent shall include the biological parent of the employee or an individual who stood in loco parentis to the employee when he/she was a child. Next of kin shall mean the nearest blood relative other than spouse, parent, son, daughter, as defined in federal regulation.

Furthermore, a serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Family leave must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the employee's child. If both spouses are employed by the Johnson City Central School District, the combined amount of leave for birth, adoption, foster care placement and parental illness may be limited to twelve (12) weeks. An employee may not take leave to care for a parent-in-law. This limitation does not apply to medical leave taken by either spouse to care for the other who is seriously ill and unable to work, to care for a child with a serious health condition, or for his/her own serious illness.

Notice To Take Leave

The employee shall notify the district of his/her request for family or medical leave at least thirty (30) days prior to the date when the leave is to begin, when such leave is foreseeable. If such leave is not foreseeable then notice shall be given as early as is practical. If the employee requests medical leave, reasonable attempts shall be made to schedule treatment so as not to disrupt the district's operations.

Intermittent and Reduced Leave

Intermittent leave is leave taken in separate blocks of time due to a single illness or injury. Reduced leave is a leave schedule that reduced the employee's usual number of hours per work week or hours per work day.

An employee who requests family leave, shall not be provided intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule unless the employee and district mutually agree. The employee who uses family leave is not automatically entitled to use such leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis.

Intermittent leave may be provided for medical leave, however, the district may transfer the employee to a comparable position if it will better accommodate such intermittent periods of leave.

Instructional Employees: For instructional employees who request medical leave and it is foreseeable that the medical treatment shall cause the employee to be on leave for more than 20% of the total number of working days in the period of leave, the district may require the employee to take leave for the duration of the treatment or to transfer to an equivalent position for which the employee is qualified, but which better accommodates intermittent periods of leave.

Military Leave: Leave Related to Active Duty or a Call to Active Duty

If the necessity for leave because of a qualifying exigency arising from the fact that a family member is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call to active duty is foreseeable, the employee shall give such notice to the district as soon as is reasonable and practicable.

The School Board may require that a request for leave because of a qualified exigency arising from the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call to active duty be supported by a certification issued in accordance with regulations.

Certification

The district may require the employee requesting medical leave to present a certification from the health care provider of the person for whom the employee is taking the leave. Upon request by the district, the employee must provide the certification within 15 days. The certificate shall include:

1. the date on which the serious health condition commenced;
2. the probable duration of the condition;
3. the appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition;
4. a statement that the employee is needed to care for the family member and an estimate of the amount of time that such employee shall be needed or a statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of the employee's position; and
5. the dates and duration of medical treatment if the request for intermittent leave for a planned medical treatment.

If the district doubts the validity of the certification, then, at the district's expense, a second opinion may be required from a health care provider selected by the district. The school physician cannot give this opinion. If the two opinions conflict, a third health care provider, at the district's expense, may be chosen by the two parties to render a final opinion.

Restoration

An instructional employee who begins any type of leave at least five (5) weeks before the end of an academic term, may be required not to return until the new term begins if the leave is at least three (3) weeks long and the employee would return during the last three (3) weeks of the term.

An instructional employee who begins leave, for any purpose other than personal illness, less than three (3) weeks prior to the end of the term and the leave is longer than five (5) working days, may be required not to return until the new term begins.

Failure to Return

The district may recover the health care premiums paid during the leave when the employee fails to return from the leave. However, recovery cannot occur if the employee fails to return because of the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or due to circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

Effect on Existing Laws or Agreements

The Board shall ensure that family and medical leave, consistent with the Family and Medical Leave Act, is provided to all eligible employees, whether or not they are covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Any collective bargaining agreement which contains greater leave benefits than this policy shall remain in force.

Notice of Policy

The district shall post a notice prepared or approved by the Secretary of Labor stating the pertinent provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act, including information concerning enforcement of the law.

OTHER LEAVES:

Blood Donation

In accordance with state law, employees desiring to make blood donations shall be granted three (3) hours of leave in any twelve (12) month period. The leave may not exceed three (3) hours unless agreed to by the Superintendent or his or her designee. Additional leaves for the purpose of blood donation under any other provision of law shall not be prevented.

Leave granted to employees for off premises blood donation is not required to be paid leave. Leave taken by employees for “donation leave alternatives” (which is what the law terms on-site blood donation) shall be paid leave given without requiring the employee to use accumulated vacation, personal, sick or other existing leave time.

Employees wishing to utilize the leave time for off-site blood donations shall give a minimum of three (3) working days notice to the Superintendent or his or her designee. Employees wishing to utilize the leave time for alternate donations shall give a minimum of two (2) working days notice.

The district will provide reasonable accommodations in emergency situations where an employee needs to donate blood for his/her own surgery or that of a family member.

Breast and Prostate Cancer Screening

Employees shall be granted up to four (4) hours of leave on an annual basis to undertake a screening for breast cancer. Employees shall be granted up to four (4) hours of leave on an annual basis to undertake a screening for prostate cancer (i.e., male employees are entitled to a total of eight (8) hours for both screenings). This leave shall be paid leave and shall not be charged against any other leave to which the employee is entitled.

Certification of testing will be requested from the employee of the district. Verification shall be produced in a timely fashion.

Date of Board Adoption: December 10, 2013
Johnson City Central School District, Johnson City, New York