



# Operating Standard

**Title:** Leave – Paid & Unpaid

**Number:** A4200.25

**Type:** Administrative

**Responsible:** CHRO; Executive Director, Human Resources

**Related Policies:** [B3001](#), [B3003](#), [B3004](#), [A4000](#), [A4100](#), [A4200](#), [A4300](#), [A4400](#)

**Linked Operating Standards:**

**Related Laws:** [Title IV](#), [Title VII](#), [FLSA](#),

**Related External Standards:** [CUPA-HR](#), [SHRM](#)

**HLC Criterion:** 1C, 2A, 4A

## 1.0 Statement

In alignment with Shawnee Community College's values of Inclusive and Equitable Access and Integrity and Stewardship, this operating standard ensures that paid and unpaid leave is administered equitably, transparently, and consistently, supporting the well-being and professional excellence of all employees.

## 2.0 Purpose & Scope

- **Purpose:** To provide guidance that ensures that paid and unpaid leave is administered equitably, transparently, and consistently among all employees.
- **Scope:** This standard applies to all Shawnee Community College employees. Faculty covered by collective-bargaining agreements may follow procedures defined by their contract; however, the College's principles of fairness and due process remain applicable.

## 3.0 Definitions

- **Paid Leave:** An authorized absence from work where an employee continues to receive their regular wages.
- **Unpaid Leave:** Authorized absence from work without receiving wages.
- **Vacation Leave:** A benefit that provides eligible employees with paid time off for any reason.
- **Sick Leave:** A benefit that provides eligible employees with paid time off due to medical appointments, preventative care, an illness or injury that prevents performance of duties, or the need to provide care for a covered family member, as defined in this operating standard.
- **Personal Leave:** A benefit that provides eligible employees with paid time off for any reason.
- **Bereavement Leave:** A benefit that provides eligible employees with paid time off following the death of a loved one to attend services and manage personal, legal, or administrative matters related to the loss.
- **Jury Duty Leave:** A benefit that provides eligible employees paid time off when they are subpoenaed as witnesses or as jurors in matters in which they have no personal or financial interest, provided that proper notice is given to their supervisor as soon as possible after being subpoenaed.
- **Illinois Employee Sick Leave Act (ESLA):** A state law that allows employees to use at least half of their sick leave time awarded annually for their immediate family members.

- **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** A federal law that provides eligible employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for themselves or covered family members per year for qualifying reasons.
- **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA):** A federal law that requires employers to allow employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for active or reserve military duty, typically up to five years.
- **Job Abandonment:** absences of three (3) consecutive workdays or more without following the proper procedure listed above, and should the absences not qualify for FMLA leave, may result in separation of employment.
- **Leave of Absence:** An approved period of unpaid leave from employment, subject to applicable College policies and approvals.
- **Immediate Family:** Shall include an employee's child, stepchild, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, parent-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, stepparent, or legal guardian.

#### 4.0 Roles & Responsibilities

- **Employee:** Employees are expected to request and use paid and unpaid leave honestly, consistently, and in accordance with College standards. Misuse or misrepresentation of leave may result in corrective action. Employees are responsible for following established procedures and communicating with their supervisor and Human Resources to ensure leave is applied equitably.
- **Supervisor:** Supervisors are responsible for promptly notifying Human Resources of employee absences that may qualify for protected or unpaid leave. Supervisors do not determine leave eligibility or designation and must refer employees to Human Resources for guidance. Failure to follow leave procedures or to apply leave consistently may result in corrective action or required training to ensure compliance and equitable administration.
- **Administrators:** Administrators are expected to reinforce a culture of ethical leadership and accountability by following appropriate leave practices, preventing favoritism or informal arrangements, and supporting supervisors in applying College standards in their division.
- **Human Resources:** Human Resources supports consistent and equitable leave practices by providing guidance to employees, supervisors, and administrators. Human Resources maintains official leave records, protects employee confidentiality, and monitors leave practices for compliance and consistency. Human Resources is responsible for determining eligibility and designation of protected or unpaid leave.

#### 5.0 Procedures

1. **Communication with Supervisor** – Employees must notify their immediate supervisor of the need for leave as soon as possible, preferably by College email. When leave is expected, advance notice is required. If leave is unexpected, the employee must notify their supervisor as soon as possible. After providing notice, the employee must submit the leave request through the College's designated leave system and maintain communication regarding their anticipated return-to-work date. Employees must promptly report any changes to their leave status or circumstances.
2. **Supervisor Review and Routing** – Upon receiving notice of a leave request, the supervisor must acknowledge receipt. Supervisors must confirm that the employee has submitted the leave request through the College's designated leave system. The supervisor is responsible for supporting operational planning and ensuring service continuity during the employee's absence.

3. Documentation and Recordkeeping - Human Resources will determine whether documentation is required and establish applicable submission deadlines during the leave review and administration process. Official leave records will be maintained confidentially and retained in accordance with applicable laws and institutional standards.
4. Determination of Leave Amounts - Leave amounts, accrual rates, and maximum limits are based on employee classification and appointment status and are outlined in *Addendum A - Leave Amounts and Accrual Schedules*, which is incorporated into this operating standard by reference. Any changes to leave amounts or accrual schedules require approval by the Shawnee Community College Board of Trustees.

## 6.0 Guidelines

- Leave practices must be applied consistently and equitably across all departments and divisions to ensure fairness, transparency, and trust.
- Leave should be scheduled to support continuity of College operations
- Frequent absences undermine performance and compromise the College's service to students and department operations. Employees who have excessive and/or patterned absenteeism are subject to corrective action, up to and including termination. Examples of pattern absenteeism may include:
  - unscheduled absences,
  - absences during high-impact operational periods,
  - misuse or misrepresentation of sick time.
- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave is administered by Human Resources in compliance with federal law. Human Resources determines eligibility, designates leave, issues required notices, and manages medical certifications to ensure consistent administration. When applicable, accrued paid leave runs concurrently with FMLA leave in accordance with College policy.

## 7.0 SCCES Connections

This Operating Standard supports the Employee Engagement Element within the SCCES framework, particularly the Workplace Climate, Employee Satisfaction, and Employee Retention Key Performance Areas.

Leave practices serve as a foundational component of employee support systems, ensuring that employees can balance personal needs with professional responsibilities while maintaining operational continuity. Consistent and equitable administration of leave contributes to employee trust, organizational fairness, and workplace stability.

Through consistent application, this standard contributes to:

- A fair and supportive work environment (Workplace Climate)
- Employee well-being and satisfaction (Employee Satisfaction)
- Workforce stability and sustained capacity (Employee Retention)

The practices defined in this standard serve as key inputs influencing employee engagement, attendance patterns, and the College's ability to maintain consistent operations and service delivery.

## 8.0 Monitoring Report Connections

This Operating Standard supports the College's annual Human Resources Monitoring Report by generating evidence related to leave usage, attendance patterns, and equitable administration of employee benefits.

Evidence generated through this standard contributes to the evaluation of Board policies, including:

- B3000 - General Executive Limitations
- B3001 - Employee Relationships
- B3003 - Organizational Culture
- B3004 - Employment, Compensation, and Benefits

Evidence generated may include:

- Leave utilization rates by type (vacation, sick, personal, unpaid)
- Patterns of absenteeism, including frequent or high-impact absences
- Use of protected leave (e.g., FMLA, USERRA)
- Department-level variations in leave usage

These indicators provide insight into employee well-being, attendance patterns, equity in benefit administration, and the impact of leave practices on operations. Collectively, they support Board evaluation of workplace climate, employee support systems, and compliance with Executive Limitations.

The following alignment illustrates how operational practices defined in this standard contribute to key Monitoring Report measures:

<b>Operational Area</b>	<b>Evidence Generated</b>	<b>Monitoring Alignment</b>
Leave Utilization	Usage rates by leave type	Employee Well-Being & Support
Absenteeism Patterns	Frequency and timing of absences	Workforce Stability
Protected Leave Usage	FMLA/USERRA participation	Compliance & Equity
Department-Level Trends	Variations in leave usage across units	Equity & Operational Consistency

Collectively, these indicators provide insight into attendance patterns, employee support systems, and operational impact, supporting continuous improvement and informed decision-making.

## 9.0 Data Collection & Review

This Operating Standard supports ongoing evaluation of leave practices through structured data collection and review.

*Data Collection:* Human Resources will maintain and review data related to:

- Leave utilization by type and employee group
- Frequency and duration of employee absences
- Patterns of absenteeism, including recurring or high-impact absences
- Use of protected leave (e.g., FMLA, USERRA)

*Review and Analysis:* Human Resources will evaluate compiled data for patterns, trends, and areas of concern, including inequities in leave usage, operational disruptions, and indicators of employee well-being. Findings will be used to inform training, policy refinement, and leadership guidance, and to support development of the annual Human Resources Monitoring Report.

*Review Cycle:* Data will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, with formal review conducted at least annually or as needed based on emerging trends, legal requirements, or institutional priorities.

*Coordination:* Human Resources will coordinate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, as appropriate, to support alignment with SCCES and Monitoring Report development.

## 10.0 Oversight & Review

This Operating Standard will be reviewed at least every three (3) years or sooner as required based on legal, regulatory, accreditation, or institutional needs.

Oversight of this standard is coordinated by Human Resources, with support from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to ensure alignment with SCCES and Monitoring Report development.

Revisions will follow the College's Shared Governance processes and will be documented in the Change Log.

Change Log		Governance Unit: Human Resources Council
Date	Description of Change	
04.23.26	Initial Adoption; Replaces Prior Policies 6260, 6270, 6272, 6273, 6274, 6275, 6276, 6277, 6278, and 6279	

Addendum A - Leave Amounts and Accrual Schedules

**Vacation**

1. A full-time, twelve-month employee not covered by the *SCC/SCEA Collective Bargaining Agreement* will be granted vacation days. The number of vacation days granted will be based on the length of FT service with the College.
2. Vacation days which accrue during an employment period must be used during that period or within six months from the annual expiration of that period. Any accrued vacation days not used within the prescribed time will be forfeited.
3. Any unused vacation hours up to a maximum of 50% of the vacation hours earned for the fiscal year may be converted to accumulated sick days, placed in a separate rollover bank, and not recognized by SURS. Upon an employee's severance of employment with the college, for any reason, all accrued vacation hours will be expended or compensated.
4. Employees at the level of Executive Director, Vice President, or above will accrue the maximum monthly accrual.

**Vacation Schedule**

Years of Service	Annual Vacation Days	Monthly Accrual Earned
Hire to 1 year	12	8 hours
1-2 years	13	8.67 hours
2-3 years	14	9.34 hours
3-4 years	15	10 hours
4-5 years	16	10.67 hours
5-6 years	17	11.33 hours
6-7 years	18	12 hours
7-8 years	19	12.66 hours
8+ years	20	13.34 hours

**Sick Leave**

1. Sick leave shall be granted at the rate of eighteen (18) days per year for all full-time employees not covered by the *SCC/SCEA Collective Bargaining Agreement*.
2. Sick leave should not exceed the annual number of days granted, except in cases of medical emergency of the employee or immediate family. Human Resources may review patterns of extended or repeated sick leave use to ensure appropriate designation, support, and compliance with applicable laws and standards.
3. If applicable, sick leave shall be accumulated without limit, and in accordance with applicable statutory provisions. Employees will not be reimbursed for unused sick leave upon termination of his/her employment. Unused sick leave shall be applied toward service credit for retirement in accordance with the State Universities Retirement System (SURS). Employees can view the leave bank in the Employee Self-Service Leave Summary.
4. Sick leave can be taken in one-hour increments for those not covered by the *SCC/SCEA Collective Bargaining Agreement*.

### **Sick Leave Transfer Procedure**

A full-time employee who has been employed for at least two years and has exhausted all available sick leave may request a transfer of up to twelve (12) sick leave days from the sick leave balances of other full-time employees. Transferred leave may be used for absences as defined by the College. With the President's approval, transferred sick leave may be granted in advance of the employee exhausting his or her available sick leave, subject to this procedure.

1. The employee must submit a written notice to their immediate supervisor requesting additional sick leave. Upon the President's initial approval, the employee must provide the supervisor with a list of full-time employees who agree to transfer sick leave days, including the number of days each employee will contribute. Each contributing employee must initial the number of days they are donating.
2. All sick leave transfers will be documented in the employee's personnel file. Employees requesting a transfer of sick leave under this procedure will be informed of other available leave options and advised of their applicability.

### **Personal Leave**

Personal leave shall be granted at the rate of three (3) days per year for all full-time employees not covered by the *SCC/SCEA Collective Bargaining Agreement*. Personal leave can be taken in one-hour increments and is non-cumulative.

Part-time hourly employees will accrue one (1) hour of personal leave for every forty (40) hours worked up to a maximum of forty (40) hours annually. Employees may begin using accrued leave following a 90-day waiting period. Accrued personal leave by part-time hourly employees will carry over from one year to the next, with a maximum of forty (40) hours available for use in a year.

### **Funeral Leave**

The Board shall grant each employee two (2) days of funeral leave per college year without loss of pay. Funeral leave can be taken in one-hour increments and is non-cumulative.

### **Jury Duty**

Employees who are subpoenaed as witnesses or summoned for jury duty in matters in which they have no personal or financial interest will be granted paid time off, provided they notify their supervisor as soon as possible after receiving the subpoena or summons.

If the employee's regular daily pay exceeds the amount received for jury or court service, the College will pay the difference. Employees may retain any court-paid expenses, such as mileage or meal reimbursements.

Employees are expected to return to work on any scheduled workday or portion of the day when their presence is not required for court proceedings.

### **Military Leave**

Employees must notify the College of their military status at the time of hire or upon joining a reserve component, whichever occurs first.

Employees who are members of a reserve component and are mobilized to active duty by order of the President of the United States are entitled to continued compensation at the regular rate of pay at the time of mobilization, reduced by the amount of base pay they receive for military service, for the duration of their active duty.

Employees called to active duty must inform the College, prior to departure, of their current military base pay to ensure accurate compensation.

In accordance with the *Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act*, full-time employees who serve in a uniformed service reserve component will be granted leave for periods of basic training, annual training, and special or advanced training, whether voluntary or involuntary. During such leave, employees will continue to accrue seniority and other employment benefits, including health insurance. Upon completion of active military service, employees are entitled to reemployment and continued employment

While on annual training leave, full-time employees will receive the difference between their College salary and military pay. During basic training and for up to 60 days of special or advanced training, full-time employees will receive the difference between their College salary and their military pay, provided their military pay is less than their College salary.

Employees returning from active duty must notify the College of the end of their service as soon as practicable in accordance with USERRA. Failure to provide timely notice as required under USERRA may result in a waiver of reemployment rights.

### **Leave of Absence**

An employee who has at least six (6) months of service may request an unpaid leave up to six (6) weeks for a qualifying medical condition that would otherwise meet FMLA criteria, but for insufficient length of service. Approval of this leave is contingent upon operational needs, and the employee must first exhaust all accrued vacation, sick, and personal leave. The employee remains responsible for all insurance premium payments during that leave period.

An exempt employee with at least three (3) years of consecutive full-time service with the College may request an unpaid leave of absence for up to one (1) year. Such leave may be granted for purposes including professional development, parenting, travel, or other personal reasons, subject to approval by the College Board.

### **Holidays**

The College recognizes the following as official holidays of the College:

Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
President's Day  
Good Friday  
Memorial Day  
Juneteenth  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Columbus Day  
Veterans Day  
Day Before Thanksgiving through Day After Thanksgiving  
Christmas Eve through New Year's Day

1. When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the President may designate the preceding Friday or following Monday as the observed holiday, based on the best interests of the College.
2. In an emergency or when it serves the College's best interests, the President may declare additional holidays and will notify faculty, staff, and students accordingly.
3. The Board of Trustees may declare an additional holiday for a special purpose.