

Unpaid Leave Administrative Regulation for NRHEG Employees

Part I

Revised April 2024

It is the expectation of the NRHEG School District that employees have a primary commitment to the agreed-upon workdays. Therefore, requests for unpaid leave time during the school calendar year should be in response to an unusual, infrequent, or unique major life event. Prior to consideration of a request for an unpaid leave of absence, all eligible forms of paid leave must have been exhausted. If unpaid leave is denied but taken, or unpaid leave is taken but not submitted for approval, the employee will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Process for Requesting Unpaid Leave.

1. All *Non-Emergency Unpaid Leave Request Criteria* must be met before the request can be submitted to the Principal or Department Director.
2. Requests must be submitted by completing the *Unpaid Leave Request Form* on the District's website.
3. Requests must be submitted to the Principal at least 60 days before the first day of the requested leave. The principal and/or Superintendent may waive this requirement if the request is in response to an emergency situation.
4. If the requested *Unpaid Leave* is for a medical reason, the application must include a physician's statement attesting to the disability and the anticipated duration of the leave.
5. School-year employees may apply for leave beginning on July 1 of the summer preceding the school year for which the leave is requested.
6. If your leave is a non-FMLA leave, all eligible forms of paid leave must have been exhausted. (i.e., Personal Leave Days must be used if Safe and Sick Leave has been exhausted)
7. All other leave relating to absence should be entered in Frontline prior to requesting the unpaid leave.

Non-Emergency Unpaid Leave Request Criteria

(examples include, but are not limited to, additional Personal Leave Days for an extended vacation, any use of a Safe and Sick Leave Day when Safe and Sick Leave Days have been exhausted)

To request unpaid leave, the following criteria must be met. The criteria do not apply to unpaid leave requests for emergency-related absences, FMLA-eligible absences, or medically-related absences that are not FMLA-eligible, as determined by the School District.

- A) No more than three (3) teachers and two (2) paraprofessionals or two (2) AFSCME Union members from the same department will be allowed to be on leave (personal or unpaid) on any given day.
- B) No more than one approved *Unpaid Leave Request* every six (6) consecutive years of employment may be submitted.
- C) No more than five (5) consecutive work days for leave (Personal Days, Unpaid Leave, or a combination of Personal Days and Unpaid Leave) will be allowed. Requests for leave beyond five (5) consecutive days for exceptional or unusual circumstances must be submitted to the Board of Education.
- D) Leaves of three (3) or more consecutive workdays may not occur more than once in the Same school year.
- E) Leave cannot be taken during the first five (5) days or the last five (5) days of the school year.

Non-Emergency Leave Exemptions – Immediate Family Member Wedding and Graduation

A *Non-Emergency* event applies to a specific event involving a spouse or child of the employee. An approved leave to attend such an event is exempt from the *Non-Emergency Unpaid Leave Criteria* that states: “No more than one approved *Unpaid Leave Request* every six (6) consecutive years of employment may be submitted.” The specific events exempted are limited to:

- Weddings
- Graduations (high school, post-secondary institution, military basic training)

Health Insurance Benefit During Non-Emergency Unpaid Leave

The employee will pay a pro-rated daily rate of the district portion of health insurance. The pro-rated daily rate will be calculated by dividing the annual district portion by the number of work days per year. The deduction for unpaid days and health insurance reimbursement will occur on the next available payroll.

**This deduction does not apply to unpaid leave requests for emergency-related absences, FMLA-eligible absences, or medically-related absences that are not FMLA-eligible, as determined by the School District.*

Emergency Leave

An *Emergency* entails a sudden or unexpected occurrence(s) that demands prompt attention. Potential circumstances or events qualifying as an emergency may include, but are not limited to:

1. Critical illness or accident among one’s friends or family
2. Being snowbound or experiencing impossible travel conditions from home to work
3. Birth event in the immediate family
4. The need to attend a civil function or appear at a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding other than jury duty

Child’s School Activity Leave Exemption

A *Child’s School Activity* applies to the school activity of an employee’s child in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12. When a substitute is not required as determined by the Principal, the employee is allowed up to four (4) hours per year (non-cumulative) of Unpaid Leave to attend a child’s school activity prior to having to access Personal Leave. An approved leave to attend such activity is exempt from the *Non-Emergency Unpaid Leave Criteria* listed above.

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Unpaid Leave

Part II

April 2024

NRHEG Public Schools has a board-approved policy in place pertaining to the use of unpaid days off. This approved policy is for all employees and covers all planned absences that would result in unpaid time off. While this policy addresses many situations, not all unpaid situations are covered.

NRHEG District employees must follow the procedure listed below that best matches their situation pertaining to unpaid absences.

Planned / Unpaid Leave Request: (board-approved policy)

1. It is the expectation of the NRHEG School District that employees have a primary commitment to the agreed-upon workdays. Therefore, requests for unpaid leave time during the school calendar year should be in response to an unusual, infrequent, or unique major life event.
2. Requests must be submitted via the [Unpaid Leave Request form](#) at least 60 days before the first day of the requested leave.
3. All eligible forms of paid leave must have been exhausted before a request for an unpaid leave of absence is considered.
4. If unpaid leave is denied but taken, or unpaid leave is taken but not submitted for approval, the employee will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.
5. No more than one approved *Unpaid Leave Request* may be submitted for every six (6) consecutive years of employment.
6. The employee will pay a pro-rated daily rate of the district portion of health insurance costs for unpaid leave days.

Unplanned / Unpaid Leave Form (clarification added April 2024)

NRHEG Public Schools understands that unplanned situations arise that are not covered by the Unpaid Leave Request policy. NRHEG Public Schools also understands that unplanned situations may occur before an employee can request an unpaid leave of absence. (i.e., need for a Safe and Sick Leave day when all Safe and Sick Leave days have been exhausted)

When these unplanned situations do occur, the employee:

1. Must call their direct supervisor requesting the unpaid leave. Text and emails will not satisfy this requirement.
2. Must follow all regular requirements for reporting an absence.
3. Must fill out the [Unplanned / Unpaid Leave form](#) indicating the reasons for not reporting to work within 24 hours of their absence.
4. Is hereby made aware that while different contracts address the matter differently, excessive absenteeism is considered "just cause" and is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

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