

Sick Leave

All full-time employees, regardless of their length of service, earn 4 hours of sick leave for each full biweekly pay period. Employees who work on a part-time basis with an established tour of duty earn sick leave at the rate of 1 hour for each 20 hours in pay status.

Sick leave becomes available for use at the beginning of the pay period during which it is earned.

There is no limitation on the amount of sick leave which may be carried forward from one year to another.

Any sick leave to an employee's credit upon separation may be credited back to them if an individual is reemployed on or after 2 Dec 94 (See 5 CFR 630.502(1)).

NOTE: An employee who retires receives credit for unused sick leave. It is added on to the length of service for the annuity calculations.

Sick leave accrual rates are as follows:

Sick Leave Accrual	
Full-time Employees	1/2 day (4 hours) for each biweekly pay period.
Part-time Employees	1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status.
There are no limits on the amount of sick leave that can be accumulated. Unused sick leave accumulated by employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System will be used in the calculation of their annuities.	

An employee may use sick leave for-

- [Personal medical needs](#)
- [Care of a family member](#)
- [Care of a family member with a serious health condition](#)
- [Adoption related purposes](#)

AFI 36-815, requires that the employee always request approval of sick leave, and in advance whenever possible. Para 3.5, requires employees to request sick leave in advance for prearranged medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment. In other cases, the employee must request sick leave as soon as possible after the beginning of the absence, normally within the first two hours of the beginning of the duty day.

For absences of 3 days or less, sick leave must be requested on each day of absence unless the supervisor expressly relieves the employee of this requirement.

As leave-approving officials, supervisors should have procedures established for requesting sick leave (just as for annual leave) and they should be sure all employees know and follow these procedures. Negotiated agreements may be very specific on this.

An employee may be advanced up to 30 days of sick leave. This is not considered a routine or standard procedure and will be granted only after all circumstances have been carefully weighed. Advance sick leave is not granted if it is considered likely that the employee will not return to duty for a sufficient period of time to repay the advanced leave.

NOTE: At the rate sick leave is earned, an employee would have to work for over two years to earn back the 30 days of advanced sick leave – and that's if they don't need to use sick leave during the intervening period.

Sick leave may be denied in the following situations:

- Requests for sick leave for non-emergency medical appointments if it is determined the employee's services are needed.
- If the employee fails to follow prescribed procedures for requesting sick leave, provided the supervisor considers there were insufficient extenuating circumstances to warrant approval.
- If the employee fails to provide adequate documentation of incapacitation when required.

An employee may not normally engage in outside employment while on sick leave. However, in rare instances, the employee's condition may still be incapacitating for the regular job and not preclude the employee from performing a different, outside job. The employee must notify the supervisor of the outside job and furnish acceptable evidence of continued incapacitation for the regular position.

Before allowing an individual to engage in outside employment, the supervisor must make every reasonable effort to furnish light duty or appropriate detail duties the employee can perform.

Medical documentation is a written statement signed by a licensed physician or health care provider which provides the following information:

1. The history of the medical condition(s)
2. Clinical findings from the most recent medical evaluation
3. Diagnosis, including the current clinical status
4. Prognosis, including plans for future treatment and an estimate of the expected date of full or partial recovery



5. An explanation of the impact of the medical condition on overall health and activities
6. An explanation of the medical basis for any conclusion which indicates the likelihood that the individual is or is not expected to suffer sudden subtle incapacitation by carrying out, with or without accommodation, the tasks or duties of a specific position
7. Narrative explanation of the medical basis for any conclusion that the medical condition has or has not become static or well stabilized and the likelihood that the individual may experience sudden or subtle incapacitation as a result of the medical condition

Employees must provide medical documentation for sick leave for more than 3 consecutive days unless the supervisor specifically waives this requirement.

Employees are allowed 15 days after they return to duty to provide necessary medical documentation to support their absence. It is only one 15-day period. Supervisors are responsible for notifying employees of this requirement. Normally, the EMR Specialist works with the supervisor to construct the appropriate memorandum outlining all the requirements for the employee.

When requesting medical documentation, only request answers to the questions that are necessary to resolve the issues at hand. EEOC guidance states that an employer may only seek information about an employee's medical condition when it is "job related and consistent with business necessity".

If the supervisor doubts the validity of a medical certificate, the base medical officer may be requested to review the documentation and to consult the employee's physician for additional information.

Indicators that an employee is abusing his/her sick leave privileges include the following:

The employee

- Never develops a reserve of leave for emergencies
- Is often on unscheduled sick leave on Monday, Friday, or around holidays
- Fails to properly request leave
- Uses excessive leave for seemingly feeble medical reasons

In the case of suspected sick leave abuse, employees should be advised in writing, in advance that medical documentation will be required for all future sick leave requests and that failure to provide the medical documentation within the timeframes may result in disapproval of sick leave. The absence may then result in a charge of AWOL.