

# Vacation Time

This Policy and its related procedures set standards for the fair and consistent accrual and usage of paid vacation time.

This Policy applies to all University employees, with the exception of students who are employed on a Student Contract, casuals, academic assistants, executives, academic staff (faculty and clinicians) and Postdoctoral Fellows. Vacation Entitlement for University employees not covered by this Policy will be outlined in their contract of employment, applicable collective agreement provisions, or in accordance with employment standards legislation.

## Procedures

The Vacation Policy Procedures have been created to support the Vacation Policy and to provide a clear statement of the principles to be considered for ensuring that the University complies with the Vacation Policy and adheres to the *Employment Standards Act* and the applicable collective agreement(s).

### Accrual

1. Employees' initial vacation Entitlements are outlined in their employment contract (typically 15 days) and increase in accordance with Appendix A (Vacation Schedule) of the Vacation Policy.
2. An employee's vacation entitlement cannot exceed 30 days per calendar year.
3. For employees other than those in continuing, full-time appointments, vacation Entitlements will be pro-rated based on full time equivalency.

### Carry-Over

1. The University's policy is that Entitlements be used in the Accrual Period, though Carry-Over of up to five days of vacation may occur if:
  - a. The department head/designate grants an employee's written request for Carry-Over, to a maximum of five days; or
  - b. Exceptional operational circumstances prevented the utilization of vacation days.
2. However, in no circumstance can an employee with less than five years of continuous service utilize fewer than ten of their vacation days, or the pro-rated equivalent of those ten days for new employees, continuing part-time employees, continuing term employees or reduced responsibility employees, in a calendar year.
3. In no circumstances can an employee with five years or more of continuous service utilize fewer than fifteen of their vacation days, or the pro-rated equivalent of those fifteen days for continuing part-time employees, continuing term employees or reduced responsibility employees, in a calendar year.

4. Requests to carry over vacation must be submitted to the department head or designate in writing no later than November 1 of the Accrual Period.
5. If Carry-Over is granted, the employee is expected to use the Carry-Over as well as the full Entitlement in the subsequent calendar year. Carry-Over in excess of five days may be approved in exceptional circumstances related to operational requirements, and requires written approval from the appropriate department head.

## Management Responsibilities

1. Department heads/designates are responsible for ensuring that vacation taken by employees is entered into the Time & Labour system on a monthly basis by the departmental timekeeper, prior to payroll cut-off dates, to ensure the maintenance of current and accurate timekeeping records.
2. Vacation time taken and/or scheduled for the month of December must be entered into the Time & Labour system prior to the December payroll cut-off date.
3. Department heads/designates will make reasonable efforts to schedule employee vacations as requested, considering the applicable collective agreement(s) and the operational requirements of the department. However, it is the responsibility of the department head/designate to make every effort to ensure that employees use all of their Entitlements in the Accrual Period; therefore, in cases where there is not mutual agreement between the employee and the department head/designate, the department head/designate may schedule an employee's vacation on their behalf or payout unused Entitlements in excess of ten days (or the prorated equivalent of those 10 days) or 15 days (or the prorated equivalent) for employees with five years or more years of continuous service in accordance with departmental procedures and the applicable collective agreement(s).

## Relationship to Leaves of Absence

1. Where an employee has taken an unpaid leave of absence (not including maternity or parental leave) for a period or periods exceeding one month, vacation Entitlements will be pro-rated for the period or periods actually worked.
2. Employees will continue to accrue vacation during maternity and parental leaves.
3. If during an employee's vacation, there should occur a serious illness or accident requiring hospitalization or confinement to bed for a period of five days or more, which is supported by Substantiated Medical Documentation (as defined in the [Return to Work Policy](#)), then sick leave may be substituted for vacation.
4. Similarly, where entitlement to Bereavement Leave is established, such leave will be substituted for previously scheduled vacation.

## New Hires/Terminations/Transfers

1. When an employee transfers to a new department, their Carry-Over and any accrued Entitlements will be the responsibility of the department in which they were earned. The department head/designate of both departments must make arrangements to schedule existing Carry-Over and any accrued Entitlements prior to the transfer and/or transfer funds equivalent to the Carry-Over and any accrued Entitlements.
2. Employees hired in the first half of the month will be entitled to a full month's worth of accrual; employees hired in the second half of the month will accrue a half months' worth of accrual.
3. The vacation payout that an employee receives upon termination will be pro-rated based on their service within that year and reduced for any vacation days used up to the pro-rated vacation entitlement. Employees terminating in the first half of the month will be entitled to a half-month worth of accrual. Employees terminating in the second half of the month will be entitled to a whole month's worth of accrual.
  - a. For example, an employee whose annual Entitlement is 20 days, and who terminates on May 10, and has not used any vacation within that year, will be paid out for 7.5 days of vacation (20 days / 12 months x 4.5 months).
4. Department heads/designates are expected to schedule employees' unused Entitlements prior to their termination date. Where such arrangements are not practicable, the value of the outstanding Entitlements will be paid out on the employee's final pay.

## Policy

The University strives to provide a healthy workplace that supports a work/life balance and provides employees with periods of uninterrupted time away from their jobs and work-related duties. Vacation Entitlements are to be used in the calendar year in which the employee earns the vacation, though carry-over of vacation may occur in exceptional circumstances. Approval to carry over may be granted in accordance with departmental guidelines, applicable collective agreements, and the Vacation Policy Procedures.

View [Vacation Policy](#) from the *University Secretariat and Legal Counsel*

## Definitions

**Accrual Period:** January 1 through December 31 of each year.

**Continuous Service:** The period during which an individual is employed by the University without a break in service as defined by the Employment Standards Act or the applicable collective agreement. Employment excluded from the scope of this policy is not considered continuous service (except for continuous employment as a postdoctoral fellow).

**Entitlement:** The number of vacation days which an employee is eligible to use within an Accrual Period. This is typically based upon years of Continuous Service in accordance with Appendix A.

**Carry-Over:** The portion of an employee's Entitlement which is approved for use in the subsequent Accrual Period.

**Student Contract:** A contract processed through the HR PeopleSoft system that is used for a student at the University who is employed as a Research Assistant (RA), Teaching Assistant (TA), Teaching Fellow or for non-academic work.

## Responsibilities

### Employees

- Request and use each year's Entitlement in its entirety, during the Accrual Period, providing their department head/designate with as much advance notice as possible of requests and changes to requests, and in accordance with departmental guidelines and the applicable collective agreement.

### Department Heads/Designates

- Endeavour to approve vacation at times requested by employees, taking into consideration the applicable collective agreement(s) and the operational requirements of the department.
- Make every effort to ensure that employees' Entitlements are used in their entirety during the Accrual Period, including scheduling employees' vacation as necessary to ensure usage within the Accrual Period.
- Ensure that vacation taken by employees is entered into the Time & Labour system on a monthly basis by the departmental timekeeper, prior to payroll cut-off dates.
- Approve any requests for Carry-Over in accordance with departmental guidelines, applicable collective agreement(s) and Vacation Policy Procedures.
- Collaborate with other department heads/designates and in accordance with the Vacation Policy Procedures and the applicable collective agreement(s) when employees with Entitlements transfer between departments.
- Must submit their own requests for vacation usage, if required, and any requests for vacation Carry-Over to their supervisor. Department heads/designates cannot approve their own requests for vacation Carry-Over.

## Human Resources

- Provide a mechanism for accurately recording vacation and facilitating employee access to their current Entitlement.
- Provide department heads/designates with information and advice regarding the application of the Vacation Policy and Procedures.
- Ensure that offer letters include appropriate language regarding vacation Entitlement.

## Vacation Schedule (Appendix A)

| Employment Year based on Continuous Service | Vacation Entitlement  |
|---|---|
| Year 1                                      | Entitlement based upon employment contract (typically 15 days)<br>Pro-rated based on start date |
| Year 3                                      | + 1 day   |
| Year 4                                      | + 1 day   |
| Year 5                                      | + 1 day   |
| Year 6                                      | + 1 day   |
| Year 7                                      | + 1 day   |
| Year 10                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 12                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 14                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 16                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 18                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 19                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 20                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 22                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 24                                     | + 1 day   |
| Year 25                                     | + 1 day   |

Employment year is based on the calendar year January 1st to December 31st. An employee is considered to be in Year 1 during the calendar year they are hired. Increases to entitlements are effective January 1st of the applicable calendar year.

**NB:** An employee's vacation entitlement cannot exceed 30 days per calendar year.