

Leave & Absence Policy

1. Purpose

The Leave & Absence Policy aims to promote employee well-being while ensuring minimal disruption to business operations. It defines the various types of leave available to employees and sets out clear procedures for applying, approving, and managing leave.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all full-time, part-time, and fixed-term employees. Interns, trainees, and contract workers may refer to their individual contracts or associated guidelines for specific leave entitlements.

3. Definitions

- **Annual Leave:** Paid vacation leave accrued monthly for rest and personal activities.
- **Sick Leave:** Leave taken due to illness, injury, or medical appointments.
- **Casual Leave:** Short-term leave taken for urgent or unforeseen circumstances.
- **Maternity Leave:** Leave granted to female employees during pregnancy and after childbirth.
- **Paternity Leave:** Leave granted to male employees on the birth or adoption of a child.
- **Bereavement Leave:** Leave granted due to the death of a close family member.
- **Leave Without Pay (LWOP):** Leave taken without salary.

4. Leave Entitlements

- **Annual Leave:** 20 working days per year, accrued at 1.67 days/month.
- **Sick Leave:** 12 days per year. Requires a medical certificate for absences exceeding 2 days.
- **Casual Leave:** 7 days per year. Half-day increments allowed.
- **Maternity Leave:** 26 weeks paid leave in accordance with the Maternity Benefit Act. Additional unpaid leave may be granted at HR discretion.
- **Paternity Leave:** 10 working days to be availed within 60 days of childbirth/adoption.
- **Bereavement Leave:** 3 days for domestic travel, 5 days if international.
- **Public Holidays:** As per annual holiday calendar approved by management.
- **Compensatory Off:** In lieu of work performed on declared holidays or weekends.

5. Leave Application Process

- Employees must apply through the HR Management System (HRMS) or designated platform.
- Leave should be applied with appropriate notice:
 - **Annual Leave:** At least 10 working days in advance.
 - **Casual Leave:** Minimum same-day notification before 10:00 AM.
 - **Medical Leave:** Notify as early as possible, submit doctor's note within 48 hours if >2 days.
- Approval must be obtained from the reporting manager and recorded by HR.

6. Leave Approval and Rejection

- Managers should approve/reject requests within 2 working days.
- Rejections must be accompanied by a reason and alternate suggestions where applicable.
- In case of emergencies, post-facto approval may be obtained within 3 days.

7. Carry Forward & Encashment

- A maximum of 10 unused annual leave days may be carried forward to the next calendar year.
- Leave encashment is permitted:
 - At the time of separation (based on basic salary).
 - Once every 3 years during employment (maximum 15 days).

8. Leave Without Pay (LWOP)

- LWOP may be requested if paid leave balance is exhausted.
- Maximum duration: 90 calendar days.
- Benefits such as insurance coverage may be suspended after 30 days of continuous LWOP.

9. Job Abandonment

- Absence without notification for 2 or more consecutive working days will trigger a no-show investigation.

- HR will send a notice; failure to respond within 3 working days may result in disciplinary action including termination.

10. Special Leave Provisions

- **Sabbatical Leave:** Employees with 5+ years of service may apply for sabbatical leave up to 6 months without pay, subject to leadership approval.
- **Jury Duty / Voting Leave:** Paid leave is granted upon submission of official notice.

11. Responsibilities

- **Employees:** Ensure timely and accurate application for leave and submit required documentation.
- **Managers:** Ensure fair and consistent approval, manage team workload.
- **HR Department:** Maintain leave records, audit leave usage, resolve disputes.

12. Monitoring & Compliance

- Leave records are maintained for a minimum of 7 years.
- Periodic audits may be conducted by HR to ensure policy compliance.
- Misuse of leave or false documentation may lead to disciplinary action.

13. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually in December and updated in accordance with regulatory changes or organizational needs.