



POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

NUMBER: 4.6102
DIVISION: Strategy Operations and Finance
TITLE: Vacation Leave
DATE: January 3, 2000
REVISED: February 1, 2006; May 1, 2012; July 1, 2022
Policy For: All Non-Faculty Employees
Authorized By: Assistant Vice President, Human Resources

I. Purpose and Scope

Western Kentucky University recognizes the value of rest and relaxation in helping to ensure the overall health and well-being of eligible University employees.

II. Policy

A. Eligibility and Usage

1. Vacation leave with pay is earned by all regular full-time employees. (Note: Although they are generally recognized as “faculty”, twelve-month academic department heads earn vacation leave because of their administrative appointments; leave is not earned by academic department heads whose appointments are for periods of less than twelve months.)
2. Vacation leave may be used for vacations, personal business, or for any other personal reason. Leave may only be taken at times agreed upon by the employee and their supervisor/department head and must be approved in advance. Vacation leave may be denied, when in the opinion of the supervisor/department head, the employee’s absence would unduly affect the efficient functioning of the unit. The approval of vacation leave may not be arbitrarily withheld or withheld without justifiable cause, and efforts should be made to allow eligible employees to use accrued time. A supervisor/department head may specify that vacation leave only be taken based on departmental needs and schedules.
3. The responsibility for administering this policy is delegated to department heads and supervisors based on departmental records and determinations complying with the requirements of this policy.

III. Procedure

A. Reporting and Accruals

1. It is the responsibility of the employee for the accurate reporting of leave through the Topnet leave reporting system, to be approved by the employee's supervisor, no later than one week following the end of the payperiod.
2. Employees may not take or be granted vacation leave with pay in an amount greater than earned and accumulated.
3. Employees are charged with vacation leave only for days which they would otherwise work and receive pay. Should a University holiday be observed on one of the employee's regularly scheduled workdays while he/she is on vacation, he/she will not be charged vacation leave for the holiday.
4. Accumulated vacation leave may be used for an employee's own illness in cases where the employee has no medical leave balance. In such instances, the requirement for advance approval of vacation leave shall be waived.
5. Vacation leave accrues based on continuous service with Western Kentucky University in a qualified position according to the following accrual schedule:

Continuous Service	Monthly Accrual Rate	Days Per Year
0 thru 4 years	7.5 hours	12
5 thru 9 years	9.38 hours	15
10 thru 14 years	11.25 hours	18
15 thru 19 years	13.13 hours	21
20 years and over	15.00 hours	24

6. Employees hired before July 1, 1994, accrue according to the following schedule:

Continuous Service	Monthly Accrual Rate	Days Per Year
0 thru 4 years	11.88 hours	19
5 thru 9 years	13.13 hours	21
10 thru 14 years	13.75 hours	22
15 thru 19 years	14.38 hours	23
20 years or more	15.00 hours	24

7. Vacation leave is earned on the 15th calendar day of each month and is reflected in the Topnet leave reporting system once the applicable payroll containing the last day of the month has been completed. Employees who are hired on or before the 15th shall receive an accrual for that month. Employees who terminate employment prior to the 15th shall not accrue vacation leave for that month. Employees who are in an unpaid leave of absence status as of the 15th do not earn vacation leave for that month. For purposes of this policy, a leave of absence is defined as an unpaid period lasting 15 or more working days and inclusive of the 15th.
8. Adjustments to accrual rates are based on hire date. Hire dates prior to the 15th of the month will adjust in the month of hire. Hire dates after the 15th of the month will adjust the following month. Accrual rates are adjusted the 15th of the month in which the continuous service anniversary is reached.
9. Vacation leave shall be reported in hours rounded to the nearest quarter hour increment.
10. Staff employees who work in 9, 10, or 11 month positions may only accrue and use accumulated vacation leave during their employment period.
11. There is no limit to the accumulation of earned vacation leave. However, the maximum number of hours which may be carried forward from one fiscal year to the next (July 1) is 325 hours (two months). All hours in excess of 325 hours as of July 1 of each year shall be transferred to each employee's medical leave balance.

12. Transfers

1. Employees who transfer or otherwise change from one University department to another shall retain their accrued vacation leave in the new department.
2. Employees who transfer to a non-covered position (for example, a transfer from an administrative position to a nine-month faculty position) shall be paid any accumulated vacation leave up to a maximum of 250 hours at the time of the transfer.

D. Termination/Separation of Employment

1. Employees separating from employment with Western Kentucky University shall be eligible to receive pay for up to 250 hours of accumulated vacation leave which is unused at the date of termination/separation when the following conditions are met:
 - a) The employee is in good standing and has been employed for no less than one year.
 - b) The employee provides appropriate notification of their intent to resign. Appropriate notice for employees is defined as two (2) weeks, except for those employees holding positions in EEO Category 10 who must provide a notice of no less than thirty (30) days. An employee may not use accrued vacation in meeting this notification period unless approval is granted by their supervisor/department head. Appropriate notice must be given in order to be considered eligible for rehire status.
 - c) The University reserves the right to waive the required notification period, and retains the authority to review and approve or deny terminal vacation pay.

2. The date of termination/separation is the last day the employee actually works. An exception to this rule is applicable for individuals who are on certified medical leave immediately prior to separation of employment. All payments for accumulated vacation leave shall be paid in lump sum in the employee's last payroll check (or the next available payroll check if payroll cycle has closed).
3. Employees who are laid off or terminated involuntarily due to reductions in work force for reasons beyond their control will be given credit for prior years of continuous service for vacation accrual purposes upon re-employment.
4. Employees who terminate employment with Western Kentucky University and who are re-employed within one calendar year, shall receive their prior continuous service credit with the institution for vacation leave accrual purposes.
5. Should the death of an employee occur during the course of employment, any unused vacation leave up to the maximum of 250 hours will be paid to the employee's estate.
6. Retirement contributions **will be** paid by the University and withheld from vacation pay for employees who are members of the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System (KTRS) and have an initial entry date prior to 7/1/2008.

Retirement contributions **will not be** paid by the University or withheld from employee vacation pay for employees who are participants in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), who are members of the Kentucky Employees' Retirement System (KERS) or who are members of the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System (KTRS) and have an initial entry date on or after 7/1/2008.

IV. Exclusions / Special Exceptions to Policy

- A. Athletic coaches are not eligible to earn vacation leave with pay as stated in this policy.
- B. Academic Department Heads whose appointments are for periods of less than twelve months do not earn vacation leave with pay as stated in this policy.
- C. Special Exception for Campus Police Officers and Communication Officers

1. Vacation leave accrues based on continuous service with Western Kentucky University in a qualified position according to the following accrual schedule:

Continuous Service	Monthly Accrual Rate	Days Per Year
0 thru 4 years	8.00 hours	12
5 thru 9 years	10.00 hours	15
10 thru 14 years	12.00 hours	18
15 thru 19 years	14.00 hours	21
20 years and over	16.00 hours	24

2. Employees hired before July 1, 1994, accrue according to the following schedule:

Continuous Service	Monthly Accrual Rate	Days Per Year
0 thru 9 years	14.00 hours	21
10 thru 14 years	14.66 hours	22
15 thru 19 years	15.34 hours	23
20 years and over	16.00 hours	24

3. The maximum number of hours which may be carried forward from one fiscal year to the next (July 1) is 347 hours (2 months*) All hours in excess of 347 hours as of July 1 of each year shall be transferred to each employee's medical leave balance.

4. Police Officers separating from employment with Western Kentucky University shall be eligible to receive pay for up to 260 hours (1.5 months*) of accumulated vacation leave which is unused at the date of termination/separation when the following conditions are met:

- a. The officer provides appropriate notification of their intent to resign. Officers must provide a notice of two (2) weeks. An employee may not use accrued vacation in meeting this notification period unless approval is granted by their supervisor/department head. The University reserves the right to waive, at its sole discretion, the required notification period.
- b. The date of termination/separation is the last day the officer actually works. An exception to this rule is applicable for individuals who are on certified medical leave immediately prior to separation of employment. All payments for accumulated vacation leave shall be paid in lump sum in the officer's last payroll check (or the next available payroll check if payroll cycle has closed). Retirement contributions will not be paid by the University or by employees for lump sum vacation leave pay.

** Based on a 40 hour workweek*

D. Special Exception for Retirees

Employees who terminate due to gaining official retirement status may elect to remain on the payroll through the last day of accumulated vacation (maximum of 250 hours) so that retirement credit is earned. Retirement contributions will be paid by the University and appropriate deductions withheld from employee paychecks in such cases.

Should a KTRS retiree, with initial participation prior to 7/1/2008, elect to receive their accumulated vacation leave in lump sum payment, retirement contributions will be paid by the University and withheld from their earnings.

Should a KERS, ORP or KTRS with initial participation on or after 7/1/2008 elect to receive their accumulated vacation leave in lump sum, no retirement contributions will be paid by the University or withheld from employee earnings.

E. Special Provisions Pertaining to wholly Grant-Funded Positions

1. Employees who hold positions that are wholly grant-funded shall accrue vacation leave according to the same policies that apply to employees holding positions that are not wholly grant-funded. Certain unique provisions do apply related to leave usage as well as terminal vacation pay upon separation from employment.
2. Vacation accruals for wholly grant-funded employees shall not exceed 325 hours as of June 30 of each year, according to general policy provisions. Because various grants have differing budget periods, June 30 is used for uniformity and for efficient administrative purposes.
3. Upon resignation or other reasons of separation from employment, wholly grant-funded employees shall not be paid lump sum terminal vacation leave. An employee who anticipates resignation or separation from employment is responsible for working with his/her supervisor to use accumulated vacation leave prior to leaving employment. Vacation leave must be used in a manner so that grant activities/operations are not adversely affected. Consistent with general University policy, a wholly grant-funded employee may not be on continuous leave leading up to their official separation date. The last day of employment (effective date) is to be the last day of actual presence of the employee. Wholly grant-funded employees who cannot use their total accumulated vacation leave without adversely affecting grant activities/operations—as determined by their supervisor—shall forfeit any remaining vacation days.
4. Partially grant-funded employees separating from employment may be eligible for pro-rata vacation pay up to 250 hours.
5. Employees in wholly grant-funded positions who transfer to positions that are not grant-funded, or vice versa, shall have their vacation leave balances transferred to their new positions except for cases in which the new position is in an ineligible category. The general University policies that govern non-grant transfers shall apply to such transfers.
6. Employees in some/wholly grant-funded units may not be allowed to carry over vacation leave balances from one grant year to the next, according to grant regulations.
7. Principal Investigators/Project Directors of wholly grant-funded units are expected to communicate leave usage rules to each new employee and to provide notice to all affected employees at the commencement of each grant period.

V. Related Policies

VI. Reason for Revision

Policy updated to include changes to fiscal year rollover threshold and payout amounts, in addition to requiring one year minimum employment period in order to receive terminal vacation pay.