
S.O.P. #: PERSONNEL 11

SUBJECT: SPECIAL LEAVES

DIVISION: CAREER PERSONNEL

Objective: To define the types of leave provided by the Fire Department and County that are in addition to regular leave time.

Section 1: Official Non-Work Days (F-Days) Granted in Addition to Regular Leave Time

- A. From time-to-time the County grants "F-Time" to all Fire Department members who must work when County office employees are granted days off for special holiday extensions, or inclement weather.
- B. In the event the County Executive grants additional leave to non-essential county employees for any reason, those employees required by the Fire Department to perform duties shall be entitled to receive one hour of "non work leave" ("F" Leave) for each hour granted, in addition to any pay, which they are entitled to for that period. When an official non-work day is granted, members may select which date to utilize the "F"-Day from the point of earning said leave until the end of the calendar year. Employees with credited, unused "F" time after December 31st will be charged "F" for their next non-sick leave day used between then and March 31st.

Section 2: Bereavement Leave

- A. Upon request, a leave of absence shall be granted to a member when a death occurs in the member's family. The leave will be granted in accordance with the guidelines found in Section 11.3 of the current Memorandum of Understanding.
- B. Within two (2) days of returning to duty from bereavement leave, a form 372A will be completed and signed by the employee and the company officer. The form 372A will then be sent (hard copy) to fire staffing.
- C. Failure to complete the form 372A within two (2) days of returning to duty will result in the employee's status being changed to "absent without permission no pay" (Code = X) for the bereavement leave in question.
- D. The employee's signature on the 372A will attest to the validity and accuracy of the bereavement leave usage. Officers will investigate bereavement leave request as needed, and discrepancies will be handled through the disciplinary process.
- E. Bereavement Announcement Procedure
 - 1. The on duty Station or Section Officer that is notified of a career or civilian member, current or retired, who has died or has a death of an immediate family member (parent, step-parent, grandparent, step-grandparent, child, step-child, spouse, brother, step-brother, sister, step-sister, spouse's step-brother, or spouse's step-sister) will ask the member or their family if they desire to have to have the Form 372A distributed to the department.
 - 2. If desired, as outlined above, the Officer will send the Form 372A to the Fire ADO mailbox, ONLY after all service information is gathered. The on duty Administrative Duty Officer will distribute to the list on file at the ADO desk.
 - 3. Any other requests for Form 372A distribution will be approved by a Chief Officer prior to sending to the on duty ADO.
 - 4. For all other relatives not outlined above, Station Officers are authorized to distribute at their Station ONLY if the member or family desires.

Section 3: Jury Duty

- A. When a notice is received to report to jury duty, the employee is to abide by the following procedure:
1. In jurisdictions no longer honoring complete exemption requests, such as Baltimore County and Baltimore City, the employee shall complete, sign and return the questionnaire to the court. In these jurisdictions, the juror must appear for one day or one trial. If not chosen for a case, the juror has completed his/her obligation. However, if chosen for a case, the juror must serve until the completion of the trial, which may require more than one day.
 2. When the employee receives a summons to appear, a copy of the notice must be forwarded to his/her supervisor so that the appropriate payroll marking may be made.
 3. In those jurisdictions honoring exemptions, the employee requesting an exemption shall complete and sign the questionnaire from the court and forward it to the Fire Chief's Office with a Form 58 requesting an exemption, as soon as the questionnaire is received. The letter to the court requesting the exemption will be mailed, with the completed questionnaire, from the Fire Chief's Office and a copy of the correspondence will be sent to the employee.
 4. Upon completion of jury duty, the summons form should be stamped by the Circuit Court personnel and returned to Administrative Services who will place a copy in the individual's personnel file and forward the original to the Office of Personnel for payroll purposes.
- B. Personnel requested to serve on jury duty must adhere to the following procedures:
1. Day Duty
 - a. Personnel requested to report for jury duty and are scheduled to work day duty on the same day must notify the Officer-in-Charge of their assigned station/location as soon as they receive notification from the Court system. This notification to the individual's assigned station/location O.I.C. must be completed no later than twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
 - b. Personnel who report for jury duty on day(s) that they are scheduled for day duty and are released from jury duty at or prior to 1300 hours, must report to their assigned location to complete the day's shift.
 - c. When personnel must report for jury duty for more than one (1) consecutive day, they must notify the O.I.C. of their assigned station/location as soon as possible after receiving confirmation of same.
 2. Night Duty
 - a. Personnel scheduled to work night duty and are scheduled to report for jury duty on the following day shall be allowed off the night before their scheduled jury duty assignment.
 - 1) Personnel who must report for jury duty on the date(s) that they are scheduled to work night shift and are not required to report for jury duty the following day, must report as scheduled if released from jury duty at or prior to 1500 hours.
 - 2) Personnel who reported for jury duty as described above and are released from jury duty after 1500 hours must report to duty to assume their assigned duties within two (2) hours after being released.

- b. Personnel who are requested to report for jury duty for more than one (1) consecutive day while scheduled for night duty shall be allowed off the night(s) before.

NOTE: Anytime personnel are scheduled to report for jury duty and then cancelled must report this information to the O.I.C. of their assigned station/location as soon as possible and report for duty as scheduled.

Section 4: Leaves Without Pay

- A. Leaves without pay may be granted by the Director of Personnel for periods up to one (1) year to members presenting valid and sufficient reasons for such leave and upon the written recommendation by the Fire Chief.
- B. A request for leave in excess of thirty (30) days must be made by the member, in writing, to the Fire Chief.
- C. Employment elsewhere may terminate such leave.
- D. Leave may also be granted to female members for maternity reasons (see Personnel Series #02).

Section 5: Active Military Duty, Military Reserve Leave, and National Guard Activation

- A. Members shall be granted fifteen (15) days annual leave in any one calendar year to meet their military obligations. This leave shall not count against the employee's regular leave. The employee will be paid full pay during such an absence.
 - 1. The Captain shall be responsible to see that any/all members under their command requesting military leave time do not receive more than the allotted fifteen (15) days.
 - 2. The Captain shall also record military leave granted in the Station Journal.

Note: These days off shall be granted in addition to the Division allowed off complement.
- B. If called to active duty, a copy of the military orders of the member requesting leave must be forwarded to the respective Division Chief's office. The Division Chief will then notify the Assistant Chief of the Fire Department.
- C. When an employee has a Military Obligation, the employee may:
 - 1. Use the fifteen (15) allotted Military Leave days.
 - 2. Use earned leave or compensatory time.
 - 3. Use exchange time as identified in Personnel 09.
 - 4. Request a leave of absence without pay as outlined in the Baltimore County Fire Department Rules and Regulations Handbook.

NOTE: All Military Leave taken as described in Section 5, C, 1 above shall be granted in addition to the Division allowed off complement.

In Section 5, C, 2 above, when using leave, compensatory time, etc., the member must apply for the days at the earliest time possible (32 days or 24 days out). When the employee is aware of his military obligation more than 32 days in advance he is required to apply for leave in accordance with current leave guidelines. If leave is granted as part of the normal station complement allowed off, the day would count against the station complement allowed off. The employee would be allowed off over complement if the calendar were full.

- D. If called to active duty, the employee must submit a letter to the Chief of the Fire Department requesting a Military Leave of Absence for up to five (5) years.

Note: The employee may choose to utilize any remaining military leave, earned leave time, accrued leave time, or compensatory time earned while being processed onto the military payroll.

- E. While on a Military Leave of Absence, an employee does not earn any vacation or sick leave; however, upon return to work, all earned and unused leave balances will be reinstated. The employee's salary will be adjusted to reflect any merit or longevity increase that came due during his/her leave.
- F. At the end of one (1) year an activated guard or reservist would be terminated. However, various laws also guarantee an employee re-employment into his/her former job or, if unavailable, a position that as closely as possible has similar duties, classification and pay.
- G. Upon returning from active duty, the employee has ninety (90) days to request, in writing, reinstatement into the Fire Department.
- H. It shall be the employee's responsibility to monitor his/her military obligations and leave time usage.
- I. Returning to Duty from Military Reserve Leave
1. Members returning from military duty, such as encampments, civil disorders, etc., shall report for duty on their next duty day or night, or as soon as possible, with consideration given to allowing a reasonable rest period after traveling home.
 2. Contact shall be made between the employee and his/her O. I. C. to determine the employee's return to duty date.

Section 6: Adoption Leave.

- A. Upon taking physical custody of a child who is intended to be adopted, an employee, who is the person primarily responsible for the care and nurturing of the child, may use up to thirty earned sick leave absences. In the event that both parents are county employees, they may designate who is to be the person primarily responsible for the care and nurturing of the child or they may divide the use of thirty earned sick leave absences between themselves. The Director of the Office of Personnel shall apply this regulation to any employee who subsequent to December 1, 1986 took continuous alternative leave following the adoption of a child.
- B. Employees who take custody of a child for the purpose of adoption should inform their supervisor if they desire to use sick leave, as allowed.
- C. Sick leave, up to a maximum of thirty days, may be used immediately upon taking custody of the child. The sick leave days do not have to be taken consecutively if parents are sharing the responsibility of providing primary care for their new child.
- D. Sick leave may not be used to participate in the necessary legal proceedings which follow placement of a child for adoption.