



3.650 RCUH Leave of Absence Without Pay

I. Policy

It is the RCUH's policy to allow employees the opportunity to take time off from work for personal reasons, including Victims Leave (Addendum to Policy 3.650) under Chapter 378 (71-74) of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

II. Responsibilities

A. RCUH Employee

1. Comply with attendance procedures set forth by the Principal Investigator.
2. Request leave of absence without pay in advance of the planned leave (after all vacation hours have been exhausted, unless LWOP is for professional improvement leave, military leave, or family leave).
3. Note the leave of absence without pay on the RCUH Employee Time/Leave Certification Form.
4. If the leave of absence without pay is taken due to a certified disability, submit physician's note with the time report.

B. Principal Investigator

1. Ensure that attendance procedures (i.e., call-in requirements, leave requests, changes in work schedule) are clearly communicated to each employee. Enforce and monitor attendance procedures.
2. Submit an ePAF transaction (approved by Principal Investigator) for any LWOP actions.
3. Comply with procedures described below for any matters relating to leave without pay.

III. Applications

This policy applies to all regular-status employees (regardless of FTE).

This policy may also apply to temporary employees and student assistants under limited circumstances. The Principal Investigator or authorized designee shall reserve the right to find a replacement, without giving prior notice, to any casual employee or student assistant who is not available to work when needed.

IV. Details of Policy

- A. Maximum LWOP Period** – In all cases **other** than for certified disability leave (sick or industrial), the total period of continuous leave (paid and unpaid) shall not exceed

six (6) months. However, if the absence causes the project undue hardship and the employee is not willing or able to return to work, the employee may be terminated.

B. Fringe Benefits During LWOP – While on approved leave of absence without pay, the employee’s fringe benefits will be discontinued until she/he is placed back on active/paid status. However, the following may be provided:

1. See Policy RCUH 3.520 Health Plans for information on continuation options (i.e., COBRA) for health-insurance coverage during periods of leave of absence without pay.
2. See Policy RCUH 3.545 Long-Term Care for information on GLTCI coverage during periods of leave of absence without pay.

If the leave of absence without pay is due to an employee’s injury/illness, then life insurance and long-term disability insurance coverage may continue.

C. How Leave of Absence Without Pay (LWOP) Is Administered

1. Approval Is Required: Leave of absence without pay must be requested and is contingent upon the operational and staffing needs of the project as determined by the Principal Investigator or authorized designee.
2. Vacation Must Be Exhausted: All unused vacation credits must be exhausted and paid out before an employee can be placed on leave of absence without pay, except under the following circumstances:
 - a. The leave is for “Professional Improvement,” which is a period used to enhance the employee’s value to the project through the improvement of professional abilities. This type of leave is applicable to exempt-level staff only, and the leave period must be a primary and direct, and not a secondary or incidental, consequence of such leave. Professional improvement leave is subject to RCUH Human Resources approval.
 - b. The leave is taken in accordance with the Hawai’i State Family Leave Law (see Policy 3.660 RCUH Family Leave for details).
 - c. The leave is military leave and the Principal Investigator can accommodate the leave without pay in lieu of vacation leave.
3. Extended LWOP Due to Injury/Illness: If a regular-status employee’s extended absence due to the employee’s injury or illness (i.e., after employee exhausts sick leave accrual and is not able to return to work) causes the project undue hardship, the employee may be terminated to enable the project to find a regular replacement. This will only occur if the employee is not able to perform the essential functions of his/her job and the project is unable to provide sufficient reasonable accommodations. Termination of this sort should typically occur only after an absence (paid and unpaid) of six (6) months (includes continuous and intermittent absences) and must be approved by the Director of Human Resources or authorized designee. Terminations of this sort occurring prior to six (6) months of absence must be approved by the RCUH Director of Human Resources. See Policy 3.640 RCUH Sick Leave for more information.

4. Time Reporting: Any LWOP must be noted on the Employee Time/Leave Certification Form.
- D. Failure to Return to Work** – Should an employee fail to return to work upon expiration of the approved leave, he/she shall be deemed to have resigned from his/her position and will be terminated.
- E. Victim’s Leave** – Refer to Victim’s Leave (Addendum to Policy 3.650) for more information.

V. Procedures

A. Procedures for Employees Requesting LWOP

1. Request Approval From Principal Investigator/Designee: Submit request for leave of absence without pay to the Principal Investigator or authorized designee with reasonable notice.
2. Time Reporting: If approved, the employee must note his/her LWOP hours as “LWP” in the “Unpaid Leaves” column of the RCUH Employee Time/Leave Certification Form. Also indicate the start and end dates of the leave in the green “Additional Information” section.
3. Return to Work: Return to work upon conclusion of the approved LWOP period. Communicate any changes to the leave period to the Principal Investigator/designee.

B. Procedures for Principal Investigators/Designees Who Have an Employee Requesting LWOP

1. Ensure Attendance Procedures Are Clearly Defined and Communicated: It is the Principal Investigator and/or designee’s responsibility to ensure that attendance procedures (i.e., call-in requirements, leave requests, changes in work schedule) are clearly communicated to each RCUH employee.
2. Submit Personnel Action Form: All leave without pay actions (including professional improvement leave) **must** be submitted on the ePAF system for **more than one month** and approved by the Principal Investigator.
3. Time Reporting: Any employee on an approved LWOP period will not show up on the online timesheet; therefore, Principal Investigator/designees need not submit time for the employee on approved LWOP.
4. If an ePAF transaction was NOT submitted, “LWP” must be noted on the Other Earnings panel of the RCUH online timesheets for salaried employees so the appropriate earnings can be subtracted from the employee’s pay period salary. “LWP” is not required on the online timesheets for hourly employees, as only the hours worked are recorded.

VI. Contact

RCUH Benefits: (808) 956-6979
rcuh_benefits@rcuh.com

VII. Relevant Documents

[ePAF System](#)

[Employee/Time/Leave Certification Form](#)

[Victims Leave \(Addendum to Policy 3.650\)](#)

[Policy 3.650 RCUH Victims Leave Form \(B-21\)](#)

[Policy 3.520 RCUH Health Plans](#)

[Policy 3.545 RCUH Long Term Care](#)

[Policy 3.640 RCUH Sick Leave](#)

[Policy 3.660 RCUH Family Leave](#)

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