



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR SICK LEAVE

### **Q: What is an authorized use of my sick leave?**

According to RCW 49.46.210, “An employee is authorized to use paid sick leave for the following reasons.”

- An absence resulting from an employee’s mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition;
- To accommodate the employee’s need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition;
- To accommodate an employee’s need for preventative medical care;
- To allow the employee to provide for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition;
- To care for family member who needs preventative medical care;
- When the place of business has been closed by order of public official for any health-related reasons;
- For any absence that qualifies for leave under the domestic violence leave act (RCW 49.76.030)

### **Q: When is the use of my sick leave inappropriate?**

Below are some examples of sick leave misuse, this list is not inclusive;

- A pre-planned vacation;
- To visit the newborn child of a family member or friend;
- To visit someone who is ill and is not considered an eligible family member;
- Children's events (i.e. sports events, activities, performances, graduations, etc.)
- For the purpose of pre-planned family events, or other events that; do not qualify under RCW 49.46.210

### **Q: Who is an eligible family member for the purpose of sick leave?**

According to RCW 49.46.210 a “family member” means any of the following;

- A child (including biological, adopted, foster child, stepchild, or a child to whom the employee is a legal guardian, regardless of age or dependency status);
- A biological, adopted, or foster parent stepparent, or legal guardian of an employee or the employee’s spouse or registered domestic partner;
- A spouse or registered domestic partner;
- A grandparent;
- A grandchild;
- A sibling.

**Q: When will I need to provide a doctor's note to take sick leave?**

If your absence will exceed five consecutive working days, the District may require a doctor's note and medical release in order to return to your position (also refer to your specific CBA dependent on your position with OSD for more specific information). Additionally, if there is a suspected pattern of sick leave misuse, the District can request that a doctor's note be provided regardless of the total days absent.

**Q: What if I will be using more than five consecutive days of sick leave?**

If your sick leave will exceed four consecutive working days, you may be eligible to receive time off according to Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Additional documentation is necessary for requesting FMLA. Contact the Human Resources Department as soon as possible to make your request and more information regarding possible leave options.

**Q: What do I do when I run out of sick leave and need to take a day or more time off later?**

If you exhausted your paid sick leave, you may be required to use any other available leave such as personal leave and vacation leave before going into unpaid leave. You may request shared leave through your union representative, who will on your behalf send out an email to staff regarding the request for shared leave. **An employee will not "solicit" sick leave from any OSD staff member.**

**Q: If I use my sick leave in conjunction with a pre-planned vacation, or for a purpose that is not authorized per RCW 46.46.210, is there a potential for repercussions?**

Yes. The misuse of sick leave is considered fraud and/or theft and is subject to discipline.

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If you have questions about whether your absence is eligible for sick leave, feel free to contact anyone in the Human Resources Department.