

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform guidelines for handling personal, military, and medical unpaid leave of absence. Request for leave of absence will be reviewed with each party's best interest considered, and balanced against the needs and interest of the City.

II. POLICY - PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Any regular employee may request a leave of absence without pay for up to six (6) months by submitting a written request setting forth the reason for the leave to the Department Head. Requests will be reviewed by the Department Head, the Human Resources Director and submitted to the Advisory Staff for final approval.

An employee can request a leave of absence for such reasons as: education, retraining, bereavement in the family. These are examples of leave of absence, but all reasons for requesting a leave will be taken under consideration and all circumstances evaluated.

The employee shall return to work immediately upon completion of the leave.

Leave extensions shall be granted only under extraordinary circumstances, approved by the City Manager, and then only if the employee requests such extension prior to the termination of the original leave of absence.

When returning from a leave, the employee shall be returned to his/her former position provided that it has not been eliminated due to reorganization or reduction in the work force. If his/her former position has been eliminated, the employee shall be considered for any available position within his/her department with status and pay commensurate to his/her former one. If no position exists, the City shall reinstate or reassign the employee within his/her department as jobs open and as work schedules permit.

If the employee does not return to work on the expiration date of the leave of absence, his/her employment shall be terminated, except if granted an extension as noted above.

Length of service, as it affects various employee benefits such as vacation time, shall continue to accrue for the duration of any leave of absence. However, vacation and sick leave credits will not accrue during the period the employee is on leave.

Holidays occurring during a leave of absence shall not be paid for.

PERS contributions and service credits will not continue during the period the employee is on leave. Application can be made to PERS at the time of return for evaluation of service credits based on the reason of the leave of absence. Any leave over two months in a fiscal year will affect service credit computations.

The City will allow an employee to continue participation in the health insurance program. The employee will need to submit a check for the premium to Risk Management by the first of each month in order to continue participation in the health insurance program. The health insurance program includes the medical, dental, vision and life insurance coverage normally afforded to employees.

III. POLICY - MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

It is the policy of the City of Visalia to grant military leave of absence as required by law and to provide certain benefits to employees granted such leave.

A. Procedure:

1. Notification:

Any employee who is required to report for short military training periods should submit a request, in writing, to his/her immediate supervisor for a military leave of absence.

Such leave will be granted if:

- a) The employee provides evidence of the “Ordered Tour of Duty” as soon as possible after receipt of such order, and

- b) Arrangements can be made to have the employee's work performed by others.

If suitable arrangements cannot be made, it may be necessary for the employee and the City to request an exemption from the Tour of Duty.

2. Compensation:

A regular employee who has completed the probationary period will be compensated for the difference between his/her salary with the City and military pay, if military pay (taxable income on military pay voucher) is less than his/her salary.

Upon returning from leave, the employee should submit to his/her supervisor a military pay voucher or its equivalent, detailing the amount of payment received from the government for the Tour of Duty.

The supervisor will attach the voucher to the employee's time card and along with a memo to payroll requesting that the employees check be adjusted by the proper amount.

IV. POLICY - MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

It is the policy of the City of Visalia to grant medical leave for a period of up to six (6) months for regular employees who are temporarily disabled and unable to perform the duties of the job.

A. Procedure

1. Notification

An employee requesting a medical leave of absence should submit, to his/her supervisor, a doctor's statement concerning his/her inability to

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work, including an estimated length of time that the employee may remain disabled.

Leave of up to six (6) months may be granted, however, the actual length of the leave and specific time(s) which it begins and ends will be based upon the employee's individual medical condition and ability to perform the job.

While the employee is on a medical leave of absence length of service, as it affects various employee benefits such as vacation time, shall continue to accrue for the duration of any leave of absence. However, vacation and sick leave credits will not accrue during the period the employee is on leave.

Holidays occurring during a leave of absence shall not be paid for.

PERS contributions and service credits will not continue during the period the employee is on leave. Application can be made to PERS at the time of return for evaluation of service credits based on the reason of the leave of absence. Any leave over two (2) months in a fiscal year will affect service credit computations.

The City will continue to pay the employees contributions for up to six (6) months participation in the health insurance program.

Upon returning to work after a medical leave of absence, an employee will be reinstated to a similar position to that which he/she occupied prior to the leave. If the employee is temporarily unable to perform some of the functions of his/her job because of the disabling medical condition, he/she may be provided with modified tasks, alternative assignments, and/or relieved of functions that cannot be performed safely.

When an employee is permanently disabled from performing the job functions, "reasonable accommodation" will be considered.