

SEFS STAFF ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE POLICY

Attendance

Clients and colleagues count on staff to be at work as scheduled to provide smooth and efficient operations. Although there are separate regulations governing different categories of staff, regular and punctual attendance is an ongoing expectation for all staff, whether classified, professional, or other represented staff. The definition of the actual arrival time that constitutes a tardy or late occurrence is at the discretion of the supervisor, with consideration given to the type of position (e.g., receptionist), client needs, and other relevant information. Failure to maintain an acceptable attendance record may result in an unsatisfactory performance evaluation and/or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The University's campus business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. At the discretion of the supervisor, after consideration of current business needs and regulations regarding overtime, staff may be granted a temporary modified work schedule or an alternative or flexible work schedule. These modifications should be requested from the supervisor in writing before the need arises and may be denied if the employee has a pattern of tardiness or other attendance issues, or for other work-related reasons determined by the supervisor.

Individual work schedules of full-time employees who are exempt professional staff will consist, at a minimum, of 40 hours per week, which will serve as the basis of vacation and sick leave accruals. However, the nature of responsibilities associated with most exempt full-time professional staff positions may require that the employee exceed the typical 40-hour-a-week work schedule.

Timesheets

Timesheets are an integral part of attendance. For those who record time, either in/out or total hours worked, recording the actual time in/out or total hours worked assists in ensuring that the employee is paid correctly, and that leave time is properly accrued. It is good practice to record your time daily (including unscheduled absences), as much as possible, as this helps in ensuring time blocks are submitted and approved each pay period.

Accruing leave

All permanent and some temporary non-academic employees, classified, professional, and other represented staff, accrue annual leave and sick leave. Leave benefits can vary for each employee type. Specific details are available at the following website: <https://hr.uw.edu/ops/leaves/>. Records of leave accrual and use are kept in Workday. In support of a work/life balance, employees and supervisors should work together to ensure that time off is planned on a regular basis. All time off should be recorded using the Absence App/Calendar in Workday. This also helps to ensure that leave balances are correctly managed.

Auditors take an interest in leave records because they involve financial assets; annual leave balances have cash value upon separation or retirement and sick leave balances have cash value upon retirement. This is why completeness and accuracy in these records is so important.

Scheduled absence

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that work coverage is provided and that workloads are fairly distributed, all within budget. Supervisors are also responsible for approving leave and absences, and for the general accuracy of the Workday leave and absence records of those they supervise. For these and other reasons, use of accrued leave must be requested in advance and approved in Workday by the employee's supervisor.

As soon as employees are aware that they will need time off from their regular work schedule, including non-emergency medical or dental appointments, they should request the time off in Workday from their supervisor. As much notification as possible should be given when requesting more than a day or two of vacation so that arrangements can be made for work coverage. Sick time off may be used only for authorized purposes and not for vacation time off. Leave without pay is generally not granted for sick leave if the employee has sick leave hours available.

Unscheduled absence

Staff members who become ill and cannot come to work must contact their supervisor before their expected arrival time. For an illness exceeding one day, this communication must be made daily thereafter unless other arrangements have been made with the supervisor. At the supervisor's discretion, documentation from a health care provider may be required if the absence extends to three consecutive scheduled work days. Failure to provide requested verification may be subject to discipline.

Notification: Except in extenuating circumstances, not communicating to report an absence is considered serious misconduct. The absence will be considered unauthorized, and the employee may have to report the time as leave without pay. Having someone else notify the supervisor instead of the employee is not acceptable, except in extreme situations. Not following procedures for reporting absences may result in corrective action up to and including dismissal.

Required medical documentation

At the supervisor's discretion, employees may be required to submit documentation from their health care provider in such cases as (but not limited to):

- If absent for three (3) consecutive days,
- If the ability to return to work is in question
- If there are attendance issues/problems
- If there is a need to substantiate the employee's own or a household member's serious health condition
- If there is suspected abuse of the sick leave benefit

Failure to provide requested verification may result in disciplinary action. Submission of altered or falsified documentation is grounds for dismissal.

Extended absence

Those eligible for the Federal Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions (<https://hr.uw.edu/ops/leaves/fmla>) may take up to 12 weeks of leave under certain conditions. The Washington Family Care Act also provides leave use entitlements (<https://hr.uw.edu/ops/leaves/fmla/laws-and-uw-policies/>). Washington State also offers Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML). See <https://hr.uw.edu/ops/leaves/paid-family-and-medical-leave-pfml/> or visit the Employment Security Department's Paid Family & Medical Leave webpage: <https://paidleave.wa.gov/>.

In the case of need for an extended leave for illness or injury of an employee or their family member, the employee must notify the supervisor as soon as the need is known so that coverage can be arranged. The employee should also initiate the necessary paperwork and a Workday Leave of Absence (LOA) request. Note that, while the need for leave must be discussed, the employee is not required to disclose medical information to their supervisor/unit. For extended leave, documentation from a health care provider is often required by UW, but it is never sent or returned to the unit. It is processed by a leave specialist in Central Human Resources, which provides confidentiality.

Unauthorized absence

Examples include tardiness, leaving early, extending breaks or lunches beyond the allocated time, extra breaks, unauthorized absence from assigned work area, excessive absenteeism through use of sick leave and leave without pay, a pattern of absences falling on days before and after holidays, weekends, and vacation days, not following proper procedures in arranging absences, not providing medical documentation when requested by the supervisor, and unexpected absence without timely and proper notification of the supervisor.

Supervisors should attempt to contact employees who fail to notify them of their absence. Unauthorized absences may result in disciplinary actions, and employees may have to report the time as leave without pay. Employees not present for work and who do not call for three scheduled work shifts may be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

Making up time is a privilege granted by supervisors on very infrequent occasions where good reason is provided. Such requests may be denied if there is a pattern of tardiness or other attendance issues, resulting in leave without pay for time missed, which will be considered an unauthorized absence. For those

employees who begin to develop a record of excessive absenteeism, the supervisor may require other reporting policies and procedures. Generally, make-up time must be completed within the same week. For classified staff, specific earn type coding of the make-up time is required. Professional staff frequently work alternative or flexible schedules due to the expectation that they provide *at least* 40 hours/week of service to accomplish their jobs.

Breaks and lunch

Breaks (15 minutes) must be taken for each four hours worked, and lunches must be taken for every 5 hours worked. Full time staff who work 8am – 5pm have an hour lunch scheduled. Employees may work with their supervisors for a shorter lunch, but lunch cannot be reduced to less than 30 minutes. Breaks and lunches cannot be taken at the end or beginning of the day to shorten the work day, except 30 minutes of the common 60-minute lunch as prearranged with the supervisor.

Overtime and compensatory time

Overtime is defined as work in excess of 40 hours in any given work week for overtime-eligible staff. The defined work week plays a role in determining overtime. The UW standard work week is Monday through Sunday, but individual work weeks can vary if the job requires it. Overtime-eligible employees can receive compensatory time instead of overtime pay if the manager approves (and for contract covered employees, if your collective bargaining agreement provides for compensatory time). Overtime and/or compensatory time accrual must be approved in advance by the supervisor, documented, and must be paid or added to compensatory time balances within the same pay period. If the time reported needs to be corrected, please contact sefspay@uw.edu. Supervisors may not require employees to accept compensatory time accrual instead of overtime pay. Email requests and approvals are the preferred SEFS method of documenting the advance written approval requirement for compensatory time accrual, a copy of which should be stored in the employee's Maintain Worker Documents file in Workday.

Overtime exempt professional staff are expected to work at least 40 hours per week and are not eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time.

Holiday leave

Work on holidays requires advance supervisor approval and program necessity, documentation of which should be stored in the employee's Maintain Worker Documents file in Workday.

Disciplinary/corrective action. Examples of activities which may result in such actions include, **but are not limited to:**

- Failure to follow policy for reporting absences
- Tardiness – includes late arrival/early departure, or extending scheduled breaks and lunches
- Unauthorized absence from assigned work area
- Unauthorized absenteeism which results in leave without pay (*includes but is not limited to the above cited incidents, absences not related to illness, or due to using all accrued sick leave*).
- A pattern of absences falling on days before and after holidays, weekends, vacation days

If employees begin to develop a record of excessive absenteeism, the supervisor may require them to follow additional reporting policies and procedures.

For assistance with or questions regarding managing time and absence, please contact the SEFS HR Manager at sefshr@uw.edu or email the payroll team at sefspay@uw.edu.

Helpful UW links

https://isc.uw.edu/user-guides/enter_time/

<https://hr.uw.edu/comp/overtime-for-non-academic-staff/overtime-compensation/>

https://isc.uw.edu/user-guides/enter_absence/

https://isc.uw.edu/user-guides/correct_time_off/

<https://hr.uw.edu/ops/holidays-time-off/holidays/>