

Leaves of Absence Policy

Library Board approved August 16, 2005. Revised July 19, 2011. Revised February 22, 2022. Revised January 24, 2023. Revised April 23, 2024. Revised April 22, 2026.

Commented [1]: Pending approval by the Board of Library Trustees

Introduction

The Oak Park Public Library recognizes staff members may need to take a leave from work for various reasons during their employment with the library. Therefore, the library provides the following leave of absence options included in this policy to its eligible staff members to use as requested and needed:

- [Bereavement Leave](#)
- [Blood and Organ Donation Leave](#)
- [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)
- [Family Military Leave](#)
- [Family Neonatal Intensive Care Unit \(NICU\) Leave](#)
- [General/Personal Leave](#)
- [Jury and Witness Duty Leave](#)
- [Paid Parental Leave](#)
- [Sabbatical Leave](#)
- [School Visitation Leave](#)
- [Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act \(VESSA\) Leave](#)
- [Voting Leave](#)

Commented [2]: Included in library policy in compliance with the Illinois Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act, which was effective January 1, 2026. It codifies providing job-protected, unpaid leave for parents with newborns in the NICU.

Commented [3]: New leave type for all regular staff members with five or more years of service.

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Bereavement Leave

Purpose

The Oak Park Public Library recognizes the profound impact of the death of a family member on its staff members and provides them with time off and support to grieve, make necessary arrangements, and attend services. This policy is designed to be inclusive and respectful of diverse family structures and personal relationships. This policy demonstrates our commitment to supporting our staff members during difficult times and fostering a compassionate and understanding workplace.

Eligibility

All library staff members are eligible for bereavement leave.

Leave Provisions

Paid Leave: Staff members are entitled to five workdays of paid bereavement leave due to the death of a covered family member.

Unpaid Leave: Staff members are entitled to take an additional five workdays of unpaid bereavement leave in the event of the death of a covered family member. Additionally, the library may, at its discretion and based on operational needs, offer additional unpaid bereavement leave beyond the amounts listed in this section for any staff members who experience the loss of a covered family member. Staff members may use any accrued, unused paid time off to run concurrently with this time.

Covered Family Members:

- Spouse, domestic partner, or civil union partner
- Child, stepchild, or foster child
- Parent, stepparent, or adoptive parent
- Sibling, stepsibling, or half-sibling
- Grandparent
- Grandchild
- In-law (e.g., parent-in-law, sibling-in-law)

- Members of your household (i.e., those who live with staff members as their permanent residence)
- Any individual who is in the role of child, parent, or committed partner to a staff member, regardless of whether a biological or legal relationship exists

The library may allow bereavement leave for the death of persons not covered in the definition of “covered family members” in some circumstances at its discretion, or the staff member may be permitted to use other available paid or unpaid time off.

Additional Reasons for Leave:

- a miscarriage;
- an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination (IUI) or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure such as in vitro fertilization (IVF)
- a failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party;
- a failed surrogacy agreement;
- a diagnosis that negatively impacts pregnancy or fertility; or
- a stillbirth.

Extended Bereavement Leave:

In the event of the death of more than one covered family member in a twelve-month period, a staff member is entitled to up to six weeks of bereavement leave during that period. Up to five days will be paid pursuant to this policy. Staff members may use any accrued, unused paid time off to run concurrently with this time.

Staff members who have lost a child are entitled to up to six weeks of bereavement leave. Up to five days will be paid pursuant to this policy. Staff members may use any accrued, unused paid time off to run concurrently with this time.

Leave Usage

Time off under this policy must be taken within one year of learning of the need for leave. Bereavement leave can be taken in one continuous block or intermittently in hourly increments, as needed.

Staff members are requested to provide as much notice as possible to their supervisor of their need and plan for leave. Reasonable documentation establishing the need for bereavement leave may be required in accordance with applicable laws, but staff members will not be required to disclose the specific nature of the loss.

This policy does not permit a staff member to exceed the amount of leave available under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Returning From Leave

When returning from bereavement leave, staff members are entitled to the position they held when the leave began. If that position has been filled or is no longer available, returning staff members are entitled to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and responsibilities.

Support Resources

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Confidential counseling and support services are available to all staff members and their families. Staff members should contact Human Resources for additional information.

Leave Administration: Human Resources staff will assist staff members with navigating the bereavement leave process and answering any questions. If additional leave is needed beyond the amounts listed for bereavement, Human Resources staff will help identify and navigate other applicable leave types (such as FMLA or Personal Leave).

Culture of Support: The library is committed to fostering a supportive and understanding environment for staff members experiencing loss. This includes offering flexibility at work and resources to help manage

grief. Staff members are encouraged to discuss their individual needs with their supervisor and Human Resources staff.

Discrimination and Retaliation Prohibited

Bereavement leave applies to all eligible staff members without regard to marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or family structure. Discrimination or retaliation against any staff member for taking bereavement leave is strictly prohibited.

Blood and Organ Donation Leave

Leave Entitlement

Eligible staff members may take paid leave for up to one hour every 56 days to donate or to attempt to donate blood and up to 10 days in any 12-month period to serve or attempt to serve as a living organ donor.

Definitions

"Eligible staff member" means any regular part-time or full-time staff member who has been employed for at least six months and who donates or attempts to donate blood or an organ.

"Blood Donation" means the act of donating blood following the nationally recognized medical standards for blood donation eligibility of the community blood bank as operated by the American Red Cross, America's Blood Centers, the American Association of Blood Banks, or another blood bank.

"Organ Donation" means the act of donating any biological tissue of the human body that may be donated by a living donor (other than blood), including but not limited to, the kidney, liver, lung, pancreas, intestine, bone, and skin or any subpart thereof.

Notice, Approval, and Verification Requirement

An eligible staff member is required to give reasonable notice to the library in the event that the staff member chooses to use leave under this policy. A request for leave under this policy must be in writing and must include the day the staff member wishes to use the leave, along with a written statement from the blood bank or medical/transplant facility indicating that the staff member has an appointment on the day requested for leave to donate or attempt to donate blood or an organ.

Upon a staff member's return from an approved leave, the staff member will be required to submit a written statement from the blood bank or medical/transplant facility verifying that the staff member kept the appointment.

Complaint Process

Staff members who believe their leave has been improperly administered under this policy may file a complaint with Human Resources. The complaint will be promptly investigated, and the results of the investigation will be reported to the complaining staff member. If the staff member is unsatisfied with the findings of the investigation, the staff member may appeal the decision to the Executive Director.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Basic Leave Entitlement

Staff members may be eligible to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid family/medical leave within a 12-month period and be restored to the same or an equivalent position upon return provided that the staff member has worked for the library for at least 12 months AND worked at least 1250 hours in the last 12 months. The "12-month period" is measured as a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date a staff member uses any FMLA leave.

Commented [4]: Starting January 1, 2026, Illinois requires employers with 51+ employees to offer paid organ donation leave to part-time staff, expanding the Employee Blood and Organ Donation Leave Act. For administrative and application simplicity, the library will provide equal leave access to all regular staff members for both organ AND blood donation.

Reasons for FMLA Leave

If a staff member is eligible, the staff member may take family/medical leave for any of the following reasons: (1) the birth of a child and to care for such child; (2) the placement of a child with the staff member for adoption or foster care; (3) to care for a spouse, son, daughter or parent ("covered family member") with a serious health condition; or (4) because of the staff member's own serious health condition which renders the staff member unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the staff member's position. Leave for reasons one and two above must be completed within the 12-month period beginning on the date of birth or placement.

Military Family Leave Entitlement

If a staff member is eligible, the staff member may use the 12-week FMLA leave entitlement to take military family leave. Staff members may use this leave to address certain qualifying exigencies related to the covered active duty or call to covered active duty of a spouse, son, daughter, or parent. Qualifying exigencies may include (1) attending certain military events; (2) arranging for alternative childcare; (3) addressing certain financial and legal arrangements; (4) attending certain counseling sessions; (5) addressing issues related to short-notice deployment; (6) spending time with a covered family member who is resting and recuperating; (7) attending post-deployment briefings; and (8) for certain activities relating to the care of the military member's parent who is incapable of self-care where those activities arise from the military member's covered active duty.

A staff member may also be eligible for up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period if the staff member is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the covered service member. *This single 12-month period begins with the first day the staff member takes the leave.* A covered service member includes: (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness; or (2) a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness and: (i) was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves); and (ii) was terminated or released under conditions other than dishonorable within the five-year period before the eligible staff member first takes FMLA military caregiver leave to care for the veteran.

Improper Use of Leave

Misrepresenting facts in order to be granted FMLA leave is a violation of trust that is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Staff members may not be granted FMLA leave to gain employment or work elsewhere, including self-employment.

Notice of Leave

If the FMLA leave is foreseeable, the staff member must give the library at least 30 days' notice following the usual procedure for requesting a leave of absence (notifying the immediate supervisor and human resources). Failure to provide such notice may be grounds for delay of the leave. Where the need for leave is not foreseeable, the staff member is expected to notify the library as soon as practicable and, absent unusual circumstances, follow the library's normal leave procedures (notifying the immediate supervisor and human resources). When leave is needed for planned medical treatment, staff members should attempt to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the library's operations.

Medical Certification—Leave for Staff Member's Own or a Covered Family Member's Serious Health Condition

If the staff member is requesting leave because of the staff member's own or a family member's serious health condition, the staff member and the relevant health care provider may be required to supply appropriate medical certification. If required, the medical certification must be provided within 15 days after it is requested or as soon as reasonably possible under the circumstances. Failure to provide valid

requested medical certification promptly may result in denial of leave until it is provided. The library may also require medical recertification periodically during the leave, and staff members may be required to present a fitness for duty verification upon their return to work following leave for the staff member's own medical condition specifying that the staff member is fit to perform the essential functions of the job.

Certification for a Qualifying Exigency

If the staff member is requesting leave because of a qualifying exigency arising out of a covered family member's active duty or call to active duty, the staff member may be required to supply a copy of the covered military family member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating that the covered military member is on active duty or call to active duty (including the dates of the active duty service). The library may also request additional information about the leave.

Certification for Service Member Family Leave

If a staff member is requesting leave because of the need to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness, the library may require the staff member to supply certification completed by an authorized health care provider of the covered service member. In addition, the library may also request additional information about the leave.

Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Caregiver Leave

If a staff member is requesting leave because of the need to care for a covered veteran with a serious injury or illness, the library may require the staff member to supply certification completed by an authorized health care provider of the covered veteran. In addition, the library may request additional information about the leave.

Substitution of Paid Time Off

FMLA leave is unpaid leave. If a staff member requests leave for any FMLA-covered reason, the staff member will be required to use any remaining applicable paid time off. The utilization of this paid leave does not extend the leave period. In addition, if a staff member is eligible for any other paid leaves, such as IMRF disability or workers' compensation, these leaves will also run concurrently with FMLA leave (where appropriate) and will not extend the leave period. When using paid leave in conjunction with FMLA leave, a staff member must comply with the requirements of the applicable paid leave policy.

Benefits During Leave

During an approved FMLA leave, the library will maintain the staff member's health benefits as if the staff member continued to remain actively employed, but the staff member must continue to pay their share of the premium. Failure of the staff member to pay their share of the health insurance premium may result in loss of coverage. If the staff member does not return to work after the expiration of the leave, the staff member may be required to reimburse the library for payment of health insurance premiums during the FMLA leave.

During the unpaid portions of FMLA leave, the staff member will not receive pay for holidays. Staff members will not lose employment benefits accrued up to the day on which the unpaid FMLA leave begins.

Intermittent or Reduced Schedule Leave

In the case of leave taken for a serious health condition, to care for a service member with a serious injury or illness, or because of a qualifying exigency, the leave may be taken intermittently (in separate blocks of time due to a single qualifying reason or health condition) or on a reduced hours basis if necessary. When leave is needed for planned medical treatment, staff members should attempt to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the library's operations. Furthermore, if intermittent or reduced hours leave is required for planned medical treatment, the library may, in its sole discretion, temporarily transfer the staff member

to another job with equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodate that type of leave. If the leave is unpaid, the library will reduce the staff member's pay based on the amount of time actually worked. A fitness-for-duty certification may be required to return from an intermittent absence if reasonable safety concerns exist concerning the staff member's ability to perform their job duties.

Job Restoration

A staff member who returns to work from an approved FMLA leave of absence is entitled to return to their job or an equivalent position without loss of benefits or pay. A staff member who took leave because of their own serious health condition who wishes to return to work from FMLA leave may be required to present a fitness-for-duty release by a doctor before being restored to employment. A staff member who does not provide the certification will not be permitted to resume work until it is provided.

Family Military Leave

Eligible staff members may use unpaid family military leave for up to 30 days during the time that a family member's federal or state deployment orders are in effect.

Definitions

"Eligible Staff Member" means a staff member who has been employed for at least 12 months and who has worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 months preceding the commencement of the leave.

"Family Member" means the staff member's child, grandchild, spouse, or parent who has been called to military service lasting longer than 30 days with the state or the United States pursuant to the orders of the Governor or the President of the United States.

Use of Time Off

Family military leave is unpaid. If a staff member is granted family military leave, the staff member will be required to use any remaining applicable paid time off. The utilization of this paid leave does not extend the leave period. A staff member's leave under this policy may be reduced by the number of days a staff member takes "exigency leave" under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Notice of Leave

The staff member should provide as much notice as is practicable. Where possible, the staff member should attempt to schedule such leave so as not to unduly disrupt library operations.

Verification

For leaves taken pursuant to this policy, the staff member may be required to submit verification from the proper military authority demonstrating the staff member's eligibility for the leave.

Benefits During Leave

During an approved family military leave, the staff member may maintain health benefits at the staff member's expense. The taking of leave under this policy will not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued before the date on which leave commenced.

Job Restoration

Upon returning from an approved family military leave, the staff member is entitled to return to the same position or to an equivalent position with equal pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment unless such restoration is inappropriate for reasons unrelated to the staff member's family military leave.

Family Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Leave

The Oak Park Public Library provides its staff members with job-protected, unpaid leave when their child is admitted to a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), in compliance with the Illinois Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act.

Leave Entitlement

Staff members are eligible to take 20 days of unpaid leave while any child of the staff member is a patient in the NICU. "Child" means a staff member's child who is a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis.

Staff members may take NICU leave either continuously or intermittently. Intermittent leave may be taken in increments of no less than two (2) hours.

Staff members who are eligible for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) must first use all available FMLA leave before accessing NICU leave under this policy.

Procedure for Requesting Leave

Staff members should notify Human Resources as soon as practicable when they become aware of the need for NICU leave. Requests for leave should include the anticipated start and end dates, as well as whether the leave will be continuous or intermittent. The library may request reasonable verification of the need for NICU leave.

Pay and Benefits

NICU leave is unpaid. Staff members may elect (but are not required) to substitute available paid time off for unpaid NICU leave.

The library will continue applicable health insurance benefits during the leave period, under the same terms as if the staff member were actively working.

Job Protection

Staff members returning from NICU leave will be reinstated to their same position or a substantially equivalent position with the same or equivalent pay, benefits, and working conditions.

General/Personal Leave

If staff members are ineligible for any other leave of absence, the Oak Park Public Library may grant a general/personal leave of absence without pay. Staff members should submit their request for personal leave to their supervisor and Human Resources before the anticipated start of the leave. If the leave is requested for medical reasons and staff members are not eligible for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or any state leave law, medical certification may be required.

The general/personal leave request will be considered and evaluated on a number of factors, including anticipated workload requirements, staffing considerations, and the reason for the requested leave.

A general/personal leave of absence may be granted for a period of up to eight (8) weeks. However, a leave may be extended up to four (4) weeks if, prior to the end of the leave, the staff member submits a request for an extension, and the request is granted. The maximum amount of general/personal leave allowed is twelve (12) weeks in a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date a staff member uses any general/personal leave.

The library will continue insurance coverage during the leave if staff members submit their share of the monthly premium payments to the library in a timely manner. During the unpaid portions of general/personal leave, the staff member will not receive pay for holidays.

Commented [5]: Included in library policy in compliance with the Illinois Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act, which was effective January 1, 2026. It codifies providing job-protected, unpaid leave for parents with newborns in the NICU.

When the staff member anticipates returning to work, they should notify their supervisor of the expected return date. This notification should be made at least one week before the end of the leave.

Upon completion of the general/personal leave of absence, the library will attempt to return staff members to their original job or a similar position, subject to prevailing library operation considerations. Reinstatement is not guaranteed.

Failure to advise your supervisor or Human Resources of availability to return to work, failure to return to work when notified, or a continued absence from work beyond the time approved by the library will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment.

Jury and Witness Duty Leave

The Oak Park Public Library will provide all regular full-time and part-time staff members requested to serve jury duty with the required time off to fulfill their obligation. The library will pay staff members their straight time pay for their regularly scheduled work hours missed for jury service or when subpoenaed to appear before a court, public body, or commission in connection with library business. All staff members may keep whatever compensation is given for their jury service.

In cases where jury duty does not require a full day, staff members are expected to spend as much time as reasonable at their regularly scheduled duties.

Staff members are required to notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible when they receive a jury duty summons and provide a copy to Human Resources to be eligible for payment. Proof of jury service verifying the dates and times of attendance may be required.

Paid Parental Leave

The Oak Park Public Library will provide up to eight (8) weeks of paid parental leave to all regular full-time and part-time staff members following the birth of a staff member's child or the placement of a child with a staff member in connection with adoption or foster care. The purpose of paid parental leave is to enable the staff member to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly adopted or newly placed child. This policy will run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, as applicable.

Eligibility

All regular full-time and part-time staff members are eligible for paid parental leave provided they meet one of the following criteria:

- Have given birth to a child.
- Be a spouse or committed partner of a person who has given birth to a child.
- Have adopted a child or been placed with a foster child (in either case, the child must be age 17 or younger).

Amount, Time Frame, and Duration

Eligible staff members will receive a maximum of eight (8) weeks of paid parental leave per birth, adoption, or placement of a child/children. The fact that a multiple birth, adoption, or placement occurs (e.g., the birth of twins or adoption of siblings) does not increase the eight-week total amount of paid parental leave granted for that event.

Paid parental leave is compensated at the staff member's current regular rate of pay based on the staff member's regularly scheduled weekly hours. Paid parental leave will be paid on regularly scheduled pay dates.

Paid parental leave can be taken intermittently but should be taken in full week increments where possible.

Approved paid parental leave may be taken at any time during the twelve-month period immediately following the birth, adoption, or placement of a child with the staff member.

Any unused paid parental leave will be forfeited at the end of the twelve-month time frame.

Upon separation of employment, the staff member will not be paid for any unused paid parental leave for which they were eligible.

Coordination with Other Policies and Benefits

After the paid parental leave is exhausted, the remainder of the leave can be compensated through staff members' applicable paid time off. Upon exhaustion of applicable paid time off, any remaining leave will be unpaid leave. Please refer to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy for further guidance.

The library will maintain all benefits for staff members during the paid parental leave period just as if they were taking any other leave.

If a holiday occurs while the staff member is on paid parental leave, such a day will be charged to holiday pay.

Notice of Leave

The staff member should provide reasonable notice to their supervisor and Human Resources. The staff member must complete any necessary forms and may be required to provide documentation to substantiate the request.

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Sabbatical Leave

Purpose

The Oak Park Public Library recognizes that long-term service requires periods of significant rest and rejuvenation to maintain a high level of creativity, empathy, and service excellence. In alignment with our values of equity and staff member well-being, this policy provides eligible staff with a dedicated period to disengage from daily responsibilities and return with renewed energy and perspective.

Eligibility

All regular full-time and regular part-time staff members who have completed five (5) years of continuous service are eligible to apply for Sabbatical Leave.

- **Frequency:** A staff member may be granted one sabbatical every five (5) years of service.
- **Standing:** Staff members must be in good standing (not currently under a performance improvement plan and clear of corrective actions in the past 12 months) at the time of application through the start of the leave.
- **At-Will Status:** This policy does not alter the at-will employment status of any staff member.

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Duration & Compensation

- **Duration:** Sabbatical leave consists of four (4) consecutive weeks away from work. It may not be taken in increments.
- **Compensation:** Sabbatical leave is 100% paid.
 - **Part-Time Staff:** In alignment with the library's equity work, pay for part-time staff is based on their budgeted weekly hours at the time the sabbatical begins.

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- **Time-Off Award:** Because the library awards time off hours in a lump sum on January 1, Sabbatical Leave is treated as a separate, one-time award for the year in which it is taken. It does not reduce or replace the staff member's standard annual time-off award.
- **Coordination with Other Leave:** Sabbaticals may not be combined with vacation or personal leave to extend the total time away beyond four (4) weeks without express written approval from the Executive Director.
- **Unused Leave:** Eligible staff members who do not use all or part of their sabbatical leave forfeit this discretionary benefit in its entirety. Unused sabbatical leave is not paid out upon separation of employment.

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Continuity of Operations & Coverage

To ensure the library's standard of service and to prevent "coverage burnout" among remaining staff, the following requirements apply:

- **Continuity Plan:** No later than 60 days before the start of the sabbatical, the staff member and their supervisor must submit a **Continuity Plan** to HR. This plan must identify:
 - Essential duties and responsibilities that must continue.
 - Non-essential projects that will be "paused" or delayed during the absence.
 - Specific delegation of authority for approvals or emergencies.
- **Internal Coverage:** Where appropriate, the library will prioritize offering "Sabbatical Coverage" hours to existing part-time staff or to other staff seeking cross-training opportunities.

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Application & Selection

To ensure service continuity, the library limits the number of sabbaticals granted annually.

- **Departmental Limits:** To ensure consistent service across all library functions, generally no more than one (1) staff member from a single department may be on sabbatical leave at the same time. In larger departments, the Executive Director may approve overlapping leaves if the Continuity Plan demonstrates that service levels will not be negatively impacted. Each department head may also identify "peak service periods" during which sabbatical leave may be restricted.
- **Annual Cap:** The library will decide on and grant a maximum number of sabbaticals per calendar year. If an eligible staff member's request for sabbatical leave is denied due to the annual cap or department limits, that staff member will be able to resubmit their request for a different time.
- **Submission Window:** Applications must be submitted to Human Resources during the annual window of September 1 to October 15 for the following calendar year.
- **Prioritization (Initial Rollout):** Due to the high number of currently eligible staff, for the first 24 months of this policy (calendar years 2027 and 2028), priority will be given to staff with **10+ years of service**.
- **Selection Process:** If applications exceed the annual cap, selection will be determined by total years of service seniority.

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Renewal & Re-Entry

- **Disconnection:** To realize the benefit of the leave, staff members are expected to completely disconnect from work-related communications (email, Google Chat, texts, calls, etc.).
- **Reflection:** Within 30 days of returning, the staff member will share a brief reflection (written or verbal) with their team. This is not a project report, but a reflection on the value of rest and any new perspectives gained.

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[This Sabbatical and Renewal Policy is subject to the library's discretion and may be revoked at any time.](#)

School Visitation Leave

The Oak Park Public Library provides all regular full-time and part-time staff members time off for school visitation. Visitation is allowed for staff members to attend educational and/or behavioral conferences or classroom activities at their children's school when these school visits cannot be scheduled outside of work hours. "Child" means biological, adopted, foster child, or legal ward of a staff member who is enrolled in a primary or secondary school.

Eligible staff members may request up to a total of eight (8) hours of visitation in any school year, with a maximum of four (4) hours on any given day. The staff member must provide reasonable notice to their supervisor when requesting school visitation leave.

School visitation leave is unpaid. Staff members must use applicable paid time off for school visitation leave, if available. Supervisors may allow staff members to make up time for the unpaid school visitation leave. Staff members may be asked to provide their supervisor with written verification of the date, time, and length of the school visitation.

Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) Leave

The Oak Park Public Library provides all regular full-time and part-time staff members with unpaid victims' economic and security and safety leave for up to 12 weeks in a 12-month period for any one or more of the following reasons:

- Seeking medical attention for, or recovering from, physical or psychological injuries caused by domestic, sexual, gender violence or any other crime of violence to the staff member or the staff member's family or household member; or
- Obtaining services from a victim services organization for the staff member or the staff member's family or household member; or
- Obtaining psychological or other counseling for the staff member or the staff member's family or household member; or
- Participating in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocating, or taking other actions to increase the safety of the staff member or the staff member's family or household member from future domestic, sexual, gender violence, any other crime of violence, or ensuring economic security; or
- Seeking legal assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the staff member or the staff member's family or household member, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or derived from domestic, sexual, or gender violence or any other crime of violence.

All regular full-time and part-time staff members may use up to two workweeks (10 days) of unpaid VESSA leave for any one or more of the following reasons:

- Attending the funeral or alternative to funeral or wake of a family or household member who is killed in a crime of violence;
- Making arrangements necessitated by the death of a family or household member who is killed in a crime of violence; or
- Grieving the death of a family or household member who is killed in a crime of violence.

Leave for these reasons must be completed within 60 days after the staff member receives notice of the death of the victim.

Definitions

"12-Month Period" means a rolling 12-month period measured forward from the date leave is taken and continuous with each additional leave day taken.

"Family or Household Member" means a spouse or party to a civil union, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, sibling, or any other person related by blood or by present or prior marriage or civil union, other person who shares a relationship through a child, or any other individual whose close association with the staff member is the equivalent of a family relationship as determined by the staff member, and persons jointly residing in the same household.

"Domestic, Sexual, or Gender Violence" means domestic violence, sexual assault, gender violence, or stalking.

"Crime of Violence" means any conduct proscribed by Articles 9, 11, 12, 26.5, 29D, and 33A of the Criminal Code of 2012 or a similar provision of the Criminal Code of 1961, in addition to certain conduct proscribed by Articles of the Criminal Code of 2012. This term can include sex offenses, assault, harassment and obscene communications, armed violence, and other crimes.

Intermittent or Reduced Leave

A staff member may take leave intermittently (a few days or a few hours at a time) or on a reduced leave schedule.

Substitution of Paid Time Off

A staff member may elect to substitute applicable paid time off for any part of victims' economic security and safety leave. Such substitution will not extend the staff member's total allotment of time off under this policy.

Notice of Leave

A staff member should provide as much notice as is practicable to their supervisor and Human Resources when the need for leave becomes known.

Certification

For leaves taken pursuant to this policy, the staff member may be required to submit a certification demonstrating the need for the leave. The certification must be provided by the staff member as soon as reasonably possible.

The certification requirement may be satisfied by the submission of a sworn statement from the staff member and one of the following:

- Documentation from a victim services organization, attorney, clergy, or medical or another professional from whom the staff member or the family/household member has sought assistance from in addressing domestic, sexual, gender violence or crime of violence and/or its effects;
- A police or court record;
- A death certificate, published obituary, or written verification of death, burial, or memorial services from a mortuary, funeral home, burial society, crematorium, religious institution, or government agency documenting that a victim was killed in a crime of violence; or
- Other corroborating evidence.

All documentation related to the staff member's need for the leave pursuant to this policy will be held in strict confidence and will only be disclosed as required by law.

Benefits During Leave

During an approved VESSA leave, the library will maintain your health benefits, as if you continued to be actively employed. If paid leave is substituted for unpaid VESSA leave, the library will deduct your portion of the plan premiums as a regular payroll deduction. If your leave is unpaid, you must pay your portion of the premium during the leave. Your group health care coverage may cease if your premium payment is more than 30 days late. If you do not return to work at the end of the leave period, you may be required to reimburse the library for the cost of the premiums paid by the library for maintaining coverage during your unpaid leave, unless you cannot return to work because of the continuation, recurrence, or onset of domestic, sexual, gender violence, crime of violence, or other circumstances beyond your control.

When your need for the leave also qualifies as family/medical leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the FMLA leave will run concurrently with leave taken pursuant to this policy, such that the total amount of unpaid leave for which a staff member will be eligible in one year is 12 weeks.

When your need for leave also qualifies for bereavement leave under Illinois' Family Bereavement Leave Act (FBLA), FBLA leave will run concurrently with leave taken pursuant to this policy, such that the total amount of unpaid leave for which a staff member will typically be eligible in cases of bereavement is 10 days. However, in such cases, the 10 days of bereavement leave will not be deducted from the staff member's total VESSA allotment of 12 weeks.

Job Restoration

If you wish to return to work at the expiration of your leave, you are entitled to return to your same position or to an equivalent position with equal pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. If you take leave because of your own medical condition, you are required to provide medical certification that you are fit to resume work. Staff members who do not provide the certification will not be permitted to resume work until it is provided.

Reasonable Accommodations

The library supports the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act and will attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for people who are entitled to protection under this Act in a timely fashion unless such accommodations would present an undue hardship for the library.

Reasonable accommodation applies to applicants and staff members and may include adjustment to a job structure, workplace facility, or work requirement, transfer, reassignment, or modified schedule, leave, a changed telephone number or seating assignment, installation of a lock, implementation of a safety procedure or assistance in documenting domestic, sexual, gender violence or crime of violence that occurs at the workplace or in work-related settings, in response to actual or threatened domestic, sexual, gender violence or crime of violence.

A qualified individual is an individual who, but for being a victim of domestic, sexual, gender violence or crime of violence or with a family or household member who is a victim of domestic, sexual, gender violence or crime of violence, can perform the essential functions of the employment position that such individual holds or desires.

Should you wish to request a reasonable accommodation pursuant to this policy, you should contact Human Resources.

Confidentiality

All information provided to the library pursuant to this policy, including a statement of the staff member or any other documentation, record, or corroborating evidence, and the fact that the staff member has requested or obtained an accommodation pursuant to this policy shall be retained in the strictest confidence by the library, except to the extent that disclosure is (1) requested or consented to in writing by the staff member; or (2) otherwise required by applicable federal or state law.

Voting Leave

The Oak Park Public Library supports and promotes civic engagement and believes participation in the election process is a critical civic responsibility.

Therefore, all staff members may be permitted two hours of paid leave for the purpose of voting in a local, state, or national election. This leave must be exercised between the opening and closing of the polls and may be used for early voting.

If you need to take time off to vote, you must notify your supervisor of your plans no later than the day before the election. Your supervisor will notify you of the two-hour block of time assigned to you for voting purposes. Proof of attendance at the polls may be required.

