

REGULATION

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: Policy GC

Responsible Office: DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

SABBATICAL LEAVE

A. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for requesting and implementing employee requests for a sabbatical leave which is intended to provide the employee with time away from regular duties to pursue an academic program to achieve a degree.

B. BACKGROUND

The Board of Education (Board) is committed to maintaining a quality learning environment in which staff and students can develop skills and ideas, acquire knowledge, and engage in creative activities covering a wide range of disciplines and fields. As an expression of this commitment, the Board provides a sabbatical leave program for certain employee groups to enhance their professional competence. Sabbatical leave, therefore, represents a dual investment - an investment of time and commitment on the part of the employee and a financial investment by the Board which promises to result in improved professional outcomes for students.

C. DEFINITION

Sabbatical Leave - an absence from work, with partial pay, authorized in advance for up to one year, to pursue a program of study.

D. PROCEDURE

1. Units I and II

Employees in Units I, and II shall be granted sabbatical leave in accordance with the applicable Negotiated Agreements and in the terms set forth in these regulations. This regulation shall be implemented in compliance with the provisions of the applicable negotiated agreements, the provisions of which shall supersede any language that may be inconsistent.

- a. An employee on a sabbatical leave is held to all standards of conduct as if actively at work, and compliance with all laws. Employees on a leave shall self-report all charges, arrests, and convictions for any offense, including driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while impaired (DWI) and other criminal traffic offenses.

2. Unit V and Unit VI

- a. Employees in Units V and VI shall be granted sabbatical leave in accordance with this administrative regulation as follows:
 - i. Limitation on Sabbatical grants - Sabbatical leave shall be available for up to three Unit V (Professional Support Staff) employees and one Unit VI (Executive Staff) employee. An employee may receive only one sabbatical leave grant during employment.
 - ii. Eligibility - Employees must have completed six continuous full years of service with the school system and have received at least satisfactory/effective performance ratings. Any employee who has participated in a Professional Development Leave must complete six full years of employment with AACPS subsequent to their return from that leave and receive a Satisfactory or higher evaluation rating for that period of time.
 - iii. Written request - Employees must submit a written request for sabbatical leave which must be received by the Division of Human Resources no later than October 1. The employee, once qualified and notified by the Division of Human Resources, must provide three professional references, one of which must be from the immediate supervisor. Requests from eligible employees shall be submitted to the Superintendent who shall make a recommendation to the Board for approval. Action shall be taken on all such requests no later January 15 of the school year preceding the school year for which sabbatical leave is requested.
 - iv. Length of Sabbatical - The length of sabbatical leave shall be for either a full school year or a half year.
 - v. Compensation - The employee on a sabbatical leave shall be paid by the Board at the rate of fifty percent of the salary which would have been received if they had remained on active duty.
 - vi. Obligation of Employee -

Full time study - The employee must be registered for a minimum of 12 semester hours per semester, except when the leave is for the purpose of completing a dissertation. Evidence of the program of study must be submitted with the request.

Contractual Agreement - An employee accepting a sabbatical leave shall enter into a separate, written contract whereby he/she agrees to return to service in the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) for no less than a two-year period immediately following the leave. If the employee fails to return and remain for the specified time, he/she shall refund any monies paid to him/her or on his/her behalf (salary

and the Board's share for healthcare benefits) by the Board of Education.

Reporting - Employee on a sabbatical leave shall provide quarterly progress reports to the Executive Director of Human Resources and a final report upon the conclusion of the leave. The final report shall include appropriate documentation such as an official transcript.

Notice of intent to return - The employee on sabbatical leave must submit a notice of intent to return to work to the Executive Director of Human Resources by April 1 of the year preceding the return.

Change of Status Due to Inability to Complete Program - If the employee on sabbatical leave cannot complete the planned program for which leave was granted, it is his/her responsibility to notify the Executive Director of Human Resources as soon as possible and at least within 30 days. The leave may then be rescinded by the Board of Education, and the employee placed on an appropriate leave status, reassigned, or terminated. Salary allowances and benefits shall be adjusted accordingly, and the employee must repay the Board of Education for payment of any monies paid to him/her or on his/her behalf for which he/she may be liable as a result of the change in leave status.

Conduct - An employee on a sabbatical leave is held to all standards of conduct as if actively at work, and compliance with all laws. Employees on a leave shall self-report all charges, arrests, and convictions for any offense, including driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while impaired (DWI) and other criminal traffic offenses.

Reinstatement - In granting a sabbatical leave, the Board obligates itself to offer to the employee, on the expiration of the leave, employment in as near comparable status as possible at the time without creating a new position or transferring another employee. Upon return from sabbatical leave, the staff member shall be placed on the salary schedule at the level which they would have achieved had they remained actively employed in the system during their period of absence.

- vii. Benefits - Employees on sabbatical leave shall continue to receive any health benefits elected as well as AACPS provided term life insurance and long term disability insurance for which they would have been eligible had he/she remained in his/her regular position with the Board. The employee share for healthcare benefits shall be the same as if the employee was working his/her regular schedule. The employee cost for health care benefits shall be deducted from the pay received during the sabbatical. The employee may elect to continue voluntary benefit deductions.

- viii. Retirement - During the sabbatical leave, the employee's contributions to the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System shall continue at the then current rate.
- ix. Leave - Employees on sabbatical do not accrue any annual, sick or personal business leave.

Regulation History: *Developed by Superintendent 04/09/14*
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Note previous regulation history: None