

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

T.1 PURPOSE

This SEAM Article establishes the policy and procedures that govern the Cook County Sheriff's Office employment action and are a reiteration of standing practice, which prevents any political influence on the process.

T.2 POLICY

- (a) It is the policy of the Cook County Sheriff's Office to provide management with the necessary flexibility and control to assure the delivery of quality service; to attract, retain and motivate employees; and to develop and maintain a professional and progressive human resources management system.
- (b) The respective Executive Office Chief and/or department head involved in this Article's process shall complete and sign a No Political Consideration Certification (NPCC).

For additional policies or procedures related to human resources, employees should refer to their respective Sheriff's Office department policy/procedure manuals.

T.3 PROCEDURE

For the purpose of this article, the Department of Human Resources (HR) refers to the Sheriff's Office Department of Human Resources located at 3026 South California, Building 2, 1st Floor, Chicago, IL. 60608. The telephone number for HR is (773) 674-3451.

T.3.1 BENEFIT TIME

The official record of an employee's benefit time is maintained within the Cook County Time System. The totals of benefit time for medical time, personal time, vacation time, compensatory time and floating holiday time are available on the employee's dashboard.

Employees must work at least 40 hours in a pay period in order to accrue benefit time.

Employees are required to submit the appropriate request within Workforce Dashboard at least 24 hours prior to the need for use of benefit time, if applicable.

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T.3.2 MEDICAL TIME

- (a) Medical time may be authorized by the Sheriff's Office when an employee's illness makes the employee unable to perform their assigned duties; when the employee's presence at work would jeopardize the health of others in the work environment; when the employee is tending to the illness or injury of a qualifying family member; when an employee has an appointment with a recognized practitioner (e.g., doctor's appointments, medical treatment, physical therapy); or when an employee's qualifying family member has an appointment with a recognized practitioner, and the employee's attendance is reasonably necessary. Medical time shall not be used as additional vacation time or for other non-medical-related reasons, and its use is subject to review to ensure that it is not used inappropriately.
- (b) A medical-related absence, including FMLA leave, that lasts or is anticipated to last 40 consecutive work hours or more must be reported through Workforce in advance of the absence, if known, or no later than the next business day after the fifth day of absence. For purposes of this section, a medical-related absence occurs when an employee uses two or more days of medical time during 40 or more consecutive work hours of absence.
- (c) Supervisors who approve medical-related absences of 40 consecutive hours or more must notify ccso.hr@ccsheriff.org as soon as the absence is approved and indicate the employee's name, JDE, and dates of absence. The Supervisor must also remind the employee to follow the Return-to-Work process prior to returning.
 - 1. Supervisors should notify HR in the event an employee takes off a length of time that may qualify for FMLA.
- (d) HR will review all actual or anticipated absences of 40 consecutive hours or more to assess and advise employees of entitlements under various leave policies and initiate documentation related to leaves.
- (e) An employee returning to work after a medical-related absence of 40 consecutive work hours or more for reasons, including FMLA, are required to complete the return-to-work process prior to their next scheduled workday. Please see Return to Work subsection for more information.
- (f) If the need for a medical-related absence is foreseen but less than 40 hours, (e.g., scheduled physician visits, medical treatments, physical therapy), the requests for use of medical time should be submitted as soon as practicable in advance through Workforce. The Return to Work does not need to be followed in these circumstances unless otherwise indicated by HR.
- (g) When an employee uses medical time for unforeseen medical reasons, the employee must report the absence at least two hours in advance of their start time pursuant to their department policies and procedures (e.g., calling into IVR, utilizing the Web-clock), unless the employee's applicable collective bargaining agreement provides for a different period of time or, for non-union employees, the employee's department head

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- provides for a different period of time.
- (h) Employees who have been placed on proof status through the Affirmative Attendance Procedure are required to provide documentation to HR - Employee Services from the employee's physician within three days of their return to work. The documentation must contain:
1. The printed name, address, phone number and signature of the medical practitioner on physician's official letterhead /script;
 2. Date(s) of the examination/visit of the employee or immediate family member;
 3. Date(s) the employee was unable to work due to the illness or injury of themselves or an immediate family member;
 4. Confirmation from the medical provider that the employee was unable to work due to their illness or injury or of an immediate family member; and
 5. If the employee is sworn, confirmation that the employee may carry and qualify with a firearm must be indicated on the release. The decision to authorize a sworn employee to carry a firearm will be made by the Sheriff's Office after an assessment of all known circumstances.
- (i) If an employee calls in to indicate they are utilizing medical time for a medical reason but has no medical time accumulated or less than eight hours medical time accumulated, that employee shall not be paid. The absence will be considered unauthorized unless authorized by HR and only after proper medical documentation has been received and use of other benefit time has been approved by HR. If the employee is calling in due to the medical condition for which they have approved FMLA and they have available FMLA hours to use, the employee must specify that they wish to utilize FMLA in conjunction with available benefit time (e.g., vacation time, personal time), provided the time is available at the time of the call.
- (j) All full-time employees, other than seasonal employees, will accrue medical time with pay at the rate of 3.70 hours per pay period, approximately one, eight hour working day for each month of service. Medical time accruals will be carried out in accordance with the bi-weekly payroll system and employees must be in a pay status for a minimum of 40 hours in a pay period to accrue medical time in that period.
- (k) All individuals employed on a part-time schedule shall be granted medical time with pay proportionate to the time worked per pay period. Seasonal employees do not accrue medical time, if applicable. In order to maintain health benefits, an employee must work a minimum of 30 hours per week.
- (l) Medical time may be accumulated to equal, but at no time exceed 1400 hours or the limit established in the employee's applicable collective bargaining agreement or County Personnel Rules. Severance of employment terminates all rights for the compensation with respect to medical time.

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- (m) Medical benefit time (sick time) is allowed to be utilized in one-hour increments unless specified otherwise by an employee's collective bargaining agreement.

T.3.3 VACATION TIME

- (a) All full-time employees of the Sheriff's Office, other than seasonal employees shall accrue vacation time with pay as follows:

Anniversary of Employment	Days of Vacation	Maximum Accumulation
1st thru 6th	10 days (80 hours)	20 days (160 hours)
7th thru 14th	15 days (120 hours)	30 days (240 hours)
15th +	20 days (160 hours)	40 days (320 hours)

NOTE: "Days" accrued is applicable to employees whose regularly scheduled working day consists of at least eight hours. Actual accruals are in hour increments.

- (b) Vacation time accruals shall be carried out in accordance with the bi-weekly payroll system. Employees must be in a pay status for a minimum of 40 hours in a pay period to accrue vacation time during that period. Employees in their first through sixth year of continuous service earn 3.08 hours per pay period. Employees in their seventh through fourteenth year of continuous service earn 4.62 hours per pay period. Employees in their fifteenth year or more of continuous service earn 6.16 hours per pay period.
- (c) All individuals employed on a part-time work schedule of 20 hours per week or more shall be granted vacation time with pay proportionate to the time worked per pay period.
- (d) Employees may use only such vacation time that has been earned and accrued. The respective department head may establish the time when the vacation shall be taken based on operational needs. Any approval of benefit time is contingent on having the time accrued.
- (e) Any employee of the Sheriff's Office who was previously employed by one of the following agencies shall have the right to have the period of such service be credited for vacation credit provided that employment with the Sheriff's Office occurred within one year of the cessation of termination with the above-mentioned government offices.

1. The City of Chicago
2. The Chicago Park District
3. The Forest Preserve District
4. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
5. The Chicago Board of Education

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6. Agencies under the State of Illinois including, without limitation, the University System and the Chicago Transit Authority
- (f) Credit for such prior service shall be established by providing HR an original letter, on agency letterhead from the HR department of the former government office, attesting to the employment dates, the amount of cumulative time of the prior service and whether the employment was part-time or full-time, and signed by an authorized official within the agency.
 1. The agency letter must be provided by the employee to the HR prior to the start of employment with the Sheriff's Office.
 2. The vacation credit will be applied upon receipt of the original agency letter and will not be applied retroactively.
 - (g) In the event an employee has remaining vacation time and separates from service, the employee, or in the event of death, the employee's spouse or estate, shall be entitled to receive the employee's prevailing salary (i.e., the last active pay rate the employee was receiving) for such unused vacation time.
 - (h) In computing years of service for vacation time, employees shall be credited with all time in an active pay status. Any breaks in service due to a leave of absence (except for Military purposes), lay-off or disability (except for Injury on Duty) shall be deducted from an employee's years of service for the purpose of accrual.
 - (i) Any Sheriff's Office employee who is a re-employed veteran or who was off due to duty injury shall be entitled to be credited with working time for each of the periods of absence. The years of service, for purposes of accrual of vacation time in the year of return to employment with the Sheriff's Office, shall be the same as if employment had continued without interruption.
 - (j) All applicable policies and procedures and any applicable collective bargaining agreement vacation bid processes will be adhered to.
 - (k) Vacation time is allowed to be utilized in one hour, half day and full day increments unless specified otherwise by an employee's collective bargaining agreement.

T.3.4 PERSONAL TIME

- (a) All full-time employees shall be permitted 32 hours of personal time, with pay, each fiscal year. Such personal time shall not be used in increments of less than one-half of the working day at a time. An exception will be made in the event that an employee's working day exceeds eight hours, in which case the employee may utilize any remaining personal time that is less than one-half of a working day prior to the end of the fiscal year.

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- (b) Personal time accrual will be carried out in accordance with the bi-weekly pay period system. An employee must be in a pay status for a minimum of 40 hours in that pay period in order to accrue personal time. Employees earn 1.24 hours of personal time each pay period.
- (c) All individuals employed on a part-time work schedule shall be granted personal time proportionate to the time worked per pay period.
- (d) Employees entitled to receive personal time, who enter Sheriff's Office employment during the fiscal year, shall be given credit for such personal time at the rate of eight hours or one-eight hour working day for each full fiscal quarter in a pay status; except those two days of personal time may be used for observance of religious holidays prior to accrual, to be paid back in the succeeding two fiscal quarters, within the same fiscal year.
- (e) Personal time may not be used on consecutive days unless approved by the respective department head.
- (f) Personal time off shall be scheduled a minimum of 24 hours in advance so as not to disrupt operations and will be subject to the approval by the respective department head, unless noted in their collective bargaining agreement.
- (g) On December 1st of every year, employees with accrued personal time left may carry over 12.00 hours into the next fiscal year. Any personal time exceeding 12.00 hours will be lost.
- (h) Severance of employment shall terminate all rights to all accrued personal time and holiday time, and compensation thereof.

T.3.5 OVERTIME

This section does not apply to employees who are exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

- (a) When the respective department head determines an emergency or operational need exists to mandate overtime, the respective department head will first ask for volunteers on-duty based on seniority, starting with the employee(s) with the most seniority. If no employees volunteer, overtime will be assigned based on reverse seniority.
- (b) Compensation for overtime worked will be in the form of compensatory time or pay, or in accordance with the law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- (c) Employees who have worked overtime must submit the overtime through the Workforce Dashboard, and the overtime must be approved by a supervisor, prior to the upload of payroll.

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- (d) Employees are allowed to “bank” compensatory time up to 240 hours or the amount specified in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Employees shall not be allowed to work more than 624 hours (thirty percent of 2080 full-time hours) in overtime in a fiscal year with the exception of emergency situations where the respective department head will be required to provide written authorization and justification.

T.3.6 COMPENSATORY TIME

Compensatory time is time earned by the employee, however, it is not immediately paid out. The hours are collected in a benefit bank until utilized or paid out.

FLSA nonexempt employees can earn up to a maximum of 240 hours of compensatory time or up to amounts specified in an applicable collective bargaining agreement. All accrued compensatory time will be paid out to employees prior to moving to a new position.

T.3.7 DESIGNATION OF HOLIDAYS

- (a) The Sheriff's Office recognizes all 13 holidays, designated by the Board of Commissioners of Cook County:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Lincoln's Birthday
- Washington's Birthday
- Pulaski's Birthday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas

- (b) In order to be eligible for holiday pay an employee must meet the following requirements and the requirements, if any, of an applicable collective bargaining agreement:

1. The employee must have worked their regularly scheduled number of hours on their last scheduled day preceding and following the holiday.
2. The employee must have worked at least forty 40 hours during the pay period in which the holiday occurs unless the employee was in a paid status during such period.

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3. The holiday days will not be counted as medical time, vacation time, or personal time.
 4. Employees are scheduled to work holidays in accordance with an applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- (c) Non-union employees do not accrue holiday time. If a holiday is to be worked by a non-union employee, the respective payroll timekeeper must be notified in writing by the employee's supervisor. Any banked holidays must be used within the calendar year unless otherwise specified in an applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- (d) Employees who are active at the beginning of the fiscal year (December 1st) also qualify for a floating holiday.
1. Floating holidays must be used within the fiscal year unless otherwise specified in a collective bargaining agreement.
 2. Floating holidays have no payout value upon termination of employment.
 3. Floating holidays shall be utilized in full day eight-hour increments or in accordance with their applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- (e) Employees must work at least 40 hours in the current pay period to be eligible for holiday pay proportionate to the time worked.

T.3.8 CIVILIAN PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- (a) Pursuant to Cook County Ordinance, except as provided by an employee's collective bargaining agreement, a period of probation for any new employee who has been appointed to a career service position will be a probationary employee for the first 12 months of employment. During the first 12 months of employment, the probationary employee will receive no seniority or continuous service credit until they complete their probationary period, regardless of prior career service status in another County position.
- (b) The period of probation for a current employee who has been appointed to a new position after a promotional process is fixed at a period of six months of continuous service, or as otherwise provided by a collective bargaining agreement.
- (c) Any period of absence or period of less than full-duty work may result in the extension of the employee's probationary period for the period of time equal to the absence (e.g., duty disability, ordinary disability) and/or time spent performing less than full-duty work. Probationary employees continuing in the service of the employer beyond their probationary period shall be career service employees.

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T.3.9 SWORN MERIT PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- (a) An applicant appointed to an entry-level position as a Correctional Officer, will serve a required 15-month probationary period. During the first 15 months of employment, the probationary employee will receive no seniority or continuous service credit during such probationary service until they complete their probationary period, regardless of prior career service status in another County position.
- (b) Newly appointed selected applicants for the Court Services Department, Department of Community Corrections and the Sheriff's Police Department shall be in a probationary status for a period of one year of active duty in that rank from the date of appointment, or as otherwise provided by the applicable collective bargaining agreement and the Rules and Regulations of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board. Refer to SEAM Article B – Merit Rank Promotional Procedures.
- (c) Pursuant to the Rules and Regulations of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board, Sheriff's Police Officers, Cook County Correctional Officers and Cook County Sheriff's Deputies will be on probation for one year from the date of appointment. The probationary period includes either employment in the position to which the person has been appointed or promoted, or employment in another position within the Sheriff's Office, or while on official leave of absence, or a combination of all.
- (d) Any period of absence or period of less than full-duty work may result in the extension of the employee's probationary period for the period of time equal to the absence (e.g., duty disability, ordinary disability) and/or time spent performing less than full-duty work. Probationary employees continuing in the service of the employer beyond their probationary period shall be career service employees.

T.3.10 PROBATIONARY PERIOD SEPARATION/DISCHARGE

The respective department head may recommend separation/discharge of an employee during the employee's probationary period. All recommendations may be forwarded to Executive Director of HR for further action.

T.3.11 LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITH/WITHOUT PAY

- (a) Bereavement Leave
 - 1. Excused bereavement leave with pay will be granted, up to three days, to an employee following the death of an employee's family or household member, in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements. Family is understood to include mother, father, spouse, domestic partner, child (including stepchildren and foster children), brother/sister, grandchildren, grandparents, spouse's parents. Where death occurs and the funeral is to be held out of

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Illinois and beyond the states contiguous thereto, the employee shall be entitled to a maximum of five normal days' pay to attend the services. Documentation must be uploaded in Workforce and copies sent to the timekeeper to support the employee's travel.

2. Excused bereavement leave for the death of a child allows up to 10 workdays of unpaid bereavement time for:
 - a. The death of a covered family member within 60 days after the employee receives notice of the covered family member's death. In accordance with the Family Bereavement Leave Act, "covered family member" is defined as an employee's child, stepchild, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or stepparent. Additionally, the Family Bereavement Leave Act defines "child" as the employee's child (i.e., biological, adopted, foster child, legal ward, stepchildren) or the child of an employee who is standing in loco parentis (in the place of a parent) and there is no age requirement.
 - b. Absences due to (i) a miscarriage; (ii) an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure; (iii) a failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party; (iv) a failed surrogacy agreement; (v) a diagnosis that negatively impacts pregnancy or fertility; or (vi) a stillbirth. The bereavement leave must be completed within 60 days after a listed event in this section occurs.
3. Earned benefit time may be taken to cover this type of leave. This time does not run concurrently with time identified above.
4. The following documentation must be uploaded into Workforce or copies sent to timekeeper with the employee's request for bereavement or bereavement leave to be granted:
 - a. An obituary or death notice which lists the employee as a designated mourner; or a program from the funeral which lists the employee as a member of the deceased's immediate family.
 - b. A letter from the funeral home director, obituary, or a certificate of death establishing the entitlement to the leave.
 - c. Travel documentation including airline tickets or supportive documentation that indicates the funeral of a member of the employee's family or household where death occurs and the funeral is to be held more than 150 miles from the Cook County Building located at 118 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL. 60602 or the requirements of an applicable

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collective bargaining agreement, if applicable.

- d. Birth certificate or marriage certificate, if applicable, or legal documentation providing proof of relationship or guardianship.
- 5. An employee requesting bereavement leave due to a pregnancy- or adoption-related event listed in this section, must submit a completed a request for Illinois Child Bereavement Leave in Workforce. An employee cannot be required to indicate which event led to the requested bereavement leave.
- 6. Leave requested to attend the funeral of someone other than a member of an employee's family, as defined above, may be granted, but time so used shall be deducted from the accumulated vacation time, personal time or compensatory time of the employee making the request.
- 7. Failure to submit approved paperwork demonstrating an entitlement to bereavement leave may require previously approved leave to be denied. Any pay previously approved will be converted to available benefit or, if necessary, unauthorized time.

(b) Jury Duty

Approval will be granted for leave with pay for any jury duty required of an employee of the Sheriff's Office. Any compensation earned, excluding travel allowance received, must be relinquished to the Sheriff's Office through the employee's respective payroll timekeeper. The Sheriff's Office Payroll will utilize this paycheck as proof of jury duty served.

(c) Maternity / Paternity Leave

Eligible employees (as defined by the Parental Leave County Policy) shall be granted maternity or paternity leaves of absence to cover periods of pregnancy and postpartum childcare up to six months. Employees need not exhaust all accrued vacation time or medical time before going on maternity/paternity leave but may apply such accrued time to the leave of absence. Time taken will run concurrently with FMLA relating to pregnancy or postpartum childcare if the employee is eligible for FMLA. The employee must complete a request for Maternity/Paternity Leave in Workforce. The following shall apply:

- 1. An employee requesting a maternity/paternity leave shall inform HR in writing of the request no later than 30 days prior to the expected date of delivery and shall present a statement on physician's letterhead and signed by a physician stating the expected date of delivery.

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- a. The employee has rights and responsibilities under related policies and procedures, County policies and any applicable collective bargaining agreements.
 - b. If the employee intends to add the newborn to their Cook County health insurance, this must be done through Oracle Self-Service within 30 days of the delivery date.
 - c. Qualified employees seeking a reasonable accommodation for conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions whether or not such condition is a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), may refer to SEAM Article AA for further information and/or contact HR.
2. If an employee is on probation at the time of the request, the employee's probationary period shall be extended by the total number of working days taken during the leave period.
- (d) Veterans' Convention Leave

Any employee who is a delegate or alternate delegate to a national or state convention of a recognized veterans' organization may request a leave of absence for the purpose of attending said convention, providing, however, that any employee requesting a leave of absence with pay must meet the following conditions:

1. The employee must be a delegate or alternate delegate to the convention as established in the by-laws of the organization.
2. The employee must register with the credentials committee at the convention headquarters.
3. The employee's name must appear on the official delegate-alternate rolls that are filed at the state headquarters of their organization at the close of the convention.
4. The employee must have attended no other veterans' convention, with a leave of absence with pay, during the fiscal year.
5. The employee must produce, upon returning from the convention, a registration card signed by a proper official of the convention, indicating attendance.

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(e) Military Leave

1. In accordance with the law, any employee who is a member of any reserve component of the United States Armed Forces or of any reserve component of the Illinois State Militia, shall be granted leave for any period actively spent in military service, including;
 - a. Basic training;
 - b. Special or advanced training;
 - c. Annual training; or
 - d. Any other training or duty required by the United States Armed Forces.
2. During leaves for annual training, the employee shall continue to receive their regular compensation.
3. During leaves for basic training, for up to 60 days of special or advanced training, for any other training or duty required by the United States Armed Forces, and for employees mobilized to active duty, when an employee's military pay is less than their current pay rate for a commensurate pay period, the employee will be eligible for differential pay. All military Leave and Earning Statements (LES) must be submitted to the Sheriff's Office Payroll Department via email ccso.payroll@ccsheriff.org, to be eligible for differential pay.
4. Any employee granted a leave of absence without pay to enter service in the Illinois National Guard or any of the reserve components of the military or naval forces of the United States, either voluntarily or by reason of conscription, shall upon return to County service, be returned to work as if the employee had been employed continuously by Cook County, including with respect to title and position, with the same anniversary and seniority dates, status and pay.
 - a. The employee must request a military leave in Workforce for all military training and/or deployment leaves. Military orders must be uploaded in Workforce for each leave request for review and approval.
 - b. Employees that are on active military duty must complete a Military Service Affidavit. The notarized affidavit should be uploaded in the Workforce military leave case.
 - c. The employee may specify a period of time off following completion of service in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and

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Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA):

1. 1-30 consecutive days of military service: Employee must return to the workplace after safe travel home and eight hours of rest.
 2. 31-180 consecutive days of military service: Employee must return to the workplace within 14 days of release from active duty.
 3. 181+ consecutive days of military service: Employee must return to the workplace within 90 days of release from active duty.
- d. Employees should notify HR if they will take any additional time off pursuant to USERRA beyond the time originally requested based on their military orders, or if there are any alterations in their period of deployment. Appropriate documentation must be uploaded to the employee's leave case in Workforce.
- e. Employees must present discharge papers at the time of their return.
- f. Unlike other County benefits, pension credits do not accrue for employees on military deployment. All employees returning from deployment should contact the Cook County Annuity and Benefit Fund immediately upon return.

(f) Leave of Absence for Non-Merit Rank Employees

1. Non-merit rank employees may apply for an unpaid leave of absence for the care of their own, or an immediate family member's, serious health condition or military leave. A leave of absence is only applicable if leave is not available to the employee through use of their own benefit time, FMLA, or disability. The decision to grant a request for an unpaid leave of absence is at the discretion of the Chief of Staff.
2. Direct-appointment employees are not eligible for an unpaid leave of absence.
3. The employee must complete a Request for Leave of Absence Form with HR. The Executive Director of HR will forward the request, along with any supporting documentation to the Chief of Staff for review.
4. Such leave of absence shall be limited to one month for every full year of continuous employment by Cook County, with a maximum of one year of Leave, except for military service. A written request for leave approval outside the

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parameters listed above, or an extension to the approved leave period should be submitted to the Executive Director of HR for review by the Chief of Staff. Approval of a change in the leave length may be granted at the discretion of the Chief of Staff.

5. An employee requesting to return back to work from a leave of absence shall contact HR at least 14 days prior to their requested return date. Employees requesting to return from leave for other employment must submit a letter indicating they are leaving the other employer in good standing, and they were not under investigation for misconduct with the other employer. The vacancy created by the leave of absence may be filled. Should reinstatement be requested and no vacancy in the budgetary position is available, the employee may wait for a vacancy in the approved leave of absence for up to an additional six months following the request to return.
6. The Executive Director of HR shall provide the Cook County Risk Management the name of the employee taking a leave of absence, at the time the leave is approved.
7. The request for a leave of absence must be submitted no later than 14 days prior to the requested commencement date, unless otherwise not feasible to do so.
8. A written request for reinstatement may be sent via email to ccso.hr@ccsheriff.org at least 14 days prior to the termination of the leave of absence. Failure to do so will be considered a resignation by the employee.
9. During a leave of absence, Cook County shall not pay any insurance benefits. Employees on a leave of absence may elect to continue their health insurance benefit at their own expense by contacting the Cook County Department of Risk Management.
10. HR should maintain all personal leave documentation, including the date the employee went on a personal leave, the reason for such leave, who approved the leave, the date the employee returned from the leave and any supporting documentation.
11. The Executive Director of HR shall maintain a current list of all Sheriff's Office employees on leave, which shall include the following information:
 - Name;
 - JDE number;
 - Date of approved/denied leave;

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- Reason for the leave;
- Leave expiration date; and
- Whether the employee has returned from the leave.

(g) Leave of Absence for Sworn Merit Rank Employees

Leaves of absence shall not be granted to any Police Officer, Correctional Officer or Deputy Sheriff who has not completed their probationary period, unless otherwise authorized under this Article.

1. Leaves of absence without pay may be requested by any sworn merit rank employee ("sworn member"), irrespective of rank. The leave of absence shall be from the position and rank the employee holds at the time the leave of absence is granted. Upon termination of a leave of absence, the sworn employee shall be returned to the same rank held at the time the leave of absence was granted provided a vacancy still exists and the requirements of this subsection have been met. The sworn employee must complete a Request for Leave Form and submit to the Executive Director of HR. The Executive Director of HR will submit the request along with any supporting documentation to the Chief of Staff for review. If the request for leave documentation does not fully substantiate the request, the employee must provide the required documentation no later than 30 days from the date of the request or the request for leave will be denied. The decision to grant a request for an unpaid leave of absence is at the discretion of the Chief of Staff.
2. If the sworn employee requests a leave of absence to attend higher education through a college/university, the sworn employee must provide documentation to HR from the institution, on school letterhead, showing proof of full-time enrollment and must continue to provide such proof, on a semester/quarter basis, substantiating the continued need for the leave of absence.
3. If the sworn employee is requesting a leave of absence to report to another law enforcement agency, they will be required to present documentation to HR from the agency, on its official letterhead, substantiating an offer of employment and the start date no later than 14 days from the date of the request.
4. A sworn employee may request a compassionate leave for the care of their own, or an immediate family member's, serious health condition. A compassionate leave is only applicable if leave is not available to the employee through use of their own benefit time, FMLA, or disability.
5. To request a compassionate leave, the employee must be employed by the

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Sheriff's Office for a minimum of one year and complete a Request for Leave of Absence Form with HR. The sworn employee will be required to provide HR Employee Services with relevant information to support the request. Additional documentation, as needed or requested, to support the medical leave of absence may be required. The Executive Director of HR will forward the request, along with any supporting documentation, to the respective Executive Office Chief of Staff for approval. If the request for compassionate leave is approved, the sworn employee will be required to provide medical documentation to HR Employee Services every 90 days to substantiate the continued need for the leave.

6. During a leave of absence, Cook County shall not pay any insurance benefits. Employees on a leave of absence may elect to continue their health insurance benefit at their own expense by contacting the Cook County Department of Risk Management.
7. In the event that the leave of absence is denied, the employee will be notified in writing that the request is denied and if the employee fails to return to work within 14 days of the denial date, they will be considered to have resigned their employment with the Sheriff's Office.
8. All leaves of absence, except for military service, shall be for one year or less, with the privilege of reapplying for a new leave of absence at the expiration of the first. Requests for a leave of absence beyond one year will be reviewed by the Chief of Staff, with notification to the Sheriff's Office Merit Board. Due to operational needs, requests to extend a leave of absence beyond one year are disfavored by the Sheriff's Office and approval is at the discretion of the Chief of Staff. A sworn employee on a leave of absence who accepts a position other than that for which the leave of absence is granted, without written approval from the respective Chief of Staff, will be deemed to have resigned. A sworn employee who fails to return to their position following a granted leave or fails to request and be approved for a new leave of absence before the expiration of the first leave of absence, shall be deemed to have resigned, unless the basis of the leave for the employee is to work for another Cook County agency. These employees will have three months from the expiration of the current leave to seek an extension or reinstatement if the employee remains so employed before being deemed to have resigned.
9. Merit rank employees requesting to return back to work from a leave of absence shall contact HR 14 days prior to their requested return date. Employees requesting to return from leave for other employment must submit a letter indicating they are leaving the other employer in good standing and they were not under investigation for misconduct with the other employer. The vacancy

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created by the leave of absence may be filled. Should reinstatement be requested and no vacancy in the rank or no budgetary position is available, the employee will not be returned.

10. Merit rank employees granted a leave of absence longer than one year seeking to return to the Sheriff's Office must first contact the Merit Board to confirm the status of their merit rank. If the Merit Board confirms the employee continues to hold a merit rank, the employee shall be considered for return to such merit rank consistent with the requirements of this section.

Refer to the subsection entitled Return to Work for further guidelines.

(h) Disability Provisions

1. Ordinary Disability

- a. Employees seeking ordinary disability benefits must apply to the Cook County Pension Board for approval. Employees should contact the Cook County Pension Board at (312) 603-1200 or in person at 70 W. Madison Street, Suite 1925, Chicago, IL. 60602 to obtain application and benefit information, eligibility rules and other documentation.
- b. Employees seeking ordinary disability benefits are required to provide this information to HR. Employee's seeking ordinary disability leave benefits must call in each day of absence at least two hours prior to their start time until such time as HR receives the Employer Verification Form (EVS) from the employee.
- c. HR will notify the respective department head of approvals for ordinary disability granted by the Cook County Pension Board. Employees must notify HR within one business day after being released for duty by a physician or the expiration of benefits, whichever comes first to begin the return-to-work process.
- d. An employee who is on ordinary disability leave must return to work after their ordinary disability leave is terminated. The employee shall be eligible to return to the same position and receive the same salary paid at the time the ordinary disability leave started.

2. Duty Disability / On-duty Injury

- a. Employees off work due to an injury or illness arising out of and in the course of employment may be eligible for temporary total disability benefits in accordance with the provisions of the Illinois Workers'

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Compensation Act.

- b. Employees shall refer to the On-Duty Injuries Policy, Required Reports section, for instructions and responsibilities related to required reports for work-related injuries and illnesses.
- c. Temporary total disability benefits are issued by the Cook County Risk Management Department. Employees can also apply for duty disability benefits from the Cook County Pension Board. If an employee does not apply for duty disability benefits or if the application is denied, the employee will not receive pension credit for retirement during their absence. Employees should contact the Cook County Pension Board directly for further information regarding duty disability benefits.
- d. Any employee who is injured in an accident arising out of and in the course of their employment will not be eligible to substitute medical time, vacation time, or personal time in place of temporary total disability payments. However, unless governed by an applicable collective bargaining agreement, employees who are injured in a work accident under the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act and miss less than 14 days from work may utilize available benefit time for the first three days of absence.
- e. Employees are required to cooperate with the internal and external investigations of injury on duty injury claims. This may include responding to communication attempts by Cook County Risk Management, participating in a recorded statement required by Cook County and accurately completing any internal reports regarding the incident.
- f. In the event that Cook County Risk Management denies an employee's claim for worker's compensation benefits, HR shall request a medical update from the employee's medical provider. Depending on the medical update, HR shall communicate with the employee regarding their options including, but not limited to, a return to work, possible light duty assignments or leave opportunities available to the employee.
- g. HR will work with all employees released by their treating physician or an independent medical examination with restrictions to determine whether light duty assignments within the Sheriff's Office are available. Light duty assignments, if offered and available, will accommodate restrictions placed on the employee as a result of the occupational injury

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or illness. Light duty assignments may be in the employee's home department or in another department of the Sheriff's Office. Light duty assignments might also be on a shift and detail that differs from the employee's regular shift and detail. Light duty assignments are not permanent and are subject to change as needed to meet the needs of the employee and the Sheriff's Office. An employee may be required to perform a skills assessment to determine proper placement into a light duty assignment. Any employee who refuses to accept a light duty assignment may be subject to denial of temporary total disability benefits. Light duty assignments are meant to be temporary and do not represent a new position, new job classification, or permanent accommodation.

- h. No employee shall return to duty following an absence due to an on-duty injury without obtaining a physician's approval to return to work.
- i. Employees granted a leave of absence either without pay or being paid by the Cook County Pension Board (e.g., maternity leave, disability leave), with the exception of employees on military leave or duty injury, whose leave of absence exceeds 30 consecutive days shall have the total number of days of such leave deducted from their seniority date, accrual date, and date in position, as applicable, to reflect the total number of days absent. All leaves of absence and changes to seniority dates, accrual dates and dates in position shall be in accordance with Cook County rules and/or an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

T.3.12 RETURN TO WORK

An employee returning to work after an absence of 40 work hours or more for reasons other than planned vacation, or with prior written approval from HR (e.g., when an employee is authorized to use some other benefit time for a medical reason), should complete the return-to-work process at least five calendar days prior to their return (when feasible), but no later than prior to the next scheduled workday. If an employee is injured on-duty and returns back to work before 40 consecutive work hours, the employee must still complete the return-to-work process outlined in this subsection.

Employees who are returning from an absence of 15 calendar days or more without the use of approved benefit time (i.e., vacation, personal, holiday, compensatory), excluding medical time, or returning from a suspension of 15 calendar days or more, must report for drug testing as directed by HR before a release to work can be completed.

- (a) For all absences related to the employee's own health or medical condition, employees are required to submit medical documentation to HR Employee Services, including a

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statement from the employee's physician covering the entire period of time the employee has been away from the workplace, including the date the employee's physician has identified that the employee may return to work or is anticipated to return to work. The employee or the employee's physician should email the medical documentation to HR at ccso.hr@ccsheriff.org to begin the return-to-work process.

- (b) The medical documentation will be reviewed by HR Employee Services. Upon review, Employee Services shall do one of the following:
 - 1. Issue a Release for Duty Status Form;
 - 2. Refer the employee back to their physician for any clarification of documentation; or
 - 3. Refer the employee for an Independent Medical Examination (IME) if non-duty related.

- (c) In the event that restrictions are indicated on an employee's medical documentation, HR Employee Services must reach out to the employee's department to determine whether they can return to their regular position within the scope of the restrictions. For sworn employees, all medical restrictions will be forwarded to the Training Academy for a determination of whether the employee will remain authorized to carry a weapon prior to the restrictions being resolved.
 - 1. A qualified member requesting a reasonable accommodation must do so through the process described in SEAM Article AA (Accommodation Procedure). A temporary accommodation may be granted by HR as part of a return-to-work program, and that accommodation shall be monitored by HR.

- (d) HR Employee Services shall complete the return-to-work process upon receipt of all required forms.

- (e) Paternity Leave Return to Work:

Employees returning from paternity leave shall provide a statement from the child's physician confirming the birth of a child to HR and follow the above Return to Work Procedures.

- (f) Military Training Return to Work:

Employees returning to work from any period of military training or service during which an employee sustains an injury shall submit medical documentation to the HR Employee Services, including a statement(s) from the employee's physician covering the entire period of injury resulting in the employee absence from the workplace,

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including the date the employee's physician has identified that the employee may return to work, Employee Services will issue a Release for Duty Form to the employee or request additional medical clearance/clarification. HR will facilitate the release for duty including collecting the Department of Defense documentation as required by the Sheriff's Office, including employee's name, deployment dates, and other pertinent information.

(g) Extended Active-Duty Return to Work:

Employees returning to work from extended active duty after 15 calendar days or longer shall:

1. Contact HR at least three days prior to their expected return to work; and
2. Report to HR for drug testing as directed by HR prior to receiving a Release for Duty Status Form.

(h) Training or Education Return to Work:

Employees returning to work from a leave approved for training, specialized training or educational purposes (excluding in-service training) shall:

1. Contact HR at least 10 days prior to their desired date of return to work;
2. Report for drug testing as instructed by HR; and
3. Submit copies of any diplomas or certificates received to HR and the Sheriff's Office Training Academy.

T.3.13 RETURN TO DUTY CREDENTIAL COMPLIANCE

- (a) Sworn employees returning to work who have an expired Firearms Owners Identification Card (FOID) (or acceptable proof that they are authorized to own a firearm, as in cases where the employee has applied for a renewal and the ISP is processing it) or do not have a current firearms qualification will be returned to the duty status "Not Authorized to Carry a Weapon" until valid documentation is provided to HR.
- (b) If the sworn employee must qualify with a firearm, it is the employee's responsibility to request to attend In-Service training by submitting a memorandum to their supervisor.
- (c) If an employee's driver's license is not current, the employee must provide HR with the updated driver's license to be copied in order to update the Sheriff's Office records and the Training Firearms Database. Those employees who are required to possess a valid driver's license and are required to drive as part of their job responsibilities must provide a valid driver's license.

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- (d) It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that they are in compliance with the City of Chicago's, or other local municipalities', firearms registration requirements. The employee should provide all documentation to the Training Academy.
- (e) It is the employee's responsibility to notify HR if their FOID is expired or revoked.

T.3.14 MAINTENANCE AND REQUEST TO REVIEW PERSONNEL RECORDS

HR is responsible for maintaining employees' official personnel records, refer to the respective department Personnel Records Policy.

T.3.15 RETIREMENT

Employees planning on retiring should contact the Cook County Pension Board as soon as practicable.

- (a) An Employee should contact HR at ccso.hr@ccsheriff.org within 30 days of their expected retirement date to request exit documentation to complete the retirement process.
- (b) Prior to retirement the employee must bring any Sheriff's Office credentials including star, hat shield and Sheriff's Office Identification Card; and relinquish all credentials to HR. Employees must also return all other Sheriff's Office property (e.g., keys, electronic devices).
- (c) Sworn employees may request a retirement star and retired Sheriff's Office Identification Card by submitting a memorandum, identifying their retirement date, to their respective department head and the Executive Director of HR. The following criteria must be met by the employee to be considered for retirement credentials:
 - 1. 10 years of service and be eligible for a Cook County Pension;
 - 2. Be in good standing with the Sheriff's Office at the time of retirement (refer to SEAM Glossary for definition of "good standing");
 - 3. Return of all Sheriff's Office credentials and other property;
 - 4. Be in possession of a valid FOID card and show a current qualification with the Training Academy; and
 - 5. Complete a Photo Identification Request Form and forward to HR, who will verify the employee meets all criteria as listed above and will issues the retired Sheriff's Office Identification Card to the retired sworn employee.
 - 6. The identification card for retired officers in good standing issued pursuant to

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this Section qualifies for the photographic identification required for eligibility to hold a retired law enforcement officer concealed carry permit.

7. Sworn employees who retire without a finding of good standing and do not have a Collective Bargaining Agreement with provisions addressing good standing may request a one-time review of that finding to the Chief of Staff.
8. Upon receiving a requested review, the Chief of Staff may amend a finding of not in good standing where the original finding was based on any pending discipline or an open OPR investigation. A finding of not in good standing that was based on discipline seeking a demotion or termination or an OPR case that reasonably would have been resulted in a recommendation of demotion or termination may not be amended.

T.3.16 LOST, STOLEN OR DAMAGED CREDENTIALS

The following must be provided to HR for any lost, stolen or damaged credentials:

- (a) A detailed police report from the police department of the local municipality where the credentials were lost or stolen;
- (b) A detailed memorandum describing the circumstances and/or incident, submitted through the employee's chain of command; and
- (c) A money order or cashier's check made payable to the Cook County Sheriff's Office for the amounts as follows:
 1. Star and Hat Shield - \$170.00 (the entire amount must be paid in full even if only the star or the hat shield were lost). This will also cover the cost of the issuance of a new Sheriff's Office Identification Card, due to the change in the star number.
 2. Sheriff Office Identification Card or Identification/ Proximity Card combination \$30.00.
- (d) Employees may be held responsible for any damaged credentials. A memorandum describing the condition of the damaged credentials, any other relevant documentation and a request for replacements, must be submitted through the employee's chain of command.
 1. If a determination has been made by the respective department head that the damage was due to the negligence of the employee, the employee shall submit a money order or cashier's check made payable to the Cook County Sheriff

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Office, for the appropriate amount due.

Employees should refer to the Credentials for Sheriff's Office Employees Policy for additional information related to employee credentials.

T.3.17 CHANGE OF ADDRESS, NAME, AND/OR ADDITION/DELETION OF DEPENDENTS

Employees are responsible for ensuring that they make status changes (e.g., change of name, address, tax deductions, marital status; the addition or deletion of dependents) in Oracle as soon as practicable, but no longer than 30 days, after such changes occur.

- (a) The employee's driver's license must reflect the current address and/or name change and must be uploaded into Oracle in support of a name or address change. If the employee does not possess a driver's license, a state identification card must be provided.
- (b) Proof of notification to the State of Illinois to change address and/or name on the FOID card will be required of all sworn employees and must be uploaded into Oracle in support of a name or address change.
- (c) If change of name is due to marriage, a copy of the marriage license must be uploaded into Oracle. If change of name is due to divorce, a copy of the first and last page of the divorce decree must be uploaded into Oracle. Either circumstance will also require an employee to update their insurance information in Oracle to add or delete dependents.

T.3.18 DECEASED

- (a) It is important that family members know they should report the death of an employee to HR via email at ccso.hr@ccsheriff.org so that the employee may receive the appropriate benefits and honors bestowed upon fallen employees.
- (b) A Memorial Notification Form should be completed for the death of a current or former Sheriff's Office employee or the death of a current employee's family member and submitted, via the chain of command, to the respective department head. The department head shall email the Memorial Notification Form to Peer Support at ccso.inmemoryofnotification@ccsheriff.org.
- (c) In the case of a current employee's death, a death certificate must be forwarded to the current life insurance provider and to the Cook County Pension Board within 24 hours or as soon as practicable. This is critical to ensure continued coverage of any dependents under the Cook County benefit plan.

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T.3.19 DIRECT DEPOSIT

All employees are strongly encouraged to sign up for direct deposit of their paycheck through their financial institution or through an authorized County credit union.

To participate in direct deposit, an employee must complete this request via Oracle.

T.3.20 EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

- (a) All requests for verification of employment must be submitted by the Lender to HR and must be accompanied by a signed release from the employee for the Cook County Sheriff's Office to release the information. No verification of employment will be provided verbally or without the signed consent of the employee.
- (b) The employment verification must indicate the employee's name as it appears on their current paycheck/direct deposit. No employment verification will be completed for an employee if another name is indicated on the request submitted to the Sheriff's Office.
- (c) Employment verifications may be sent via email at ccso.employmentverification@ccsheriff.org or by regular mail to the Cook County Sheriff's Office, Department of Human Resources, 3026 S. California Ave., Chicago, IL. 60608.

Under no circumstance is any Sheriff's Office employee authorized to complete any employment verification other than HR.

T.3.21 BILINGUAL PAY

- (a) Only unionized employees that are covered by an applicable collective bargaining agreement with a bilingual pay provision who also meet the requirements below will be eligible for bilingual pay.
- (b) An employee utilizing their bilingual skills regularly during the course of their employment may request the County's stipend for bilingual pay through their chain of command by completing the HR Bilingual Pay/Test Request Form that requires an explanation of how they utilize their bilingual skills in the course of their work duties.
- (c) The employee's immediate supervisor and respective department head will review the bilingual pay request and determine if any of the following criteria are applicable to the requesting employee's current position:
 - 1. Public contact requires continual eliciting and explaining of information in a language other than English.
 - 2. Translation of written material in another language is a continuous assignment.

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3. The position is the only one in the work location where there is a demonstrated need for language translation in providing services to the public.
4. One-of-a-kind language skill for current position or department.
5. Current position requirements necessitate a bilingual skill.

If any of the above criteria are applicable, an HR Bilingual Pay/Test Request Form must be completed by the employee's immediate supervisor and submitted to HR with the signed approval from the employee's immediate supervisor and respective department head.

- (d) The employee must successfully pass a language proficiency test administered by HR or submit a completed College Level Examination Program (CLEP) in their language of proficiency to qualify.
- (e) The employee's immediate supervisor and respective department head will be required to submit an annual HR Bilingual Pay Review Form verifying that the initial criteria are still applicable to the requesting employee's current position.
- (f) Employees who are approved to receive the bilingual pay stipend will be required to reapply for the bilingual pay stipend two years from the date they were approved.
- (g) Bilingual pay is a once-a-month stipend.

T.3.22 DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP AND CIVIL UNION STATUS

Dependent benefits are extended to domestic and civil union partners. To establish eligibility, an employee is required to provide a domestic partnership or civil union certificate. All required documents must be scanned and uploaded to Oracle to complete enrollment. If both partners are Cook County employees, all family members must be covered under one enrollment.

T.3.23 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM REFERRALS

The Sheriff's Office is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all employees and their families whenever possible. The Sheriff's Office recognizes that employees may experience difficulties which may impact their personal and professional lives. The Sheriff's Office supports and encourages employees to utilize an employee assistance program to obtain assistance.

Employees that utilize the Employee Assistance Program and require time away from the workplace are required to obtain an approved leave of absence. Further explanation of leaves of absence can be obtained from HR. The Employee Assistance Program counselors can be contacted by phone at (800) 327-5048 or visiting

<https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/employee-assistance-program>.

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AFSCME Personal Support Program - Union members can take advantage of this confidential program for free screening and referral services. AFSCME members should contact (800) 647-8776 for further information.

- (a) The Sheriff's Office offers immediate assistance through the Peer Support Program.
 - 1. The Peer Support Program is an intervention program for Sheriff's Office employees challenged with both personal and professional crisis.
 - 2. Professionally trained counselors and peer members are on site at Oak Forest Hospital.
 - 3. Employees can call the 24/seven confidential peer support telephone line at (708) 633-2588.

T.3.24 VICTIMS' ECONOMIC SECURITY AND SAFETY ACT (VESSA)

The Amended Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) (820 ILCS 180/1 et seq.) allows employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per any 12-month period if they or a covered family or household member is a victim of any "crime of violence." That term is defined to include "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. The sections of the Criminal Code referenced relate to homicide, sex offenses, bodily harm, harassing and obscene communications, terrorism, and armed violence. The amendments to the statute expressly define "sexual violence" as "sexual assault." VESSA provides an employee with the legal right to an annual allotment of unpaid leave, protection against discrimination and reasonable accommodations to workplace facilities or job requirements.

A "covered family or household member" includes a party to a civil union, grandparent, child, grandchild, sibling, or any other person related by blood or by present or prior marriage or civil union, or any other person who shares a relationship through a child, or any other individual whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship as determined by the employee. Spouses and parents, as well as persons jointly residing in the same household, continue to be covered under the statute.

- (a) Employees in need of VESSA leave must make this request through Workforce. HR will provide the employee with additional information and assistance once the leave request is received.
- (b) An employee may take VESSA leave to:
 - 1. Seek medical attention for, or recovery from, physical or psychological injuries;
 - 2. Obtain victim services, including psychological or other counseling;
 - 3. Participate in safety planning, including temporary or permanent relocation or other actions to increase the safety of the victim; and

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4. Seek legal assistance or participate in court proceedings related to the violence.
- (c) VESSA leave may be taken in increments, intermittently or on a reduced schedule.
 - (d) An employee may not exceed the time permitted by FMLA. FMLA taken during any 12-month period counts against the 12-week allowance of unpaid leave permitted under VESSA.
 - (e) An employee may elect to utilize accrued paid leave for any portion of VESSA leave, however, an employer may not compel an employee to exhaust any portion of her/his paid leave before using (or in substitution of) VESSA leave.
 - (f) Group health plan benefits must be maintained through the duration of the VESSA leave “under the conditions coverage would have been provided if the employee had continued in employment” (820 ILCS 180/20(e)(2)(A)), however, the employer may continue to collect any premium contributions from the employee that otherwise would have been paid by the employee had she/he not taken Leave.
 - (g) VESSA requires employers to make reasonable accommodations to known limitations resulting from circumstances relating to domestic or sexual violence, unless the employer can demonstrate that such an accommodation would impose an undue hardship (an action requiring significant difficulty or expense) on the operations of the employer. An eligible employee seeking such an accommodation should make a request to HR to determine whether the accommodation is reasonable.
 1. The employee shall provide the employer with at least 48 hours advance notice of the employee’s intention to take VESSA leave, except in such cases where it is not practicable to provide such notice. The employee may be required to provide certification that VESSA leave is to be taken for one or more of the purposes shown in this section at the time of the request for VESSA leave. If the employee is unable to provide certification at the time of the request, the employee must provide certification within a reasonable period of time after the request for VESSA leave by providing one of the following documents:
 2. Documentation from a victim services organization, attorney, member of the clergy or medical or other professional from whom the employee or the employee’s family or household member has sought assistance;
 3. A police or court record; or
 4. Other corroborating evidence.
 - (h) An employee requesting a VESSA leave may be required to provide the following certification documentation at the time of the request for VESSA leave to HR. If the employee is unable to provide the certification documentation at the time of the request, the employee must provide certification within a reasonable period of time after the request.

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1. A sworn statement from the employee that states the following:
 - a. That the employee, or a family or household member of the employee, is a victim of domestic or sexual violence and that the employee is taking time off from work to address issues related to domestic violence or sexual violence. Other documentation, such as a birth certificate, marriage certificate and/or legal documentation may be required to confirm family or household relationship;
 - b. The requested start date of the VESSA leave;
 - c. If the employee is requesting to take the VESSA Leave intermittently or on a reduced work schedule. If the employee is requesting a reduced work schedule, the exact reduced work schedule must be provided.
 - d. Whether the employees requesting to utilize accrued benefit time or if the employee is requesting unpaid VESSA leave.
 - e. Original documentation, on official letterhead, signed and dated, from a victim services organization, an attorney, a member of the clergy or a medical or other professional from whom the employee or a family or household member of the employee has sought assistance, a police or court record or other corroborating evidence. If the employee is requesting a reduced work schedule, this documentation should substantiate that request. If the employee has possession of such documentation.
- (i) HR shall verify eligibility requirements of the leave request, including either the submittal of required documentation at the time of the request for VESSA leave or within a reasonable period of time after the VESSA leave has been approved, and shall notify the employee, in writing, of the status of the VESSA leave request as soon as practicable (i.e., two business days absent any extenuating circumstances).
- (j) HR, department heads and supervisory staff shall maintain the confidentiality of all information pertaining to the use of VESSA leave, notice of an employee's intention to take VESSA leave and certification provided by the employee.
- (k) Individuals wishing to learn more about the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), or file a complaint regarding VESSA should visit their website at <http://www.state.il.us/agency/dol>.

T.3.25 HEALTH BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY

Employees must be paid for a minimum of 30 hours per week to receive County health benefits at the employee contribution rate (a percentage of pay associated with each plan and tier of coverage). Employees paid less than 30 hours per week during the measurement period,

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consistent with their regular work schedule, must pay the full premium cost for those benefits.

T.4 RE-HIRE OF FORMER NON-UNION EMPLOYEES, WHO WERE INITIALLY HIRED UNDER THE PROCESSES OUTLINED IN SEAM

T.4.1 INDIVIDUALS WHO MAY QUALIFY TO BE RE-HIRED

The Sheriff's Office has complete discretion with respect to the re-hire of former non-union employees who:

- (a) Were previously employed by the Sheriff's Office; and
- (b) Left the Sheriff's Office in good standing.

Any re-hire applicant must have previously been hired under the provisions of SEAM, which exempts the re-hire applicant from undergoing additional hiring processes, with the exception of the criminal background check and a drug screening.

The Cook County Sheriff's Office assures equal employment opportunity without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, marital status, citizenship status, military status, disability, genetic history, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, political affiliation and/or influence, and/or any other protected classification(s) under the law, basing all recruitment and selection decisions, including re-hire, solely on job-related criteria.

T.4.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The respective department head and HR will coordinate the re-hire process for former non-union employees of the Sheriff's Office.

Hiring managers, supervisors and/or designated individuals charged with making hiring decisions for their respective divisions and/or department are responsible for basing those hiring decisions on the principles of merit.

All employees and/or contractors involved in the hiring process are responsible for adhering to the Merit-Based Recruitment and Selection Plan and for signing a No Political Consideration Certification (NPCC).

T.4.3 DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

When a department head wishes to re-hire a former employee to their former (or similar) position, the respective department head shall make a request to re-hire to HR by completing an Employment Action.

T.5 LAYOFFS

In the event of budgetary reductions imposed by the County Board or other events or operational needs requiring a reduction of budgeted or grant funded positions, employees will

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be subject to layoff and possible recall in accordance with SEAM Article S – Layoffs.

T.6 RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

An employee may request a reasonable accommodation based on a sincerely held religious belief by contacting HR and submitting the required form(s) (e.g., Religious Accommodation Request Form) and relevant information/documentation that may be requested, in compliance with applicable law. HR will subsequently review the request and approve or deny the requested accommodation. Employees who wish to appeal HR's decision may submit an appeal within 30 calendar days from the date of the decision and submit it to the Sheriff's Legal Department via email at ccso.legal@ccsheriff.org. The Sheriff's Office's General Counsel shall review the matter and inform all parties of their decision in writing. The employee and HR shall promptly provide all requested information to facilitate the review. The General Counsel's decision shall be the final internal appeal.