

Administrative Policy No. 19.25.06

Subject: Time Limitations on Employee Requested Leave Adjustments

Information Contact: Office of Accounting Services
Chief, (360) 664-5716

Authorizing Sources: [Collective Bargaining Agreements](#)
[Chapter 357-31 WAC](#), Holidays and leave
OFM State Administrative & Accounting Manual,
Chapters: [20](#), Internal Control and Auditing
[25](#), Payroll

Effective Date: November 22, 2010

Revised: February 17, 2021

Approved By: **Original signed by Judy Fitzgerald**
Assistant Secretary / Chief Financial Officer

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the time limitations for employees to request changes to leave types used for previously documented leave.

Retroactive changes to an employee's leave usage are extremely labor intensive and often require complete reconstruction of leave activity back to the event and forward.

Scope

This policy applies to all Department of Social and Health Services employees.

This policy does not apply to shared leave or Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Exception

If any payroll period is closed, employees may not make retroactive changes to paid Family Medical Leave absences.

Additional Guidance

[DSHS Forms Picker](#)

Form 03-421, Leave Request

Definitions

DSHS means the Department of Social and Health Services.

Leave type means the categories of leave as designated on the DSHS leave request form (03-421).

Payroll Office is the office within the Facilities, Finance, and Analytics Administration that processes payroll for DSHS to include the institutional payroll offices that process their own payroll.

Policy

- A.** It is the employees' responsibility to manage their own leave in an accurate and timely manner. DSHS employees must request retroactive changes to the leave used for any absence within the shortest timeframe listed below.
 - 1. 30 days from the last leave date in question.
 - 2. If the employee's leave occurs within 30 days of their anniversary date, they can change it up to two working days prior to their anniversary date in order to avoid a loss of accrued leave due to the 240-hour vacation rule.
 - 3. By December 15th for sick leave changes (due to the annual sick leave buyout), except for provisions outlined in item 2 of this section.
 - 4. By June 30th for compensatory time (due to the annual compensatory time buyout).
 - 5. As required by the applicable collective bargaining agreement (CBA).
- B.** In the event of extenuating circumstances, only the office of accounting services chief or payroll manager will have final approval to make retroactive changes that exceed the timeframes listed in policy point A above.
- C.** If any specific provision of this policy conflicts with an applicable CBA, the CBA will prevail.

Procedure

- A. To process retroactive changes in leave type**
 - 1. DSHS employees complete and submit a revised leave request.
 - 2. Supervisors, leave corrections processors, and payroll processors:

- a. Review revised leave requests to check for compliance with this policy.
- b. If the request:
 - i. Meets the policy requirements and applicable leave balances exist to accommodate the change, process as appropriate.
 - ii. Does not meet the policy requirements, or applicable leave balances do not exist, deny the request and return the leave request to the employee with an explanation of why the leave was denied.
3. The appointing authority, or designee
 - a. Reviews revised leave requests where leave without pay (LWOP) is requested in lieu of other leave types, or is needed because of insufficient leave balances.
 - a. If the request is:
 - i. Approved, forwards leave request to payroll office for processing.
 - ii. Denied, returns the leave request with explanation to the employee.

B. To request an exception to policy

1. DSHS employees submit a revised leave request to their appointing authority, or designee, along with an explanation of why an extenuating circumstance exists.
2. The appointing authority or designee
 - a. Reviews request for an exception to policy.
 - b. If the request is:
 - i. Approved, forwards the leave request and explanation to the Office of Accounting Services chief or payroll manager.
 - ii. Denied, returns the leave request and explanation for denial to the employee.
3. The Office of accounting services chief or payroll manager
 - a. Reviews staff request for an exception to policy.
 - b. If the request is:
 - i. Approved, forwards the leave request and explanation to the payroll processor, and notifies the appointing authority, or designee.
 - ii. Denied, returns the leave request and explanation for denial to the appointing authority, or designee. The appointing authority, or designee, returns the leave request to the employee with an explanation of why the leave was denied.

C. Examples:

Example #1

Employee Joe submitted approved vacation leave for November 1st. While on leave, he contracted an illness and did not take the intended trip. He returned to work on November 20th. His anniversary date for vacation leave is December 1st.

Employee Joe submitted a revised leave request to change vacation leave to sick leave on or before November 30th. The timing of this request complies with the timeframes set and established in this policy.

- a. The vacation leave change meets the policy because it is prior to his anniversary date of December 1st.
- b. The sick leave correction meets the policy because it is prior to the December 15th deadline for changing sick leave balances.
- c. The request to change is also within the 30-day timeframe and as set by the applicable CBA.

Example #2

Employee Joe submitted approved vacation leave for November 1st. While on leave, he contracted an illness and did not take the intended trip. He returned to work on November 20th. His anniversary date for vacation leave is November 25th.

Employee Joe submitted a revised leave request to change vacation leave to sick leave on December 14th. The timing of this request does not comply with the timeframes set and established in this policy.

- a. The request was not submitted prior to the employee's November 25th anniversary date.

Example #3

Employee Joe submitted approved vacation leave for November 23rd. While on leave, he contracted an illness and did not take the intended trip. He returned to work on November 27th. His anniversary date for vacation leave is December 30th.

Employee Joe submitted a revised leave request to change vacation leave to sick leave on December 20th. Although the request was submitted within the 30-day timeframe and is prior to the employee's anniversary date, this request does not comply with the shortest timeframes as required by policy.

- a. The request was submitted after the December 15th cut-off date for changing to sick leave.