

Northeastern University

Policy on Paid Time Off

HUMAN RESOURCES

Effective Date: April 2, 2014

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Supersedes:

Related Policies:

Policy on Leaves of Absence

Policy on Timekeeping and Reporting

Responsible

Office/Department:
Human Resources Management

Keywords: paid time off, sick time; personal time; vacation time; holiday

I. Purpose and Scope

This policy provides basic information about the paid time off which the university offers to its employees. The university provides eligible staff with paid time off, including paid sick time, vacation time, personal time, and others as described in this policy.

II. Definitions

For purposes of this policy,

Paid time off means paid sick time, vacation time, personal time, and other paid time off.

Days: Note that paid time off for sick, vacation and personal time is accrued and allotted in days. Days are converted to hours for purposes of tracking time in the time tracking system.

III. Policy

It is the policy of the university to pay employees at their regular rate of pay for certain absences or other time away from work.

The university reserves the right to change the amount of paid time off which it offers to its employees as a matter of policy and consistent with state and federal law. This policy applies to all eligible university employees including employees who work outside of the state of Massachusetts unless another state law applies.

A. Paid Sick Time

The university provides, within certain limits, compensation to employees at their regular rate of pay for absences due to their own medical condition(s) and other circumstances.

i. Use of Paid Sick Time

Paid sick time may only be used for absences relating to the employee's medical condition(s) except as provided in paragraph III.B, Personal Time, and as set forth below.

Up to a maximum of forty (40) hours of sick time per year may be used for the following purposes in accordance with the Massachusetts Earned Sick Time Law:

- a. To care for a physical or mental illness, injury or medical condition that requires home care, professional medical diagnosis or care, or preventative medical care affecting the employee or the employee's child, spouse, parent, or parent of a spouse;
- b. To attend routine medical appointments of the employee or the employee's child, spouse, parent, or parent of a spouse;
- c. To travel to and from an appointment, a pharmacy, or other location related to the purpose for which earned sick time was taken; or
- d. To address the psychological, physical, or legal effects of domestic violence on the employee or the employee's dependent child.

Employees should notify their supervisors in advance if the need for earned sick time is foreseeable. If an employee anticipates a multi-day absence from work, employees must provide notification of the expected duration of the leave, or, if unknown, must provide notification on a daily basis, unless the circumstances make such notice unreasonable. Use of earned sick time that is unforeseeable must be reported to employees' supervisors as soon as is practicable. It is the responsibility of supervisors to maintain accurate paid sick time information. If an employee exhausts their paid sick time, any additional sick day(s) taken will be unpaid. This unpaid sick time must be tracked and entered in the Time Tracking system which is found on myNEU under Services and Links.

Employees who are eligible for and use earned paid sick time may be required to submit to the HRM/Benefits Department documentation signed by a health care provider certifying that the use of earned paid sick time was for an authorized purpose when the absence

1. exceeds twenty-four (24) consecutively scheduled work hours or three (3) consecutively scheduled work days;

2. occurs within two (2) weeks prior to an employee's final scheduled day of work before termination of employment, except in the case of temporary employees; or
3. occurs after four (4) unforeseeable and undocumented absences within a three (3) month period.

Employees who do not have a health care provider may provide a signed written statement evidencing the need for the use of earned paid sick time for an authorized purpose in lieu of certification by a health care provider in the event documentation is required.

If a benefits eligible employee is absent in excess of five (5) consecutive workdays due to a medical condition, the employee may be required to provide additional medical documentation and complete leave of absence forms. The employee and/or the employee's supervisor must contact the HRM/Benefits Department to discuss any absence for a medical condition that exceeds five (5) consecutive workdays. Employees should refer to the [Policy on Leaves of Absence](#) and the [Disability Leave Programs](#) webpage if an absence exceeds the number of earned paid sick days they have available, as they may be eligible for interim disability leave and/or long-term disability leave.

The university may require employees to provide a fitness-for-duty certification, a work release, or other documentation from a medical provider before returning to work after an absence during which earned sick time was used.

ii. Accrual of Sick Time for Benefits Eligible Employees

The accrual of paid sick leave is based on the employee's date of hire/anniversary date of employment.

a. Accrual for Faculty and Administrative Professional Employees Grades 9-17

Benefits eligible employees paid on a semimonthly basis earn paid sick time based upon the number of years of service. The amount of paid sick time is allotted on the first day of employment and renewed annually at the start of the fiscal year (July 1). If an employee is on leave or inactive on July 1, the renewal will occur when the employee returns to work. The following table gives the specific details. Employees paid semi-monthly who work less than full-time will accrue a pro-rated amount of paid sick time based upon their years of service and hours worked.

Years of Service	Paid Sick Time at Full Pay
Up to 2 years of completed service	22 days
Over 2 years of completed service and less than 7 years of service	44 days
Over 7 years of completed service	66 days

b. Accrual for Office Support (Grades 51-54), Technical (Grades 41-45), Crafts, Trades, and Service Employees (Grades 60-71), Public Safety (Grades 73-76)

All benefits eligible personnel paid weekly earn paid sick time at the rate of one day for each complete month of service. Earned paid sick time may be carried forward from year to year up to a maximum of 150 workdays.

iii. Accrual of Sick Time for Eligible Part-time, Temporary and Student Employees

Part-time, temporary and student employees are entitled to accrue 1 hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked up to a maximum of 40 hours of paid sick time per year. Employees may carry over up to 40 hours of unused earned sick time to the next fiscal year. Employees, however, cannot use more than 40 hours of earned sick time in a fiscal year.

Student Employees are eligible to accrue sick time only if they are not (a) participating in a federal work study program or substantially similar financial aid or scholarship program; (b) providing support services to residents of a resident hall in exchange for a waiver or reduction in room, board, tuition or other education-related expenses; (c) exempt from FICA.

iv. Payout of Paid Sick Time

Upon separation from employment, the university does not make a lump sum payment for unused earned paid sick time. There is a single exception to this policy for certain benefits eligible employees paid weekly. At the time of retirement from university service, benefits eligible employees paid weekly will be eligible to receive a lump sum award of 50% of all unused earned paid sick time, provided they (1) are at least 62 years

old, (2) have 10 years of completed service immediately prior to retirement, and (3) have 60 days or more of accrued earned paid sick time.

v. Enforcement and Non-Retaliation

Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for misuse of earned sick time if they are engaging in fraud or abuse of benefits available under this policy.

The university will not tolerate retaliation against an employee who exercises or attempts to exercise rights under the law.

B. Personal Time

Use of Personal Time for benefits eligible employees

Employees may use up to 3 days of earned paid sick time as personal days for personal matters including, but not limited to, appointments, parent teacher conferences, and religious observances. Please refer to the Policy on Leaves of Absence for requirements pertaining to personal time.

C. Religious Observances

Northeastern respects the religious beliefs of faculty and staff and their desire to take time off during religious observances. Employees may use personal time for religious observances.

D. Vacation

i. Use of Vacation Time for benefits eligible employees

The university encourages employees to use their accrued vacation time. Vacation time may only be taken with prior approval of the employee's supervisor. Vacation days must be accrued before taken. Paid time off for holidays recognized by the university do not require the use of vacation time. Vacation time cannot be used to extend an employee's separation date. The employee's separation date is the last day he/she works.

ii. Accrual, Rollover and Payout of Accrued Vacation Time

Vacation time is accrued on a monthly basis and will begin to accrue in the first month of employment if the employee begins work on or before the 15th of that month, or the second month of employment if the employee begins work after the 15th of that month. Employees who work less than full-time accrue vacation time on a pro-rated basis. For rates of accrual, please see the Vacation Accrual Rate Addendum, attached to this Policy, or visit the [HRM Benefits website](#).

Vacation time accrued during one fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) must be used by June 30 of the following fiscal year and cannot be carried forward into subsequent fiscal years. The university will not pay an employee for unused vacation days, except to the extent required by law.

Any unused, accrued vacation time will be paid with the employee's last paycheck upon separation from the university. In the case of the death of an employee, vacation accrued and not taken will be paid to the estate of the employee.

E. Holiday

A holiday is a day designated by the university on which employees are paid for time not worked. Exempt staff who are required to work on a designated university holiday can take another day off as coordinated with their supervisor. Non-exempt staff who work on a designated university holiday will be paid for the time worked, including but not limited to any overtime pay required.

To be paid for a holiday, a faculty or staff member must be in a benefits eligible, paid status on the working days before and after the holiday. The holiday schedule is determined by the university and posted on the [Human Resources website](#) each year for the upcoming year.

F. Other Paid Time Off

The university provides for other paid time off, such as bereavement leave, payment for jury duty service, and other situations where an employee must be absent from work. Please refer to the [Policy on Leaves of Absence](#), and the [Human Resources Website](#) for details.

IV. Additional Information

Each department is responsible for managing the records of its employees' paid time off benefits.

More detailed information regarding paid time off in accordance with this policy is provided on the [Human Resources website](#).

V. Contact Information

HRM Customer Service Center: 250 Columbus Place; 617-373-2230;
HRMInfo@neu.edu

Vacation Accrual Rate Addendum

Administrative and professional Grades 12 through 17 and full-time faculty

- Accumulate vacation time at the rate of two days per month.
- Administrative/professional personnel who work 45 weeks or less per year do not accrue vacation time.

Administrative and professional Grades 9 through 11 accrue vacation time on the basis of the number of months employed during each fiscal year (July 1 - June 30).

- The number of days accrued is based on the employee's length of service as detailed below.

Number of Years Employed	Vacation Accrued Each Month of Employment
Up to 4 years of completed service	1.25 days -- maximum of 15 days/year
Over 4 years or completed service and less than 14 years of service	1.67 days -- maximum of 20 days/year
Over 14 years of completed service	2 days -- maximum of 24 days/year

Office Support (Grades 51-54), Technical (Grades 41-45), Crafts, Trades, and Service Employees (Grades 60-71), Public Safety (Grades 73-76)

- Accrue vacation on the basis of the number of months employed during each fiscal year (July 1-June 30).
- The number of days accrued is based on the employee's length of service as detailed below.

Number of Years Employed	Vacation Accrued Each Month of Employment
Up to 4 years of completed service	1 day -- maximum of 12 days/year
Over 4 years or completed service and less than 9 years of service	1.5 days -- maximum of 18 days/year
Over 9 years or completed service and less than 14 years of service	1.67 days -- maximum of 20 days/year
Over 14 years of completed service	2 days -- maximum of 24 days/year