

Long-Term Leave

I need to take an extended period of leave. What are my options?

Most members will take either **Category 1 (Planned Leave)** or **Category 2 (Parental, Health, and Home Responsibility)** long-term leaves of absence, found in Sections 10.6 and 10.7 of the union contract.

Category 1 Leaves

- May be granted for one of six reasons defined in Section 10.6.2
 - Professional Study, Travel, Opportunity Leave, Service to Other Public Agencies, Service to Professional Associations, Other Leaves Determined by the Superintendent
- Are granted up to a period of one academic school year, and can be renewed yearly up to a total of three years within a 10 year period
- Are available only to permanent employees, or 2nd-year probationary employees, if the leave begins no earlier than their 3rd year of employment
- Must be requested by March 1st of the preceding school year in which leave is to begin. Exceptions may be granted for humane or other cogent reasons
- Can be renewed, as long as the request is made by March 1st of every year
- They begin at the start of an academic year, and conclude at the end of the academic year, unless mutually agreed to by the District and member beforehand

Category 2 Leaves

- Can be taken only for the following reasons, defined in Section 10.7:
 - **Parental Leave**—This includes **Pregnancy Leave** (which requires 30 days' notice, if possible), **Male Paternal Responsibility**, and **Adoption**
 - **Health Leave**—requires a physician's note of incapacity to perform your regular duties
 - **Home Responsibility**—granted when there is a demonstrable need for caring for an immediate family member, as defined in Section 10.16
- Are granted for the balance of a school year, and can be renewed year to year, for a period not exceeding 5 years per instance
- Are available to probationary and permanent employees
- Return to work begins at the start of a school year, unless mutually agreed to otherwise beforehand
 - Members on health or home responsibility leaves can return during the school year, if there is a vacancy available for them
- Members on parental or home responsibility leave have the opportunity to substitute as needed

Are there other types of long-term leave?

Yes, there is a **Category 3 (Other Long-Term Leaves)** in Section 10.8 of the contract. This includes **Unrestricted Leaves** and **Military Leave**. Unrestricted leaves may be granted to permanent employees by the District for one year, based on a reason that is mutually beneficial to the district and the member. They must be requested by March 1st of the academic year prior to the leave beginning. They start at the beginning of an academic year, end at the conclusion of an academic year, and they are not renewable. Military leave is granted to probationary or permanent employees upon receipt of proper orders. Military service will count towards step advancement on the salary schedule. Also, employees on military leave retain the employment status they earned prior to their leave (probationary or permanent), when they return. They can return immediately upon completion of their orders. **Sabbaticals** (Section 10.10) and **Exchange Teacher Leave** (Section 10.11) are rare, but are also available.

What happens when I want to return from leave?

Most leaves require the employee to return at the beginning of a new school year. Employees on Category 1 leave must notify the district if they want to return to work, or extend their leave for another year, by March 1st. Employees on long-term leave may request a return during a school year, if there is a temporary position available for which they are qualified. If there are none available, the employee may request priority for day-to-day substitute teaching assignments. Employees may request, prior to their leave, to return to their previous site or program. Such requests will be honored only if the employee is ready to work at the start of the next year, and if their previous position is still available at the former site/program. Probationary employees retain the status they had earned prior to going out on leave (if a probationary year 2 employee commences leave in their third year for one year, when they return, they are considered permanent, for example).

Sources: Collective Negotiations Contract, July 1, 2014– June 30, 2017 (Sections 10.6, 10.7, 10.8, 10.9, 10.10, 10.11; Appendix A, Section 4.031)