

Earning and Using Sick Leave for Washington employees

Valid Leave Reasons

An employee may take leave under Washington Law:

Diagnosis, care, or treatment of mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition, or preventive medical care, of an employee or employee's family member, defined as child (including adopted, foster, step, in loco parentis, de facto, or legal guardian, regardless of age or dependency), child of the employee's spouse or registered domestic partner, spouse, registered domestic partner, parent, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling.

For specified purposes under the Domestic Leave Act (RCW 49.76.030).

Closure of employee's place of business, closure of a child's school or place of care by order of a public official for any health-related reason (which does not include closures for inclement weather).

Accruing Sick Leave Time

An employee earns one hour of sick leave for every 40 hours worked commencing upon his/her hire date during his/her first calendar year of employment as well as subsequent calendar years.

Carry Forward of Accrued Unused Leave Time

After the conclusion of the calendar year, the Employee may "carry forward" any accrued but unused leave, to a maximum of 40 unused hours into the following calendar year.

Using Sick Leave Time

Employees can use leave beginning on the 90th day of employment. Employers can require reasonable documentation (within a reasonable time period) that leave was used for permitted purposes for absences of more than 3 consecutive work days, but cannot impose an unreasonable burden or expense on employee or exceed privacy requirements otherwise established under law. Employers can withhold leave payments if they can demonstrate that the employee abused the policy.

No payment of Unused Sick Leave Upon Separation

An employee is not entitled to payment of accrued, earned sick leave on separation from employment.

Reinstatement of Unused Sick Leave

Employers must reinstate previously accrued unused leave for employees who are rehired within 12 months of an employment separation.