

# Considering a Leave of Absence?

San Diego Unified School District – Human Resources/Payroll

Useful payroll and benefits information for every employee considering a leave of absence

## Payroll

- ✓ Apply for your leave of absence at the earliest practical date.
- ✓ Verify with your site/department secretary that a “PAR” has been created for your leave of absence. A PAR created a month or more before your leave begins is the best insurance that your pay will be issued to you correctly.
- ✓ If you are on 12 pay and begin your leave of absence at any time other than July 1, expect that you have received more pay than you have earned. This is because your contract pay for the year begins in July and the checks issued to you include advance payment for future months.
- ✓ If you are on 10 pay, the likelihood of overpayment is reduced since you are not paid in advance, however, if your status on the personnel system is not changed prior to the start of your leave or if you have absences immediately prior to your leave, you may be overpaid when these changes are communicated to payroll.
- ✓ If you have been absent and have begun to use half pay sick leave or have had unpaid absences, your checks may not have been fully adjusted for recent absences.
- ✓ Payroll staff are available to help you plan for your leave of absence. An appointment is helpful as it allows the payroll technician to prepare some calculations in advance of your arrival. Your site secretary will be able to give you a direct number to your payroll technician to schedule a convenient time to meet.
- ✓ To minimize the chance of overpayment, make sure that your site secretary is aware of your plans and has been reporting your absences as they occur. If you are out for more than a month, we encourage those absences to be reported by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for all workdays in the month.
- ✓ **RULE OF THUMB:** If you receive a full pay check for the month that your leave begins or ANY check after the month that your leave begins, you should contact payroll before spending the money. Making this call will minimize the chance that you will be asked to repay the money after it has been spent.
- ✓ When you return from a leave of absence, any previous direct deposit instructions will be reactivated. If you have changed bank accounts or wish to stop your prior direct deposit, be sure to visit payroll.
- ✓ If you are in the teachers bargaining unit and previously signed up for voluntary 12 pay and want to resume voluntary 12 pay when you return, complete the application forms upon return from your leave to resume that method of payment.

## Benefits

- ✓ Apply for your leave of absence at the earliest possible date.
- ✓ If you are eligible for district paid benefits and have been enrolled in health plans, your district paid coverage will continue through the end of the month that your last day in paid status occurs.
- ✓ Once your leave of absence has been entered into the personnel system, a letter will be sent to you by the Benefits office explaining your options for continuing your benefits on a self pay basis either through the leave of absence option defined in your collective bargaining agreement or through COBRA.
- ✓ You will have 60 days from our letter to make a decision on whether you wish to continue your district coverage at your own expense. If you elect coverage, you will be responsible for premiums from the date that your district paid coverage ended.
- ✓ If you do not elect to continue your coverage during your leave, you MUST reapply for the benefits within 30 days of your return to work. Please visit the employee benefits office to complete the application forms as soon as you can after returning to your job.
- ✓ Even if you elect to continue your benefits, it is a good idea to contact the Benefits Office as soon as you return to work. Doing so can greatly facilitate a smooth transition back to district paid benefits.

### How Do I Contact the Benefits Office?

Our telephone number is 619-725-8130. Press option 6 for direct connection to the Benefits staff.

Our office is open from 8 to 5, Monday through Friday. We are located in Room 1150 of the Eugene Brucker Education Center, 4100 Normal Street.

### How Do I Reach Payroll?

Your site secretary will be able to give you the direct line of your payroll specialist. You are welcome to use that number at any time to get answers to your questions about your pay.

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