

I. Revisions to Sick Leave Policy**II. Issue**

The proposal is to revise the university's sick leave policy to allow the university greater flexibility in addressing possible abuse. University counsel has indicated that the current policy places the university in the position of having to accept without question any medical statement submitted by the employee from a physician.

III. Background and Process

EKU provides sick leave benefits to its employees, accruing at the rate of one day per month, to provide compensation for absences due to personal illness, injury, or other short disability; their attendance on family members in such situations; or due to a death in the household or immediate family. The current policy provides for the employee, when requested by the supervisor, to provide a doctor's certificate to verify the medical conditions but provides no process when the certificate is questioned. The proposed policy provides for such additional steps.

This proposal has been reviewed and endorsed by University Counsel and the Administrative Council.

IV. Alternatives

Retention of the current policy without modification will continue to hinder the university in addressing possible abuses of sick leave policy.

V. President's Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board approve the proposed policy for immediate implementation.

Eastern Kentucky University Revisions to Sick Leave Policy

Classified Employees

Current Policy (*Handbook for Classified Employees*, revised 1996, page 17)

Sick leave is provided for the benefit of employees to use for the situations listed above and is not to be used for personal time. Abuse of sick leave may lead to disciplinary action. The supervisor may require a doctor's certificate to verify absences in the case of suspected abuse.

Proposed Policy

Sick leave is provided for the benefit of employees to use for the situations listed above and is not intended to be substituted for personal time off. Abuse of sick leave may lead to disciplinary action.

At their discretion, supervisors may require a certificate from the employee's doctor to verify absences due to medical conditions. Where deemed advisable by the supervisor or university administration, the university may take additional steps, including the referral of the employee for a second medical opinion at the university's expense, to verify the appropriateness of sick leave use. Lack of cooperation by the employee during this process may result in the suspension of any additional sick leave until the matter is resolved. If it is determined that sick leave was inappropriately used, the employee will be required to repay any sick leave taken and face other disciplinary measures.

Faculty/Staff

Current Policy (*Faculty/Staff Handbook 1998-2000*, page 59-60)

Sick-Leave Recordkeeping

It is the responsibility of individual members of the faculty/staff to inform the immediate supervisor whenever they cannot meet their responsibilities due to illness or other reasons covered by the sick leave policy and to initiate the appropriate form(s) which are available from the supervisor. Supervisors may require a health professional's certification of illness.

Proposed Policy

Sick-Leave Utilization

It is the responsibility of individual members of the faculty/staff to inform their immediate supervisor whenever they cannot meet their responsibilities due to illness or other reasons covered by the sick leave policy and to initiate the appropriate form(s) which are available from the supervisor. At their discretion, supervisors may require a certificate from the employee's doctor to verify absences due to medical conditions. Where deemed advisable by the supervisor or university administration, the university may take additional steps, including the referral of the employee for a second medical opinion at the university's expense, to verify the appropriateness of sick leave use. Lack of cooperation by the employee during this process may result in the suspension of any additional sick leave until the matter is resolved. If it is determine that sick leave was inappropriately used, the employee will be required to repay any sick leave taken and face other disciplinary measures.