Policy title	Category
Sick Leave Classification	Human Resources
Owner	**Approved by**
Human Resources	Business and Human Resources Offices

Policy statement

NWU Paid Sick Leave Policy (October 1, 2025)

Nebraska Wesleyan University (NWU), in accordance with the Nebraska Families and Workplace Act (NFWA), recognizes that employees may need time away from working. Paid sick leave may be accrued and used by NWU employees as set forth in this policy.

Permitted Uses of Sick Leave:

- An employee's mental or physical illness, injury, health condition, medical diagnosis, treatment or preventative care.
- An employee to care for a family member for any mental or physical illness, injury, health condition, medical diagnosis, treatment or preventative care.
- An employee to attend a meeting for a child necessitated by the child's mental or physical illness, injury, health condition, medical diagnosis, treatment or preventative care.
- Closure of the place of business due to a public health emergency, for a child's school that was closed due to a public health emergency, the need for the employee to self-isolate, or care for a family member who either needs to self-isolate or who has been exposed to a communicable disease.
- Absence due to dating/domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking to permit the employee to obtain for themselves or for a family member medical, psychological, or victim aid, relocation or legal services.

Covered Family Members:

- Spouse; which includes a domestic partner or an individual in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the employee.
- Child; which includes biological, step, adopted, foster, in loco, and legal guardians.
- Parent; which includes biological, step, adopted, foster, in loco, and in-laws.
- Grandparent; which includes biological, step, adopted, foster, in loco, and in-laws.
- Grandchild; which includes biological, step, adopted, foster of employee or spouse.
- Sibling; which includes biological, step, adopted, foster of employee or spouse.
- Any individual related to the employee by blood **OR** whose close association is the equivalent of a family relationship.

NWU Tracking Methods

- Full-time faculty and staff: will use a standard monthly accrual based on FTE (Full-Time Equivalency)
- Part-time faculty and staff: will use a standard monthly accrual prorated by FTE(Full-Time Equivalency)
- Adjuncts, part-time athletic coaches, and stipend-paid employees: will use a tracking method based on hours worked determined by each stipend paid.
- Student employees: will be tracked using worked hours reported in timesheets.

Accrual System

Sick Leave is calculated on an accrual system for each employee classification and continues to accrue until the applicable Maximum Earning Cap noted in the Accrual Schedule is met.

New Employees:

- Hourly paid staff and students will begin accruing upon the first day of employment. The first pay period will be prorated based on the number of hours worked.
- Salaried Staff will begin accruing with the beginning of the first pay period worked and will be prorated for the number of hours worked in the first period.
- Faculty who are paid on a deferred basis over 12 months will begin accruing with the first pay period of their deferred pay cycle.
- Adjunct faculty will accrue with each pay date according to the pay periods noted in the adjunct's appointment notice.

Accrual Schedule:

Faculty and Staff: Full-time 1.0 FTE:

Maximum Annual Accrual: 80 hours per year
Maximum Earnings Cap: 360 hours

* Current staff with a sick leave balance more than the Maximum Earnings Cap will be allowed to maintain their balance and use sick leave from that balance. Once the employee's balance is below the Maximum Earnings Cap, the employee will begin to accrue additional sick leave.

*Employees in this category may use accrued sick leave when it has been earned but may not use sick leave that has not been earned or accrued.

Accrual Examples:

1. An hourly-paid employee: 80 / 24 pay periods = 3.33 hours of accrual per pay period
2. A salaried employee: 80 hours / 12 pay periods = 6.67 hours of accrual per pay period

Part-time faculty and staff (Less than 1.0 FTE):

Maximum Annual Accrual: Prorated amount based on the employee's FTE and the maximum accrual of 80 hours per year
Maximum Earnings Cap: Prorated amount based on the employee's FTE and the maximum Earnings Cap of 360 hours

* Current staff with a sick leave balance more than the Maximum Earnings Cap will be allowed to maintain their balance and use sick leave from that balance. Once the employee's balance is below the Maximum Earnings Cap, the employee will begin to accrue additional sick leave.

*Employees in this category may use accrued sick leave when it has been earned but may not use sick leave that has not been earned or accrued.

Accrual Examples:

1. An hourly-paid employee budgeted with a .50 FTE: 80 hours * .50 FTE = 40 Hours / 24 pay periods = 1.67 hours of accrual per pay period
2. A salaried employee budgeted with a .75 FTE: 80 hours * .75 FTE = 60 Hours / 12 pay periods = 5.0 hours of accrual per pay period

Adjunct Faculty, Student Employees (age 16+), Stipend Employees:

Maximum Annual Accrual: One (1) hour for every thirty (30) hours worked
Maximum Earnings Cap: 56 hours

*Current employees in this category will not be allowed to use more than the Maximum Annual Actual of 56 hours in any given 12-month period of time.

Other Provisions

- Paid Sick Leave runs concurrently with leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), where applicable.
- Sick Leave time is not counted in calculating overtime.

- Employees are protected from retaliation or discipline for lawfully using sick leave under NFWA.
- NWU will not allow for any negative sick leave balances.
- If an employee has more than one position, the employee's hours worked will be added together for accrual purposes. Employees will be allowed to use sick leave as needed in either position, regardless of which position allowed the employee to earn the accrual of sick leave.
- Sick Leave will be accounted for from the department's budget for the employee's position when the leave is used, not under the position when the leave was earned.
- Notice is required from the employee when they need to use paid sick time. Employees will be expected to follow the direct supervisor's instructions for the method of providing notice (examples: text message, email, or phone call.)
- NWU will require reasonable documentation if the employee has used paid sick time for more than three (3) consecutive workdays.

Documentation

- Reasonable documentation includes documentation signed by a health care professional indicating time off was necessary. However, the documentation is not required to explain the nature of the illness or condition.
- If the employee or a family member did not receive services from a health care professional or if documentation cannot be obtained from a health care professional **in a reasonable time or without added expense**, a written statement from the employee indicating that the employee is taking or took paid sick time for a qualifying purpose must be considered reasonable documentation.
- Excessive absences will be addressed through the normal performance improvement process.
- Every employee is expected to use Sick Leave for bona fide purposes, and this time must be recorded.

Separation of Employment

- Upon separation of employment with the University, unused, accrued sick time is not paid out to the employee.
- Employees may not substitute sick leave for paid time as part of an employee's notice of resignation.
- An employee's accrued Sick Leave balance will be recorded upon separation.
    - If the employee is rehired within 365 days from the date of their separation, their previous sick leave balance will be reinstated upon rehire.
    - After 365 days, an employee who is re-hired will start accruing from a zero balance as a new employee.

Last revised date
October 1, 2025