

Subject: SABBATICAL LEAVE (SINGLE PERIOD LEAVE)

Date: January 7, 2024

Pages: 1 of 3

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for employees to take an extended, single period leave at critical milestones in order to add to their well-being, promote career or personal development, and serve as a valuable recruitment and retention tool.

STATEMENT OF POLICY: In recognition of hard work and commitment, meaningful opportunities to maintain a positive work/life balance and accomplish personal goals, travel, or rest and relax, shall be made available to employees throughout their career with Pinal County.

SCOPE: This Policy applies to all full-time Pinal County employees, except Elected Officials. Part-time, temporary, interns, and seasonal employees are not eligible to participate in Sabbatical Leave.

POLICY GUIDELINES: In recognition of continuous dedicated service with Pinal County, employees may be granted Sabbatical Leave (Single Period Leave) following five (5), ten (10), and fifteen (15) years of consecutive service, then every five (5) years thereafter. Sabbatical Leave is offered according to the following schedule:

YEARS OF SERVICE	SABBATICAL LEAVE
5 YEARS	2 WEEKS
10 YEARS	3 WEEKS
15 YEARS	4 WEEKS
20 YEARS	4 WEEKS
25 YEARS	4 WEEKS
30 YEARS	4 WEEKS
35 YEARS	4 WEEKS

LEAVE OPTIONS: Sabbatical paid leave is in addition to other forms of leave and may be taken as leave time and/or pay as detailed below. The hours which may be converted to pay, combined with the requirement to take leave, are intended to ensure a meaningful break from the workplace. *The option to receive pay is contingent upon budget availability established by Board approval each fiscal year.*

Five (5) Years

Employees who are eligible for the five (5) year Sabbatical Leave may take:

- 80 hours (2 weeks) of consecutive leave time, **or**
- 40 hours (1 week) of consecutive leave time and 40 hours (1 week) of pay at their regular rate, **or**
- Employees may elect to receive 80 hours of pay at their regular rate if this Sabbatical pay option is used in combination with 80 hours of accrued Vacation and/or Compensatory Time taken.

This leave period must be taken between five (5) years of service and nine (9) years and 364 days of service, or before becoming eligible for the next period of Sabbatical Leave.

Ten (10) Years

Employees who are eligible for the ten (10) year Sabbatical Leave may take:

- 120 hours of consecutive leave time (3 weeks), **or**
- 80 hours (2 weeks) of consecutive leave time and 40 hours (1 week) of pay at their regular rate, **or**
- May receive 80 hours of pay at their regular rate, combined with 40 hours of Sabbatical Leave, and 40 hours of accrued Vacation and/or Compensatory Time taken.

This leave period must be taken between ten (10) years of service and fourteen (14) years and 364 days of service, or before becoming eligible for the next period of Sabbatical Leave.

Fifteen (15) Years, Plus

Employees who are eligible for the fifteen (15) year Sabbatical Leave may take:

- 160 hours of consecutive leave time (4 weeks), **or**
- May receive 80 hours of pay at their regular rate and 80 hours of leave time.

This leave period must be taken between fifteen (15) years of service and nineteen (19) years and 364 days of service, or before becoming eligible for the next period of Sabbatical Leave.

Employees will be awarded a Sabbatical Leave of 160 hours (4 weeks) every five (5) years thereafter starting at twenty (20) years of continuous service. This leave must be used consistent with the 15-year Sabbatical Leave guidelines and the eligibility criteria in this policy.

LIMITS OF USE:

- There must be at least one (1) year between each period of approved Sabbatical Leave.
- Sabbatical Leave may not be taken in conjunction with Terminal Leave.
- Sabbatical Leave should not be taken during holiday periods.

ELIGIBILITY: The following criteria must be met:

1. An employee must be full-time (40 hours per week) and must have been full-time on a continuous basis for the relevant period of time.
 - a. However, an employee who has experienced no more than one break in service that was less than nine (9) consecutive months in length, or one employment status change (e.g., worked part-time) that was less than nine (9) consecutive months in length, may have their prior Pinal County service credited toward Sabbatical Leave (Single Period Leave) eligibility.
2. An employee requesting Sabbatical Leave must be meeting minimum performance standards at the point in time Sabbatical Leave is requested and for the period of time leading up to the leave.
3. An employee also may not be under any type of investigation during a Sabbatical Leave.
4. An employee must be in a paid work status at the time the Sabbatical Leave is taken.

PROCEDURE: Employees who meet the eligibility criteria for Sabbatical Leave must complete the Sabbatical Leave Application and submit it for approval to their Appointing Authority or designee, at least 30 days prior to the requested leave date. The Appointing Authority approval will be made based on coverage considerations, which may include, but are not limited to, anticipated staffing needs, vacancies, and staff already out on leave.

The Sabbatical Leave Application will then be submitted to Human Resources for verification of eligibility and processing.

UNUSED LEAVE AND TERMINATION: Sabbatical Leave may only be taken before the next Sabbatical Leave (Single Period Leave) eligibility criteria is met. Time not taken will be forfeited and is not compensable beyond the established criteria. Any unused Sabbatical Leave will not be paid upon termination of employment with Pinal County.

BOARD CONSIDERATION: Sabbatical Leave is an opportunity granted by the Board of Supervisors for the benefit of employees and may be expanded or reduced at the Board's discretion. Each year, the Board will reassess to determine the budgetary feasibility of offering this benefit. The Board has authority to discontinue Sabbatical Leave at any time.