

89-8 LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY AND POLICY FOR UNCLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES SEEKING OR ACCEPTING POLITICAL OFFICE OR APPOINTMENTS

History: Res. 5364 adopted 11/10/89; replaces 74-9, 78-3; amended by Res. 8457, 10/5/01.

I. General policy provisions for all leaves other than medical:

1. A leave of absence cannot be open-ended but must be for a specified period of time.
2. Initial leaves of two years or less duration, or for the initial term of an elected or appointed government office not to exceed four years, for staff members may be approved by the appropriate chancellor. An initial three year leave or an extension of an initial two-year leave for a duration of up to three years must be approved by the UW System President
3. Any extension beyond the third year, or beyond the initial four year term of elected or appointed government office, must receive specific approval of the Board and must be for a fixed period of time.
4. For other than an initial term of elected or appointed government office of up to four years, advance approval by the Board of Regents is required if the initial leave is for more than three years.
5. All leaves of absence carry an implicit agreement between the staff member and the university that the staff member will return to the university at the conclusion of the leave; each university will conclude with the affected staff member an agreement that failure to return to the university at the conclusion of the approved leave period constitutes a resignation from the university.

II. Policy for employees engaging in political activity or seeking elective office:

1. Service as an elected official on off-hour demand activities (e.g., school boards, city councils, county boards or local, state or national commissions) would not normally require a reduced appointment or leave of absence. Each case should be reviewed by the appropriate administrative supervisor.
2. No political campaigning activities shall be engaged in during hours when an employee is expected to be performing his or her regularly scheduled university duties. Further, as provided in recent state legislation, no officer or employee may solicit or receive or be involved in soliciting or receiving any contribution or service for any political purpose from any officer or employee of this state while on state time or engaged in his or her official duties as an officer or employee.
3. If a staff member chooses to enter a primary campaign, he or she, in consultation with the appropriate department chairman and dean, or director, should determine whether or not this activity will impair or encroach on performance of university duties. If it is determined that the activity will have an adverse effect, a reduced-time appointment should be arranged for the period of the primary campaign.
4. If a staff member is a candidate in a regular election, step 2 should be followed with the expectation that a reduced-time appointment would be in order.
5. If a staff member is elected, and the time demands of the office would not allow continuance of full or part-time performance of university duties, he or she may request a leave of absence under provisions of Section 1. If a campus wishes to extend the leave of absence in this instance, justification should be advanced to the President of the System and the extension must receive the specific approval of the Board of Regents.

III. Policy for employees serving as appointed officials:

1. Service as an appointed official on off-hour demand activities (e.g., school boards, city councils, county boards or local, state or national commissions) would not normally require a reduced appointment or leave of absence. Each case should be reviewed by the appropriate administrative supervisor.
2. If a staff member accepts appointment to a political or educational office at the local, state or national level, and the time demand of the office would not allow continuance of full or part-time performance of university duties, he or she may request a leave of absence under the provisions of Section 1.
3. If a campus wishes to extend the leave of absence, justification should be advanced to the President of the System and the extension must receive the specific approval of the Board of Regents.

IV. Policy for limited appointment employees seeking or accepting political office or appointments:

1. Seeking paid political office:

If an administrator of the University of Wisconsin System holding a limited appointment wishes to seek nomination or election to a paid political office which would regularly require working during the normal hours which the administrator maintains for the UW System, and

If the administrator wishes to maintain his/her employment relationship with the university during such quest for office, then the administrator shall observe the following procedures: prior to announcing candidacy, or engaging in activity clearly constituting announcement of candidacy to an office of the type indicated above, the administrator must request from the Board reassignment from his/her limited appointment to any concurrent faculty or academic staff appointment held. Such activities as the following clearly constitute announcement of one's candidacy: the formation of a campaign committee, solicitation of campaign funds, or circulation of nomination papers.

The Board shall require evidence that any such reassignment, not accompanied by an immediate leave without pay, requires the administrator to perform work useful to the University System, and appropriate to the compensation provided for the position. The Board shall grant reassignment only in the presence of such evidence.

If reassignment is made and not joined to a concurrent granting of leave without pay, the reassigned employee shall thereafter be guided by the policies and procedures stated in I. 1-5 (above) as to requesting leave.

Reassignment pursuant to a proposed quest for paid elective office shall not affect the eligibility of the employee, at the discretion of the Board, to return to his/her prior limited position, or to be appointed to an alternative limited position.

2. Serving in paid elective political office:

If the reassigned limited appointee is successful in winning the political office sought, the policies and procedures stated in Sections I. and II.5 shall apply to the granting of leave of absence.

3. Serving in an appointive office:

The limited appointee wishing to accept an appointive political office shall couple an immediate request for leave without pay with his or her request for reassignment by the Board to his/her concurrent faculty or academic staff position. The policies and procedures stated in Sections I. and III. 2-3 (above) shall apply to the granting of a leave of absence in such circumstances.

VI. Annual Report:

The Vice President for Academic Affairs will make an annual report to the Board of Regents on the status of faculty and staff whose leaves have been extended beyond the third year, who are on leave serving as elected or appointed officials, and on the status of limited appointment employees who have been granted leave to serve in elected political office or appointed office.