

West Bonner County School District

PERSONNEL

5470

Leaves of Absence - Military Leave

General Policy

All District employees, other than those who are employed on a temporary basis, are entitled to military leave of absence when ordered to active duty for training as members of the Idaho National Guard or any component of the U.S. Armed Forces. Employees who volunteer, are drafted, or are ordered to extended active duty with any component of the U.S. Armed Forces shall be entitled to reinstatement to their former positions or comparable positions if the right is exercised in a timely manner as noted below.

The District shall notify each employee entitled to rights and benefits under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) of their rights, benefits, and obligations under USERRA and those of the District.

Notice to District

All employees should provide either written or oral notice of upcoming military training to the District as soon as reasonably practical. The employee or an appropriate officer of the branch of military in which the employee will serve may provide the notice. Employees who are ordered for such duty shall provide one copy of their orders to the Superintendent. Notice shall include date of departure and date of return for purposes of military training ninety (90) days prior to the date of departure.

Military Leave for Training or Short Term Duty

Employees who are required to attend annual training or special active duty for training shall not suffer any loss of salary, seniority or efficiency rating during the first fifteen (15) days of such absence in any calendar year. Leave will be without loss of benefits.

Completion of Military Training

Upon completion of military training, employee shall give evidence of the satisfactory completion of such training immediately thereafter. Employee shall be restored to his or her previous or similar position with the same status, pay, vacation leave, sick leave, bonus, advancement, and seniority. Such seniority shall continue to accrue during such period of absence.

Benefits for Uniformed Service Personnel On Active Duty

Salary: **(Note: Federal law does not require an employer to pay the salary of an employee on military leave.) **

Pension and Retirement Plans. Pension and retirement plans are considered a benefit to which reinstated employees are entitled. Any normal contributions will continue to be made for service members who are absent for 90 days or fewer. If the employee has been absent for military service for 91 days or more, the District may elect to delay making retroactive pension contributions until the employee submits satisfactory reemployment documentation.

Medical Insurance. Health benefits will be offered to the extent they are available to other employees on leave. An employee performing military service for 30 days or fewer is not required to pay more than the normal employee share of any health premium. If the employee's military service is for 31 days to 24 months, the health plan will offer continuous coverage. An employee on military leave may elect to continue health care coverage through the District for up to 6 24 months after the military leave begins or for the period of military service, whichever is shorter. The District's obligation to provide health benefits ends once an employee's military leave exceeds 24 months. When the employee is reinstated, a waiting period or exclusion cannot be imposed if health coverage would have been provided to the employee had he or she not been absent for military service.

Reporting to District Once Military Leave is Complete

The standard military service length and reporting times are:

- *1 to 30 days of military service:* employee reports to the District by the beginning of the first scheduled work day that falls eight hours after the end of the last calendar day of military service.
- *31 to 180 days of military service:* employee must submit an application for reemployment no later than 14 days after completion of service in the armed forces. If the 14th day falls on a day when the District's offices are not open or available to accept a reemployment application, the time extends to the next business day.
- *181 days or more of military service:* employee must submit an application for reemployment no later than 90 days after completion of military service. If the 90th day falls on a day when the employee's offices are not open or available to accept a reemployment application, the time extends to the next business day.
- *Cases of disability:* employees who are hospitalized or recovering from a disability that was incurred or aggravated during the period of military service leave have up to two years to submit an application for reemployment.

There is an exception to these guidelines for those employees who, through no fault of their own, find themselves in a situation that makes it impossible or unreasonable to meet the required timetables. In those cases, the employee must return to work as soon as possible.

Disqualification from Returning to Work

There are four conditions that disqualify an employee from exercising his or her right to reemployment after military service:

- A dishonorable or bad conduct discharge
- Separation from the service under “other than honorable conditions”
- A commissioned officer’s dismissal via court martial or by order of the President
- When a service member has been dropped from the rolls for being absent without authority or for civilian imprisonment

Reinstatement to Positions After Extended Duty

Employees who volunteer, are drafted, or called to active duty for extended periods will be placed on “Military Leave of Absence” upon written application and be entitled to reinstatement to their former or similar positions upon their return and under the following conditions:

1. They must not have remained on active duty beyond their first opportunity for honorable or general release.
2. They must report to claim reinstatement within 14 days after completion of service; or 7 days in the case of individuals who undergo only 6 months/days active training or less.

After an employee has been absent for 31 days or more of military service, the District may ask the employee or the employee’s military unit for documentation showing that:

- The employee submitted a timely application for reemployment;
- The employee’s length of military service has not exceeded the five-year limitation; and
- The employee’s separation from the military service meets the requirement for reemployment.

As a general rule, employees returning from military service must be reemployed in the job that they previously held, or would have attained had they not been absent for military service. If the employee was disabled while on military duty, or a disability is aggravated by military service, the District will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the disability

Legal Reference: I.C. § 46-407 Militia and Military Affairs / Reemployment Rights
I.C. § 46-224 Militia and Military Affairs / Entitled to Restoration of
Position After Leave of Absence for Military Training
I.C. § 46-225 Militia and Military Affairs / Vacation, Sick Leave, Bonus
and Advancement Unaffected by Leave
USERRA, Title 38, Part 3, Chapter 43 U.S. Code

Policy History:

Adopted on: March 12, 2008

Revised on: August 22, 2018