

# Paid Time Off

The Personnel Review Team (PRT), made up of Division or Department Head level positions representing each Division met and discussed the need to develop a Paid Time Off (PTO) policy.

A PTO policy combines sick leave and annual leave (vacation) into one block of leave. PTO leave is utilized for the same events as traditional leave. The difference between traditional leave and PTO is that with PTO being a single block of leave, there is no distinction in how the leave time is used by the employee. PTO allows employees and managers to better manage leave time. Converting traditional leave to PTO will reduce the County's leave liability at the end of 10 years by approximately \$700,000.

7.060 PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

1. Eligibility for PTO

- a. Effective January 1, 2013, regular full-time and part-time employees will be allowed to earn and accrue Paid Time Off (PTO).
- b. Other Personal Services (OPS), temporary, reserve fire fighters and seasonal employees will not be eligible for PTO.
- c. Regular part-time employees will be allowed to earn PTO in relation to the number of hours worked per week.
- d. New employees accrue but may not use PTO until after completion of six months of employment except as provided in other provisions of this policy.
- e. Promoted, demoted or transferred employees will retain all PTO privileges and accrued balances obtained in the prior position and/or department. Employees transferring from other Agencies of Sumter County may be allowed to transfer and/or convert leave as defined under the "Transfer of Leave" section of this Manual.
- f. Accrual Rate of PTO
  - i. Regular full-time employees will earn and accrue PTO immediately upon employment as follows:

	40 hours per week*		56 hours per week*	
	Biweekly Accrual	Annual Amount	Biweekly Accrual	Annual Amount
Continuous Employment				
Date of Hire–2nd Year	6.00	156.00	8.4	218.4
Start of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year– End of 5 <sup>th</sup> Year	6.75	175.50	9.45	245.7
Start of 6 <sup>th</sup> Year–End of 9 <sup>th</sup> Year	7.50	195.00	10.5	273
Start of 10 <sup>th</sup> Year-End of 14 <sup>th</sup> Year	8.25	214.50	11.55	300.3
Start of 15 <sup>th</sup> Year and Over	9.00	234.00	12.6	327.6

\*Part-time regular employees will earn equivalent hourly factors based on the number of hours worked. The leave accrual hourly factor will be applied only to regular work hours, not in excess of 40 hours per week for 40 hours-a-week employees and 56 hours per week for 56 hours-a-week employees.

- ii. PTO will not accrue during an unpaid leave of absence or when an employee has been placed in a non-pay status (i.e., suspension). PTO will not accrue on overtime.

2. Use of Paid Time Off (PTO) Hours

Paid Time Off (PTO) is an employee benefit which combines traditional vacation and sick leave programs into a single plan. This type of program provides employees and the County a flexible method of scheduling time off with pay. Because of this, PTO time may be used at the employee's discretion, provided that approvals are obtained for this leave as stated in this policy. Since PTO hours will replace traditional sick and vacation time, access is unrestricted provided the employee has been employed for six (6) months. During this six (6) month period use of accrued PTO shall require the approval of the Division Director or County Administrator. PTO may be used for items including, but not limited to:

- a. Vacation
- b. Sick Leave
- c. Absence for transaction of personal business which can not be conducted during off-duty hours.
- d. Religious holidays other than those designated by the Board of County Commissioners.
- e. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).
- f. Supplement income for time loss due to work related personal illness, injury, or disability where statutory Workers' Compensation payments are being received. In no instance shall this combination exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the employee's regular base rate.
- g. Supplement income for time loss due to disability not work related, where employee is receiving disability insurance benefits/payments. In no instance shall this combination exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the employee's regular rate of pay.
- h. Absences from work not covered by other types of leave provisions established by the policies of the Board of County Commissioners.

3. Request for Paid Time Off (PTO)

- a. Requests for PTO leave should be submitted in the electronic leave system by employees to their Department Head at least one (1) week prior to the requested leave date when possible.
- b. Departments may establish a departmental policy for operational needs which may be more restrictive or provide exceptions to the one (1) week requirement.
- c. PTO requests will be granted at the sole discretion of the Department Head; however, every effort will be made to accommodate employees. Employees are responsible for maintaining a sufficient balance of PTO to

cover vacations, illness, and absences. If an adequate balance of PTO is not available to cover the employee's requested time off, the employee's request for time will be denied.

- d. PTO requests of more than ten (10) consecutive work days for 40 hours-a-week employee or five (5) 24-hour shifts for 56 hours-a-week employees require approval from the Division Director.
- e. When PTO leave is being used for an employee's own personal illness or the illness of an immediate family member (Immediate family is defined in Section 11.010 H of the Employee Manual.), employees shall notify their immediate supervisor as soon as the employee knows that they will be unable to work. Notice must be given no later than the first day of absence and before the starting time for employee's scheduled shift and each day thereafter before the scheduled start time or shift.
- f. An employee who is absent without authorization or notification is subject to disciplinary action, including possible termination. Three (3) consecutive work days without notification of their absence will constitute job abandonment and loss of employment.
- g. PTO will be charged at a minimum of one-half (1/2) hour.

#### 4. Abuse of Paid Time Off (PTO) Leave

- a. Excessive unscheduled use of PTO may be grounds for disciplinary action and will be reviewed on a case by case basis. When an employee's absences are such that the County has reasonable grounds to believe that an abuse exists, the employee may be required, regardless of the duration of the absence, to submit a satisfactory doctor's certificate or affidavit indicating the specific nature of the disability and its duration before such absence may be charged against the employee's accumulated PTO balance. Reasonable grounds for a determination of abuse include a pattern of numerous one-day unscheduled absences throughout the year, particularly if leave is frequently taken on Mondays or Fridays; frequency of absences; low to zero accumulated PTO balance; and other patterns of abuse.
- b. Further disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may be recommended by the Division Director when an employee's attendance continues to be unsatisfactory.
- c. Abuses in leave will be included on the employee's annual performance evaluation.

#### 5. Carry-Over of Paid Time Off (PTO)

- a. The maximum amount of PTO which can be carried forward from one (1) calendar year to the next is as follows:

YEARS OF CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT	TOTAL HOURS 40 HR Work Week*	TOTAL HOURS 56 HR Work Week*
Date of Hire to End of 2nd Year	312	436.8
Start of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year to End of 5th Year	351	491.4
Start of 6 <sup>th</sup> Year to End of 9 <sup>th</sup> Year	390	546
Start of 10 <sup>th</sup> Year to End of 14 <sup>th</sup> Year	429	600.6
Start of 15 <sup>th</sup> Year and Over	468	655.2
*Part-time regular employees will earn equivalent hourly factors based on the number of hours worked. The leave accrual hourly factor will be applied only to regular work hours, not in excess of 40 hours per week for 40 hours-a-week employees and 56 hours per week for 56 hours-a-week employees.		

- b. Employees who have a leave balance more than the total amount allowed to be carried forward in the table above (including leave accrued through the first full pay period in January) will forfeit these hours. Exception: If an employee was denied use of PTO time due to project deadlines or other extenuating circumstances, the Division Director must write a memorandum to the County Administrator explaining why the employee was not allowed to take the time off and may request up to 40 hours of time that would have been forfeited, be carried forward. However, the excess amount carried over beyond the allowable limit must be used by the employee no later than March 31 of the same year following the first full pay period in January.

6. Annual Paid Time Off (PTO) Sell Back Opportunity

The maximum amount of sell back will be 80 hours for 40 hour-a-week employees and 112 hours for 56 hour-a-week employees at their rate of pay at the time of the disbursement. Payment will be made at the conclusion of the first full pay period of December.

Employees shall demonstrate in their request that they retain a minimum PTO balance of 80 hours for 40 hour-a-week employees and 112 hours for 56 hour-a-week employees after the sell back disbursement. Sell back must be requested through the Division Director for approval.

B. Initial Implementation - January 1, 2013

1. All employees employed on or after January 1, 2013 will accrue only the newly created PTO hours.
2. For existing employees, effective January 11, 2013, accrued but unused vacation leave will convert to PTO. In addition to converting the unused vacation leave,

unused sick leave will be converted up to the maximum amount of PTO allowed for the employee's service years. The remaining unused sick leave, if any, will be transferred to a "Sick Leave Reserve."

3. Sick Leave Reserve will be used in the event of a continuous absence due to personal illness or injury or the need to care for the employee's immediate family member as defined in Section 11.010 (H) lasting three (3) consecutive work days or longer, including those covered under Workers' Compensation and disability. Once the Sick Leave Reserve hours are exhausted, they will not be replenished.
4. Employees who have entered the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) should refer to section 5.060 – Payment Upon Separation for information on payout of the Sick Leave Reserve.