

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SICK LEAVE

Q. How many sick days are temporary officers eligible for per year?

A. Temporary officers with one (1) year continuous service or more are eligible for fourteen (14) days sick leave with pay per calendar year. This includes **both certified and uncertified sick leave**.

Q. How many sick days are appointed officers eligible for per year?

A. Appointed officers are eligible for twenty-one (21) days sick leave with pay per calendar year. This includes **both certified and uncertified** sick leave.

A contract officer is eligible for twenty-one (21) days sick leave **per contract year**. This includes **both certified and uncertified** sick leave.

Q. Why are weekends included in the sick leave for some officers and not others?

A. The sick leave for an officer who works shift (weekends) is calculated to include all weekends if the officer is due to return to work on the Monday. The sick leave for an officer who does not work on weekends will not include the final weekend, provided the officer resumes duty on the first working day after the weekend.

Q. Why are appointed officers sometimes granted extensions of sick leave without pay?

A. After the first twenty-one (21) days, appointed officers are granted extensions of sick leave without pay if the sick leave is uncertified and the officer has utilised all his/her vacation eligibility.

Contract officers are granted extensions of sick leave without pay and the contract extended by the amount of no pay leave granted.

Q. If I have been granted an extension of sick leave without pay, can I request to have the period deducted from my vacation leave eligibility instead?

A. A temporary officer can only have the extension of sick leave on no pay converted to vacation leave if:-

- (i) He/she is eligible for an equal amount of or more vacation leave at the beginning of the said leave, **AND**
- (ii) He/she has not applied for National Insurance benefits.

An appointed officer can have the no pay converted to vacation leave if the sick leave is uncertified and condition (i) above applies.

- Q. Is an appointed officer eligible for continuous extensions of sick leave on full pay?
- A. General Order 5.24.1 gives the Chief Personnel Officer discretionary power to grant appointed officers an extension of sick leave on full pay for **not more than twelve (12) months**, provided the sick leave is certified.
- Q. How long can an officer be on continuous or excessive sick leave before being referred to the Medical Board?
- A. Generally, after a period of three (3) or more months extended sick leave, an officer may be referred to a Medical Board.

VACATION LEAVE

- Q. If I am an appointed officer, can I work an entire year without taking vacation leave and be paid for the leave instead?
- A. No. An appointed officer must take at least 14 days compulsory vacation leave to end no later than 31st December each year or forfeit the said compulsory leave, unless permission is sought from and granted by the Chief Personnel Officer to retain it. An officer may however receive payment in lieu of vacation leave not taken should he/she resign.
- Q. If I am temporary, when should I take my vacation leave?
- A. A temporary officer should take 14 days compulsory vacation leave, on the first occasion, by the anniversary of his/her continuous service. Thereafter, the 14 days compulsory leave should be taken by the anniversary of his/her return to work after the previous 14 days compulsory vacation leave.
- Q. Would my vacation eligibility be affected by other leave which I take?
- A. Yes. Appointed officers are credited with vacation leave at the beginning of each year. Their vacation leave eligibility is reduced proportionately by the amount of half pay, no pay, extension of sick leave, study leave, training leave or maternity leave taken. Temporary officers earn vacation leave as they work; therefore a temporary officer who has been granted any of the abovementioned leave will **not** earn vacation leave during the period of such leave.

MATERNITY LEAVE

Q. How many days are granted for maternity leave?

A. An appointed or contract officer and a temporary officer with one year or more continuous service, may be granted up to one hundred and twenty (120) days maternity leave. National Insurance Department pays the **eligible** officers, (whether appointed, on contract or temporary), maternity benefits during the first twelve (12) weeks of leave taken. Departments/Ministries pay **appointed officers** half their substantive salary from the eighty-fifth (85th) to the one hundred and twentieth (120th) day if the full amount of leave is taken.

Appointed teachers are granted the eighty-fifth (85th) to one hundred and twentieth (120th) day, if taken, on half pay if the period falls within the school term and on full pay if the period falls within the school vacation.

In case of a temporary or contract officer, the half pay does not apply. The contract officer will also have her contract extended by the full amount of maternity leave taken.

Effective 2007/04/01, permission has been granted to pay permanently appointed officers whose salaries are above the National Insurance insurable earnings threshold as well as temporary officers with three (3) years continuous service or more and whose salaries are above the National Insurance earnings threshold, the difference between their maternity benefits and their substantive salary during the period when maternity benefits are paid.

An officer with less than one (1) year continuous service is not eligible for maternity leave. Consideration is given to re-employing her after the birth of her baby.

Q. Does maternity leave affect vacation leave eligibility?

A. Yes. Maternity leave reduces the vacation leave eligibility of an appointed officer who generally is credited with her full eligibility at the beginning of each year. The reduction is proportionate to the amount of maternity leave taken. For example, an officer who is generally credited with thirty (30) days vacation per year and takes one hundred and twenty (120) days maternity leave, will have her vacation leave reduced by ten (10) days. Temporary officers, earn vacation leave when they work; therefore a temporary officer who has been granted one hundred and twenty (120) days maternity leave will **not** earn vacation leave during the period of maternity leave.

Q. Can leave of absence be taken in conjunction with maternity leave?

A. Yes. Officers, whether appointed or temporary, who have completed three (3) or more years service, may be granted up to three (3) months half pay and three (3) month no pay leave along with maternity leave. This leave also reduces the vacation leave eligibility of the officer. Officers applying for half

pay or no pay leave **must** submit a letter giving a valid reason for the request. The reason must not be for work or study purposes for which separate arrangements must be made.

Separate arrangements are made regarding leave of absence for teachers, who may contact the Ministry of Education for such information.

Q. What benefits are paid by National Insurance in respect of maternity leave granted?

A. Officers should contact the National Insurance Department to determine their eligibility for maternity benefits.

OTHER LEAVE

Q. If I want to take long term study leave to pursue full-time studies what should I do?

A. You should apply to the Training Administration Division through your Head of Department/Ministry for such leave. The relevant application forms may be obtained from your Personnel section or Training Administration Division. You should contact Training Administration Division to determine the closing dates for the submission of such applications. The Chief Personnel Officer does **not** have the authority to grant such leave.

Q. If I wish to accept full-time employment with a local or overseas Organization, what should I do?

A. If you are an appointed officer you **may** be granted up to two (2) years leave of absence without pay to accept such employment. However, you must submit a letter of application for the relevant period of leave along with a copy of the offer of appointment with the organization, to the Chief Personnel Officer, through your Head of Department who will forward the request with his/her recommendation to the relevant Ministry. The Permanent Secretary submits his/her recommendation with the application to the Personnel Administration Department for consideration by the relevant Service Commission. Other conditions governing the grant of such leave (may) apply.