



COLUMBIA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline ADM-035 Sick Leave

Effective: 7/22/2010

Issued by: Aubrey D. Jenkins, Interim Fire Chief

Rescinds

ADM-035 Sick Leave dated 05-05-08, and Columbia Fire Department retained memo #04-0022R: Doctor's statements dated November 30, 2004, and any other previous memos referring to sick leave.

Purpose

To provide all Columbia Fire Department personnel with guidelines for the use of sick leave. This guideline supplements the guidelines contained in the City of Columbia Employee Handbook. If any conflicts occur in this guideline and any provision of the Handbook, the Handbook controls.

Scope

This guideline applies to all Career Columbia Fire Department personnel.

1. Guideline

- (a) The following will serve to assist all employees of the Columbia Fire Department in understanding how sick leave is requested, and when they are required to produce Medical certification. To be granted sick leave, it must be authorized and approved by the Department Director or Division Head and is subject to review by the City Manager (page 33 of the City Handbook). At any time an employee may be required to produce a doctor's statement in support of sick leave. Failure to produce the statement may result in the request for sick leave being denied.
- (b) Sick leave cannot be used automatically, unless provided elsewhere in the City Employee Handbook. Employees may request sick leave for absence from work as defined in the Handbook.
- (c) Any employee not reporting to work because of sickness should promptly notify their immediate supervisor and the staffing office and request sick leave and advise when they expect to return to work.
- (d) If the employee fails to follow this guideline and the policy outlined in the City

Handbook, the supervisor and/or staffing office is not obligated to record the time missed as sick leave, and the sick leave could be denied and the employee not paid for that time.

- (e) Any time an employee has used the maximum accrued amount for the year (*134.4 hours for 24-hour shift personnel & 96 for regular 80-hour personnel*) during the fiscal year, any additional sick leave taken during that year will require the employee to relinquish that amount from their scheduled annual leave, which will reduce their scheduled vacation leave by the amount taken for the remainder of the year each time sick leave is requested. Any sick leave taken will be charged to sick leave accounts only.
- (f) Employees are required to manage their individual annual leave accounts to ensure that they do not go above the maximum accruals and therefore lose time accrued.
- (g) Annual leave will not automatically be granted for employees requesting sick leave when their sick leave accounts do not have adequate hours to cover any leave requested. If there is no sick leave hours available, the employee is required to request in writing to use annual leave. The Fire Chief or his designee will review and must approve any situation requiring the employee to make appropriate adjustments to their annual leave accounts to cover sick leave before the pay period ends or that time requested will not be compensated.
- (h) When an employee either misses work or leaves work for medical or health reasons, that employee is required to use sick leave. Administrative leave and/or annual leave cannot be used in lieu of sick leave for such situations and the employee cannot make up the time at their convenience, such staffing decisions create hardships on the department's ability to staff adequately and cover work assignments.
- (i) All fire department employees will be required to provide to the office of the Fire Chief or his designee medical certification for any sick leave used above the maximum accrued in one year regardless of account balance.
- (j) When an employee has requested leave and/or swap time and the request was not approved and/or the employee could not find an individual to swap, and that employee then requests sick leave and/or marks off on the dates that were requested, the sick leave will be denied, that employee will not be compensated for the time missed and they will have violated this guideline as outlined in ADM-033, section 17-(a).
- (k) Employees with medical hardships (medical certification required) will be allowed to access all accrual leave accounts subject to review and approval by the Department Director or his designee.
- (l) The Staffing Office will ensure this guideline is followed.

2. Reporting

- (a) An employee working 24-hours shifts wishing to request sick leave must do so prior to 0645 on the scheduled day of work. In an effort to provide adequate staffing an employee is asked to notify the Department as soon as possible of the request for sick leave.
- (b) Web Staff and Tele Staff will be used to request Sick Leave by the employee. An employee unable to use either Web Staff or Tele Staff must notify the Staffing Officers and the station officer. If these options are not available the employee must notify the Division Chief.
- (c) All regular 80-hour employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor to request sick leave. The Staffing office should be notified after the immediate supervisor has been contacted for proper time recording.
- (d) The Staffing office will record all sick leave used for all employees' uniform and non-uniform.

3. Medical Statement

- (a) The following situations will **always** require an employee requesting sick leave to produce a medical statement:
 - 1. When an employee misses three or more consecutive shifts.
 - 2. When an employee misses the shift prior to or immediately following an employee scheduled holiday or vacation day.
 - 3. When a fire shift employee misses a City approved holiday on which the employee is scheduled to work, or uses sick leave the shift before or after a City approved holiday.
 - 4. When a regular 80-hour employee misses their regularly scheduled work day before or after a City approved holiday.
 - 5. When an employee misses a Columbia Fire Department mandatory extra time shift.
 - 6. When an employee has used the maximum accrued hours of sick leave in the same fiscal year (July 1, - June 30).
 - 6. When an employee is asked to present a statement by a supervisor within the direct chain of command. This includes: immediate supervisor through the office of the Fire Chief.
 - 7. Any time an employee misses work due to an injury, the statement **must** state that the employee "**Can Return to Full Firefighting Duty**".

- (b) It is the employee's responsibility to furnish the medical statement without being given a directive to do so when situations listed in section III. A apply. The employee must produce the medical statement by 0745 of the first shift reporting back for duty. When a directive has been given for the employee to produce a medical statement no follow-up will be given to remind the employee of the need for the statement.
- (c) Failure to produce a medical statement when required under section III. A, or when given a directive to do so may result in a loss of pay for the period of absence and the requested sick leave will be denied.
- (d) Violations to the guideline will result in disciplinary actions as outlined in ADM-033, section 21(a).