



**Columbia Fire Department  
Standard Operating Guideline ADM-014  
Annual Leave (Fire Shift 24/48 Schedule)**

**Effective: 05/02/2011**

**Issued by: Aubrey Jenkins, Interim Chief of Department**

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**Rescinds:** ADM – 014 *Annual Leave - 56 Hours* dated 9/16/96.  
ADM – 014 *Annual Leave - 56 Hours* dated 11/28/05.

**Purpose:** To establish a guideline on the process for accruing, requesting, and scheduling of annual leave for the Columbia Fire Department

**Scope:** All career fire suppression personnel

**Guideline:**

**I. Accrual of Annual Leave**

A. Employees will accrue annual leave based on years of service in accordance with the City of Columbia Employee Handbook.

1. Employees will accrue hours monthly on their respective anniversary day in accordance with city policy. During the year the hours will add up to the following number of shifts based on years of service:

a. 1 <sup>st</sup> year	4 shifts
b. 2 <sup>nd</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> years	5 shifts
c. 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> years	6 shifts
d. 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> years	7 shifts
e. 11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> years	8 shifts
f. 13 <sup>th</sup> and 14 <sup>th</sup> years	9 shifts
g. 15 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> years	10 shifts
h. 17 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup> years	11 shifts
i. 19 <sup>th</sup> year and up	12 shifts

2. Years of service completed will be based on June 30<sup>th</sup> each year.

B. Annual leave may not be used until accrued. If there are no annual leave hours available, the employee will NOT be paid and will be considered as Leave Without Pay. Employees cannot take more time than they accrue in a calendar year unless approved through a special request. Special requests are to be made to the Assistant Chief of Operations through the chain of command. Employees cannot use annual leave until they have successfully completed their initial introductory period.

- C. Employees will accrue time during the first year but will only be permitted to take time after having successfully completed their initial introductory period and if approved by the Assistant Chief of Operations.
- D. Employees are encouraged to keep a reserve of 72 hours annual leave at all times.
- E. It is the employee's responsibility to track the use of Annual Leave and ensure a negative balance does not occur. If a negative balance occurs the employee may not be paid for that time taken if leave time is not available.
  - 1. If an employee has the minimum of 72 hours in reserve as of June 30<sup>th</sup> and they are requesting four shifts (96 hours) off in July they will not have the total time. Because of this it is likely the request will be denied, however the request may be granted unknowingly causing the employee to be docked 24 hours pay.
  - 2. Use of the Annual Leave Calculator should be used as a tool to assist the employee from dropping below the reserve minimum (see attached document).

## **II. Requesting Annual Leave**

- A. Seniority by rank will be based on the date of promotion into the employee's current rank. If there is a tie between employees the tie breaker will be based on the following, in the order listed:
  - 1. Date of hire
  - 2. Date of birth
  - 3. Coin toss (if needed as tie breaker)
- B. Employees will receive a print out with their available Annual Leave time when the Holiday list is distributed to confirm their balance prior to requesting. The most recent pay stub may be used as well. This will be completed by March 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - 1. To achieve an accurate leave total, the remaining monthly accruals until June 30<sup>th</sup> must be added to the amount. After subtracting any outstanding leave hours the employee is planning to take prior to June will produce an accurate balance of annual time.
- C. All requests for Annual Leave are due to the Division Chief's Office by April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- D. Fill out the Annual Leave request form completely. Make sure all three choices are requested for each choice of leave requested. This will help ensure a desired day is selected. Failure to submit a completed request form may result in random assigning of days based on staffing requirements and availability.
- E. Use of the Annual Leave Calculator will help ensure a negative balance does not occur. This form should be completed and turned in with the leave request.
- F. If the employee is off on any leave, i.e. military, annual, holiday, etc. during the vacation request period, it is *their* responsibility to submit the form on time. Failure to submit an Annual Leave request may result in Annual Leave during off peak dates.

### III. Scheduling Annual Leave

- A. The Division Chief is responsible for completion of Annual Leave scheduling.
- B. Annual Leave schedules for fire shift personnel will be posted for 12-months each fiscal year, which runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year.
- C. The complete Annual Leave and Holiday list for the upcoming year will be published to all employees by May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- D. The maximum number of employees off per shift will be communicated to all suppression personnel by March 1<sup>st</sup> with the release of the Holiday List. The number of personnel on holiday leave, average sick leave, worker comp., and average military leave will first be subtracted from this total. The remaining number of personnel will be allowed off on Annual Leave for that day. *Example: If 24 total people are allotted to be off per shift and, five people on average are on sick leave per shift, six people are on Holiday, and one on workers comp, one on military leave, therefore only 11 people can be allowed to be off on Annual Leave. This is based on the total rostered employees for each shift subtracted by the total required staffing each working shift.*
- E. Should any open annual leave days on each list become available throughout the year and personnel wish to swap scheduled annual leave days for such open days they may request to swap their annual leave opportunities with these unused shifts in writing to the Division Chief, however, current staffing exceptions will need to be considered against each request.
- F. The maximum number of personnel allowed off on Annual Leave for each rank may vary from year to year based on current staffing trends. If the maximum number of personnel for a particular rank do not use all allocated slots, the next lower rank will be allowed to fill those open positions. *Example: Two Chief's and three Captains are allowed off per day. If only one Chief requests off then four Captains may have Annual Leave that day. This will trickle down to the firefighter rank, up to the maximum personnel allowed off.*
- G. Requests will be processed for each rank by rounds. Once all rounds have been completed for each rank any remaining slots will be considered for the next rank. This will continue until all ranks are complete.
- H. Employees can request up to a maximum of five (5) consecutive working shifts for their first round and continue their request for each round up to their maximum accrued for that calendar year.

### V. Special use of Annual Leave

- A. An employee may request to use Annual Leave outside the normal request period for emergencies or other reasonable situations. All requests will be considered based on staffing trends for the period requested. This will be approved at the discretion of the Assistant Chief of Operations, following the normal chain of command in writing.

Employee Annual Leave Calculator												
<b>Ending Hours</b>		<b>Accrual Rate</b>	<b>Name</b> _____								<b>Anniv. Date</b>	
0.00												
<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

Total Days Requested
0

Banked Hours
0.00

Must be greater than 72 hours

1. Enter the ending Annual Leave Hours as of June 30th. To get this number take the most recent pay stub or IFAS sheet Annual Leave Hours and add the monthly accrual rate for each month up to June 30th. Then subtract any scheduled Annual Leave to be taken before June 30th.
2. Place your Accrual Rate as of June 30th into the Accrual Rate Box.
3. Your Anniversary Date (hire date) is the day of the month you will accrue Annual Leave. i.e. If you were hired on April 22, then the 22nd of each month is your the Anniversary Date.
4. Place the desired days off into the respective month as they are being requested, do this in hours. If you are requesting 3 days in Sept. place a 72 in the second box below Sept. If the hours listed below the months dip below zero you do not have enough time.
5. The hours will be automatically calculated to show the total days requested for the year. The remaining reserve hours banked will be displayed next to it.
6. When attempting to delete a hours from a month right click the mouse and select "clear contents" or type a zero in place of the previous number typed.