Maryland Healthy Working Families Act

The State of Maryland passed the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act (the “Act”), requiring employers to offer paid sick and safe leave (SSL) to eligible employees who are not already provided equivalent leave benefits under existing policies. Therefore, the Act specifically affects contingent hourly staff and student employees (excluding federal work-study students, and graduate and research assistants).

Eligible employees who are regularly scheduled to work a minimum of 24 hours per pay period accrue one (1) hour of SSL for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of forty (40) hours per calendar year. SSL can be used:

- For absence from work due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against the employee or the employee’s family member;
- To care for or treat the employee’s mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;
- To obtain preventative medical care for the employee or the employee’s family member;
- To care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;
- For maternity or paternity leave

For purposes of this law, a family member includes a spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling.

For more information:

- Review the FAQs below;
- Email leavebenefits@towson.edu;
- Contact the Office of Human Resources at 4-2162;
- Visit the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation website
FAQS

Who is affected by the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act?

The Act applies to contingent I hourly staff and student employees (excluding federal work-study students, and graduate and resident assistants.)

How are eligible employees notified of SSL?

Eligible employees are notified via direct email from the Office of Human Resources (OHR).

How does SSL accrue?

Eligible employees accrue SSL if they work 24 hours in a given pay period. The accruals are based on actual hours worked and are updated each pay period.

Additionally, these employees:

- May not earn more than 40 hours of SSL in a calendar year;
- May not carry over more than 40 hours of accrued SSL into a new calendar year;
- Stop earning SSL once their leave balance reaches 64 hours at any time during the calendar year;
- May not use more than 64 hours of SSL in a calendar year;
- May not use SSL for the first 106 calendar days of initial employment;
- Will be entitled to have any unused SSL reinstated if re-employed within 37 weeks of termination.

If the employee typically works 24 hours a pay period, does not work for a few pay periods, and then resumes working 24 hours a pay period, does leave accrue during the time the employee was not working?

SSL only accrues during the pay periods in which the employee has actually worked at least 24 hours per pay period. Approved leave time is not counted toward qualifying hours worked for purposes of SSL accrual.
Can the leave be used incrementally?

Eligible employees must take leave under the Act in increments of four (4) hours, unless the shift for which the employee needs to be absent is scheduled to be less than four (4) hours.

How can SSL be used?

An employee may use accrued SSL under the following conditions:

- For absence from work due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against the employee or the employee’s family member;
- To care for or treat the employee’s mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;
- To obtain preventative medical care for the employee or employee’s family member;
- To care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;
- For maternity or paternity leave

For purposes of this law, a family member includes a spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling.

Will we use the current leave and timekeeping system to accrue and track SSL?

Replacement of the current leave and timekeeping system is in progress and targeted for completion late 2019/early 2020. Once completed, employees will be able to record SSL on their time sheets and view their earned, accrued, and used SSL each pay period. The university developed an interim process to administer SSL until this project is complete.

What is the interim process for administering SSL?

The OHR will furnish leave balance information upon request. Please email leavebenefits@towson.edu to request this information.

When a manager/supervisor approves SSL, the employee must record the leave hours as hours worked on the corresponding day on the time sheet. The following information must be noted in the remarks section of the time sheet:

- SSL
- The date, time, and hours of leave used

The manager/supervisor must manage leave requests in accordance with these procedures and verify the time sheet is completed accurately before approving the time sheet.