



TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

Policy No.	HR-35.01	
Policy	Time Away From THA	
Date	July 26, 2023	

1. Purpose

Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) highly values the commitment, time, and effort each employee brings to fulfilling our mission and vision, and serving our community. Understanding the importance of a balanced work-life environment, we provide a comprehensive time-off options to help employees manage their professional and personal responsibilities effectively.

This policy outlines the provisions made for various types of leave, including holidays, religious holidays, floating holidays, vacation, bereavement, jury or witness leave, voting time-off, and unpaid leaves of absences for THA staff.

This policy does not affect or override any federal or state laws or collective bargaining agreements that offer more extensive medical or family leave entitlements than what is included here. For information on medical and family leave options, please refer to THA Policy HR-35.15 Family and Medical Leave.

2. Sources for Policy

- ▶ *THA and OPEIU Collective Bargaining Agreement*
- ▶ *THA and Trades Collective Bargaining Agreement*
- ▶ *THA Policy HR-50.01 Employment Separation*
- ▶ *RCW 2.36.165 Leave of absence from employment to be provided*
- ▶ *WAC 296-126-092 Meal periods — Rest periods*

3. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to THA staff according to their employment, FLSA, and union status.

4. Who is Responsible for Implementing Policy

Who	Responsibilities
<i>Human Resources Department</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ to be sufficiently familiar with this policy and appropriate Collective Bargaining Agreements and to consistently apply this policy to all staff members; ▶ to inform all new employees of these leave options; ▶ to administer all leave policies and options; ▶ to assist employees and supervisors in understanding and using their leave options.
<i>Director of Finance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ to be sufficiently familiar with this policy and appropriate Collective Bargaining Agreements and to consistently apply this policy to all staff members; ▶ to make all necessary adjustments in payroll and other activities and records resulting from employee use of benefits.

<i>Supervisors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ to be sufficiently familiar with this policy and appropriate Collective Bargaining Agreements and to consistently apply this policy to all staff members; ▶ to support staff who use available leave for appropriate purposes to achieve a healthy work and life balance ▶ to authorize or deny leave options based upon legal requirements and the best interests of the department or agency; ▶ to contact the Human Resources Department with any questions regarding this policy
<i>All Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ to be sufficiently familiar with and abide by this policy and appropriate Collective Bargaining Agreements; ▶ to use leave options appropriately and honestly and for their intended purpose; ▶ to provide the appropriate notices, forms and/or certifications required by the policy governing the use of appropriate leave options.

5. Definitions
<i>None</i>

6. Forms Associated with this Policy
<i>None</i>

7. Policy

7.1 Designated Holidays

The Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) acknowledges the observance of thirteen (13) designated paid holidays each year. Our offices will remain closed either on the holiday or the nearest workday, depending on the calendar. The specific days for the observance of these holidays will be communicated to all staff members by the Human Resources department each year.

In addition to these designated holidays, THA provides three (3) floating holidays for full-time staff members working a forty (40) hour week. However, for employees who join after July 1 of a given year, one (1) Floating Holiday is allocated. Please note that newly hired employees can only utilize Floating Holidays upon successful completion of their probation period, with advance approval from their respective supervisor.

Floating holidays are designed for use within the current calendar year and do not roll over into the next. Part-time staff members working a minimum of 24 hours per week are eligible for pro-rated benefits. The holiday pay is calculated based on the employee's base pay rate.

The following table provides a detailed list of the designated holidays:

No.	Holiday	Starting Year of Observance
1	New Year's Day	Existing
2	Martin Luther King Day	Existing
3	Presidents Day	Existing
4	Memorial Day	Existing
5	Juneteenth	Existing
6	Independence Day	Existing
7	Labor Day	Existing
8	Indigenous Peoples Day*	2024
9	Veteran's Day	Existing
10	Thanksgiving Day	Existing
11	Day after Thanksgiving	Existing
12	Christmas Eve	Existing
13	Christmas Day	Existing

*Please note that Indigenous Peoples' Day will not be observed in 2023; the holiday will be observed annually starting from October 14, 2024.

In case a holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be recognized on the preceding Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be recognized on the following Monday.

7.1.1 *Religious Holidays*

If an employee's religious beliefs require observance of a holiday not included in the basic holiday schedule, the employee may, with his/her supervisor's approval, take the day off using a floating holiday, annual leave or leave without pay. Employees should seek approval for such absences well in advance to ensure work coverage.

7.1.2 *Eligibility to Receive Designated Holiday Pay*

Full-time regular employees will receive eight hours of pay for the holiday. Part-time regular employees who are regularly scheduled to work more than 24 hours per week will receive holiday pay on a pro-rated basis. Part-time employees working less than 24 hours per week and temporary staff on any schedule do not receive holiday pay. Employees on a flex-time schedule should refer to *THA Policy HR-25.10 Working Hours* for holiday pay options. A designated holiday that occurs during the Probationary Period will be paid. Staff must work their normally scheduled work hours on the days immediately preceding and following the designated holiday.

Exception: If a staff member is absent on either or both of the days before and after a holiday with approved scheduled time off, they will receive holiday pay for the holiday. A staff member who is scheduled for work on a designated holiday and who fails to work that scheduled day will not

receive holiday pay - except when a supervisor excuses such an absence for the staff member.

Staff who are obligated to annual military temporary training duty are fully eligible for all holidays.

7.1.3 Holidays that Coincide with Certain Other Types of Absences

Any holiday falling within the period of an employee's vacation will be considered as a paid holiday and will not be deducted from the employee's accrued vacation.

Any holiday falling within the period of an employee's sick leave will be considered as a holiday and will not be deducted from the employee's accrued sick leave.

Any holiday falling on an employee's regularly scheduled day off (within the work week) will be available to the employee as an additional floating paid day off subject to the approval of the employee's supervisor and must be used within the sixty (60) days following the observed holiday.

7.1.4 Union Employees

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should refer to their contract for specifics on holidays.

7.2 Floating Holidays

THA provides three (3) floating holidays each calendar year to staff scheduled to work forty (40) hours per week. An employee hired after July 1 of a given year will earn (1) one Floating Holiday. Staff who work twenty-four (24) or more hours per week will receive pro-rated benefits. Newly hired employees will not be entitled to use floating holidays until after the successful completion of their probationary period. Staff who work fewer hours and temporary staff do not receive floating holidays. Holiday pay is based upon the employee's base pay rate.

Eligible employees may choose their floating holidays during each calendar year as authorized by the supervisor. A supervisor has the option to authorize or deny the use of a floating holiday based upon the impact to normal department or agency operations. Floating holidays do not carry over from one calendar year to the next.

7.3 Vacation

Vacation leave is intended to provide paid time away from work to rest and relax. It is not a form of wages or other deferred compensation and is paid upon separation of employment only as provided in the applicable collective bargaining agreement and by *THA Policy HR 50.01 Employment Separation*.

7.3.1 Vacation Accrual

For all other employees eligible to receive vacation time, the rate of vacation accrual, which may be adjusted from time to time, is as follows:

No.	Length of Service	Total Annual Vacation Days
1	0 to 5 years of service	14 days
2	Over 5 to 9 years of service	16 days
3	Over 9 to 14 years of service	18 days
4	Over 14 to 20 years of service	22 days
5	Over 20 years of service	24 days

Full-time regular employees will accrue these paid vacation days on a bi-weekly basis. Eligible part-time staff working more than twenty-four (24) hours per week shall accrue pro-rata vacation leave benefits.

Staff working fewer than twenty-four (24) hours and temporary employees do not receive and are not eligible for any vacation benefits. Employees do not accrue vacation benefits during a leave without pay or during a workers compensation time-loss period.

Employees accrue vacation but are not eligible to use the accrued vacation until after the successful completion of their probationary period.

7.3.2 *Carry-over and Cash-Out*

Employees are encouraged to take vacations to the amount of earned annual vacation. Employees may not carry over more than forty-five (45) days (360 hours) of vacation time from one calendar year to the next

An Employee may cash-out accrued vacation once per pay period so long as they retain a minimum of forty (40) hours of accrued vacation on the date the cash-out is paid. Cash-out requests must be submitted to the Human Resources department to be paid out the following full pay period after submission and processing is complete. (For example, an employee with 56 hours of accrued vacation may cash out up to 16 hours.)

Upon retirement or departure, the Employer shall pay no more than forty-five (45) days (360 hours) of accrued vacation time.

Employees may not cash out sick leave, and there is no carry-over restriction for sick leave.

Accrued but unused vacation will be paid out upon separation from employment according to the *THA Policy HR-50.01 Employment Separation*.

7.3.3 *Vacation Approval*

All vacation leave shall be taken at a time mutually agreeable to the employee and his or her supervisor. THA reserves the right to deny

requested vacation leave when such leave would interfere with operations or create an adverse impact on the completion of work. Especially during busy holiday seasons, THA urges employees to secure vacation approval well in advance of desired vacation days to allow for work coverage.

7.3.4 *Vacation Usage*

Non-exempt-paid staff may use vacation time in increments of 30-minutes. Exempt staff may use vacation in full day increments only.

7.4 Rest and Wellness

The Employer may designate additional Rest and Wellness Days agency-wide for consideration of staffing, workload, and other conditions. Rest and Wellness Days do not accrue or carry over and may not be rescheduled on an individual basis.

7.5 Bereavement Leave

All regular full-time employees and part-time employees regularly scheduled to work more than 24 hours a week will be granted up to five days off with pay in the event of a death in the employee's immediate family.

For purposes of this policy, immediate family member means spouse, registered domestic partner, father, mother, stepparent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, foster parent, brother, sister, stepchild, child, foster child, adopted child, child for whom the employee has parenting responsibility, grandparents, or grandchild of employee.

For the purpose of attending the funeral a maximum of one day's Bereavement Leave with pay may be granted for the death of son-in-law or daughter-in-law of the employee or the death of the employee's-spouse's or employee's registered domestic partner's foster parent, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, stepchild, child, foster child, grandparents or grandchildren.

This time off will be prorated for part-time employees. If an employee needs additional time off, they may use accrued leave or leave without pay subject to the approval of the employee's supervisor. When requesting bereavement leave, employees should inform their immediate supervisor of the deceased family member and the date of death. Proof of death and/or relationship may be required.

Temporary staff do not receive paid bereavement leave.

The Employer may require verification of the family member's or household member's death. If requested, the employee will provide verification within forty-five (45) calendar days. Additional time may be granted given extenuating circumstances.

7.6 Jury or Witness Duty

Employees who are required by law to render jury service will be granted paid time off during the period of jury duty. Staff scheduled to work part-time will

receive prorated pay. Temporary workers will not receive paid leave for jury or witness duty.

Employees should notify their supervisor as soon as possible after receipt of a juror summons so that operational adjustments can be made as needed during the employee's absence. A copy of the juror summons must be provided upon request. Depending upon the significance of impact to the department and/or agency, the employee may request of his or her supervisor an excuse from meeting the obligations of a jury duty subpoena. In such cases, THA will provide documentation to the relevant court supporting the waiver request.

Employees should contact their supervisor for instruction as to whether to return to work if there is a break greater than four hours during jury duty where the employee is not required to report to the court; depending on the circumstances, an employee may be required to return to work during such a period. An employee subpoenaed to testify in court related to his or her duties for THA will be granted paid time off for the period they serves as a witness.

Employees shall remit to THA any compensation they receive from the court for this duty except they may keep any court reimbursement for travel expenses. Temporary employees will be allowed to attend to jury duty; however they will not be eligible for jury or witness paid leave.

7.7 Time Off to Vote

If an employee's work schedule on the day of an election does not provide the employee two free hours during the time the polls are open, THA will permit the employee to take a reasonable amount of time (up to two hours) to leave work for voting purposes. Employees are encouraged to arrange for an absentee ballot if their work schedule will provide insufficient time to vote in person; time off to vote will only be approved where there was insufficient time to secure an absentee ballot during the period between the time an employee is informed of his/her work schedule and the date of the election.

7.8 Administrative Leave

On a case-by-case basis, THA may place an employee on administrative leave with or without pay for an indefinite period of time. Administrative leave may be used when it is in THA's best interests, such as during the pendency of an investigation.

7.9 Leave Without Pay (LWOP)

Subject to operational and other considerations, THA may grant a leave of absence without pay for an absence not covered by any other type of leave. Any available accrued leave must be exhausted before an unpaid leave will be approved and benefits do not accrue during LWOP. An example of an absence that may qualify is a prolonged illness or medical condition for which an employee needs reasonable accommodation. Depending on the circumstances, an employee may be placed on inactive employment status.

Where permitted by the plan documents of the employee health and welfare plans, and in accordance with current law, the eligible employee may elect to pay 102% of monthly premiums in order to continue their group insurance during a LWOP.

7.9.1 Authorization

The employee must request the leave without pay in writing to their supervisor specifically expressing the need for an extended leave without pay. In circumstances where requesting such leave through the supervisor is inappropriate, then the eligible employee may elect to send their written request directly to the Human Resources Department.

Only the Executive Director may authorize such leaves without pay. The Executive Director may grant or decline these requests at his or her sole discretion.

7.10 Unauthorized Leave

Unauthorized leave occurs when an employee does not report to work, does not return to work following a break or extends an authorized absence without contacting their immediate supervisor and getting authorization. Unauthorized absences will be considered sufficient cause for disciplinary action, including suspension and/or termination at THA's discretion.

Any employee who does not come to work and fails to contact their supervisor for three (3) consecutive business days will be considered to have resigned without notice. As such the employee will not be eligible for rehire.

7.11 Benefits During Leave

Employees who are on a paid leave of absence shall continue to receive benefits they were entitled to prior to the start of their leave, including the accrual of vacation, sick leave, holidays, retirement and health insurance benefits. Unless stated otherwise in these policies, an employee's benefits (including health insurance and leave accruals) will be suspended during any period of unpaid leave in excess of 30 consecutive days. In certain cases, self-payment of insurance premiums may apply (see COBRA information in *THA Policy HR-20.01 Employment Benefits*).