

Thurston County Fire Protection District 8

DISTRICT POLICY MANUAL



POLICY TITLE:	Unpaid Leave of Absence
POLICY NUMBER:	3-08-PO-00
REVISION:	0
DATE ISSUED/REVISED:	DRAFT
BOARD APPROVAL SIGNATURE:	

The District *may* grant a leave of absence without pay to any career member who requires leave from work which is not covered by any other type of leave and has who have exhausted all other available leave options. The decision as to whether a career member shall receive an unpaid leave of absence shall be made by the Fire Chief or his/her designee. This decision shall be made on a case-by-case basis as determined appropriate in the District’s sole discretion, considering the District’s operational needs. No career member is entitled to receive a leave of absence without pay under this policy unless otherwise required by law.

For the purposes of this Policy, “career members” include all uniformed and non-uniformed part- and full-time employees. This Policy does not include elected officials and volunteers (refer to *District Policy 3-09 “Volunteer Leave of Absence”*).

The District reserves the right to require any career member requesting leave without pay due to a medical condition to present an appropriate medical certification verifying the need for the leave. The District also reserves the right to otherwise verify the necessity of the leave, and to require supporting documentation, to the extent permitted by law.

Due to the District’s staffing limitations, leave without pay under this Policy, if granted to a career member, shall generally be of a temporary and short duration. If a career member is unable to return to work and perform the essential functions of his/her job (either with or without a reasonable accommodation) after receiving leave without pay, their employment with the District may be terminated. In addition, the District reserves the right to terminate an unpaid leave of absence at any time not otherwise prohibited by law and require the career member to immediately return to work.

Career members receiving leave without pay shall not receive or accrue any employment benefits while on unpaid leave unless otherwise required by law. Career members may, however, be able to continue their health insurance, at their own expense, during a leave without pay as coordinated with the District Secretary.

The District reserves the right to require a career member returning from an unpaid leave of absence necessitated by their own illness or health condition to present a statement from their healthcare provider certifying they are fit to return to duty and perform the essential functions of their job (with or without a reasonable accommodation). For career uniformed readiness

& response members, refer to *District Policy 3-15 "Emergency Responder Fit for Duty Status"*.

The District may presume that any career member who fails to report back to work promptly at the scheduled end of their unpaid leave of absence has resigned their employment and then process that career member's separation of employment from the District accordingly.

Career members receiving leave without pay (or any other type of leave from the District) shall not engage in other employment (excluding leave for military service obligations required by law) unless otherwise as provided under *District Policy 1-55 "Outside Employment"*.

Career members receiving leave without pay shall return all District property, equipment, documentation, files and records in his/her possession or control on or before the commencement of his/her leave unless the District, in its sole discretion, notifies the career member otherwise.

If applicable, the District may require any unpaid leave of absence under this policy to run concurrently with any other type of leave to which the career member may be entitled under federal, state, or local law.