

Metro | Policies and procedures

Subject Bereavement and Funeral Leave
Section Human Resources
Approved by Martha Bennett, Chief Operating Officer; MERC Commission

POLICY

Metro provides non-represented benefits-eligible regular and limited duration employees with paid bereavement and funeral leave in the event of the death of a qualifying family member. Metro has discretion to award unpaid bereavement leave under certain circumstances.

Applicable to

All non-represented benefits-eligible regular and limited duration employees.

Bereavement and funeral leave may be available for represented employees as determined by the applicable collective bargaining agreement and the Oregon Family Leave Act.

Definitions

Bereavement: A period of mourning following a death.

Qualifying Family Member: spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, sister, brother, grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, grandparent-in-law or other household member.

Guidelines

1. Benefits-eligible regular status and limited duration employees are entitled to take up to three days of paid leave upon the death of a qualifying family member for bereavement, to attend the funeral or other memorial service, or to make other necessary arrangements. For benefits-eligible part-time employees, the length of leave will be prorated according to the employee's assigned work hours (FTE).
 - a. Under special circumstances, the supervisor or Department Director may approve paid leave for bereavement to attend the funeral or other memorial service or to make other necessary arrangements following the death of a person other than the employee's qualifying family member.
 - b. Leave under this policy is distinct from unpaid protected bereavement leave for which the employee may be qualified under the Oregon Family Leave Act. OFLA bereavement leave does not alter or expand any paid funeral or bereavement leave that may be available under this policy. If leave granted under this policy is also covered by OFLA, the two types of leave will run concurrently. Please see Metro's Family and Medical Leave policy for more information.

2. At the discretion of the supervisor or Department Director, leave may also be granted to eligible employees for the following purposes, to be paid from any accrued paid leave balance. If the employee does not have accrued leave, the leave will be unpaid.
 - a. The supervisor or Department Director may approve up to four additional days off for travel needs related to approved bereavement and funeral leave.
 - b. The supervisor or Department Director may approve up to four hours of leave for an employee who is a participant in a funeral or memorial service.
 - c. The supervisor or Department Director may approve up to four hours of leave to attend the funeral of a co-worker.
3. Leave under this policy ordinarily should be taken within 60 days of the death. If necessary to accommodate religious or cultural practices or other special circumstances, the supervisor or Department Director may approve an extension of this time limit.
4. Leave under this policy ordinarily should be taken in one continuous period, except as necessary to run concurrently with intermittent OFLA leave, to accommodate religious or cultural practices, or for other special circumstances.

Procedures

1. Employees will request leave as soon as practicable after learning of the need for leave. The initial request for leave may be verbal or written and may be directed to the employee's supervisor or Department Director.
2. The supervisor or Department Director has discretion to request documentation of the need for leave. Acceptable documentation may include a death certificate, obituary notice, memorial service announcement, or any other documents of comparable reliability containing sufficient information to confirm the death and the relationship of the employee to the deceased. If documentation is requested, the employee must provide it within a reasonable time period specified by the supervisor or Department Director.
3. The supervisor or Department Director will approve or deny requests and will notify the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor of this determination as soon as possible. Leave requests that are covered by OFLA will be processed consistent with Metro's Family and Medical Leave policy.
4. When evaluating requests for leave that are subject to supervisor or Director approval, consideration will be given to the operational needs of the department, the employee's current workload, and the employee's overall attendance history.

Responsibilities

Employee:

- Make a verbal or written request for leave as soon as possible.
- Code leave appropriately in Metro's timekeeping system.

Supervisor and Department Director:

- Request supporting documentation if needed to substantiate the employee's need for leave.

- Consult the Family and Medical Leave policy and coordinate procedures for OFLA bereavement leave if appropriate.
- Approve or deny requests for leave and notify the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor of this determination as soon as possible.
- Ensure that leave is coded appropriately in Metro's timekeeping system.

Human Resources Department:

- Provide guidance and information as needed.

References

Metro Family and Medical Leave policy