

Sabbatical Leave

Research on leadership development indicates that people benefit from sabbaticals as a way to take a break, refresh, and recharge. Sabbaticals offer an opportunity for professional development for the employee. Because sabbaticals often create stretch opportunities for peers, this program is a part of the employer's organizational development. While some organizations make this available only to CEOs, the employer thinks eligibility for a sabbatical for all full-time staff after a period of service to the employer is a meaningful way to reward their contributions and energize staff for the next phase of their tenure with the employer.

Eligibility: Regular full-time employees are eligible to apply for sabbaticals upon completion of every three (3) years of continuous service. Part-time and temporary employees are not eligible for sabbatical leave.

Length: Employees may apply for up to three (3) weeks of sabbatical after three (3) years of continuous employment; six (6) weeks of sabbatical after six (6) years of continuous employment; and nine (9) weeks of sabbatical after nine (9) years of continuous employment and for every subsequent three (3) years of continuous employment.

The employer will consider requests for use of sabbatical leave and accrued annual leave consecutively. Sabbatical time cannot be intermittent (i.e. the sabbatical must be taken in a single interval). Sabbatical leave will be forfeited if not used within twenty-four (24) months of eligibility. After completing a sabbatical, the sabbatical return date is used as the anniversary date to qualify for the next sabbatical.

Approval: The employer may approve sabbaticals in its sole discretion. The supervisor and/or the department head along with P&C will discuss all sabbatical requests. P&C will follow-up with final approval. The employee generally must be without performance concerns within the previous six (6) months. No more than two (2) employees can be on sabbatical at any given time. If there are more than two (2) employees who request and meet the eligibility criteria, approval will be based on the Employer's business needs. Sabbaticals requests must be made at least three (3) months in advance and must be approved by the employee's direct supervisor. A sabbatical plan must be shared across the organization no later than two (2) weeks prior to the sabbatical start date, otherwise the employer reserves the right to rescind the approval. The needs of the team and GEO are among the factors that may be considered when approving sabbaticals.

Focus: The primary focus for the sabbatical is restorative.

Compensation: Employees will continue to earn their full salary and benefits during an approved sabbatical. The employer will not pay employees for sabbatical time for which they were eligible to apply upon separation for any reason. During the employee's sabbatical, GEO will not cover the costs of travel, professional development fees or other direct costs above the annual professional development allocation for the year. Sabbaticals may not be taken for purposes of earning additional outside full-time income.

Follow-up: Upon the employee's return, the employee is encouraged to share reflections about their sabbatical at a learning session, through an email communication, slack message, or other method.

CEO Sabbatical Leave

When after completion of five (5) years of continuous service, the board may choose to offer the CEO a sabbatical.

Length: 8-12 weeks. Sabbatical leave can be combined with annual leave.

Eligibility: The CEO will need to have received high ratings on their most recent performance review. The timing, length, and eligibility for a sabbatical will be at the discretion of the board of directors taking into account GEO's financial health and other organizational considerations including the sabbatical plans of other key staff. The sabbatical will need to be arranged at least three (3) months in advance.

Focus: The primary focus for the CEO sabbatical is restorative.

Compensation: The CEO will continue to earn their full salary and benefits during sabbatical. There is no cash value associated with the sabbatical. If the CEO does not use a sabbatical, it will be forfeited. While on sabbatical the CEO may not earn additional outside income.

Follow-up: Upon their return, the CEO will discuss their experience with the senior team and the full board.

Other: In the months prior to the sabbatical, the CEO will coordinate how responsibilities will be divided with other members of the senior team. It may be appropriate to name an acting CEO with appropriate compensation. At least six (6) weeks prior to the sabbatical, the CEO will propose a plan to the executive committee for discussion and ultimate approval.