

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Hull Public Schools to permit an employee to take up to 15 days of domestic violence leave from work in any 12 month period. In order to be eligible for said leave:

- i. the employee, or a family member of the employee must be a victim of abusive behavior;
- ii. the employee must be using the leave from work to seek or obtain medical attention, counseling, victim services or legal assistance; secure housing; obtain a protective order from court; appear before a grand jury; meet with a district attorney or other law enforcement official; or attend child custody proceedings or address other issues directly related to the abusive behavior against the employee or family member of the employee; and
- iii. the employee must not be the perpetrator of the abusive behavior against such employee's family member.

An employee shall exhaust all available paid leave prior to requesting or taking domestic violence leave. After the employee's available paid leave is exhausted, any domestic violence leave granted will be unpaid leave.

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of an employee, advance notice of domestic violence leave shall be required. If such imminent danger exists, the employee shall notify the Hull Public Schools within 3 workdays that the leave was taken. The notification may be communicated to the Hull Public Schools by the employee, a family member of the employee or the employee's counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior. If an unscheduled absence occurs, the Hull Public Schools shall not take any negative action against the employee if the employee, within 30 days from the unauthorized absence or within 30 days from the employee's last unauthorized absence in the instance of consecutive days of unauthorized absences, provides any of the documentation found in (1) to (7) below. The Hull Public Schools may require documentation that the employee or employee's family member has been a victim of abusive behavior and that the leave is consistent with clauses (i) to (iii) as above referenced; provided, however, that the Hull Public Schools shall not require an employee to show evidence of an arrest, conviction or other law enforcement documentation for such abusive behavior. The documentation shall be provided to the Hull Public Schools within a reasonable period after it has been requested.

An employee shall satisfy this documentation requirement by providing any one of the following documents to the Hull Public Schools:

- (1) a protective order, order of equitable relief or other documentation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction as a result of abusive behavior against the employee or employee's family member;
- (2) a document under the letterhead of the court, provider or public agency which the employee attended for the purposes of acquiring assistance as it relates to the employee or family member;
- (3) A police report or statement of a victim or witness provided to police documenting the abusive behavior;
- (4) documentation that the perpetrator of the abusive behavior has admitted to sufficient facts to support a finding of guilt; or has been convicted of , or has been adjudicated a juvenile delinquent by reason of any offense constituting abusive behavior;
- (5) medical documentation of treatment as a result of the abusive behavior;
- (6) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, provided by a counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior;
- (7) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, from the employee attesting that the employee has been a victim of, or is a family member of a victim of, abusive behavior.

All information related to the employee's leave shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed, except to the extent that disclosure is:

- (i) requested or consented to, in writing, by the employee;
- (ii) ordered to be released by a court of competent jurisdiction;
- (iii) otherwise required by applicable federal or state law;
- (iv) required in the course of an investigation authorized by law enforcement, including, but not limited to, an investigation by the Attorney General; or
- (v) necessary to protect the safety of the employee or others employed at the Hull Public Schools.

The Superintendent shall ensure that notice is provided to all employees in the next school year and beyond by appropriately amending the Hull Public School's employee handbooks, by whatever title they may be

known, or by direct notice about the Domestic Violence Law and securing the employees signature acknowledging receipt of the handbook/notice. The Superintendent shall be responsible for notifying all current employees, unless they have been notified through the handbook, of this policy in a manner that he/she deems appropriate.

The Hull Public Schools shall not coerce, interfere with, restrain or deny the exercise of, or any attempt to exercise, any rights provided herein or to make leave requested or taken contingent upon whether or not the victim maintains contact with the alleged abuser. The Hull Public Schools shall not discharge, or in any other manner discriminate against, an employee for exercising the employee's rights under the law. The taking of domestic violence leave shall not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date of such leave. Upon the employee's return from such leave, he/she shall be entitled to restoration of the employee's original job or to an equivalent position. Definitions of 'abuse', "abusive behavior", "domestic violence", "employees" and "family members" may be found in the laws referenced below.

**Legal Reference:** M.G.L. 149:52E; Section 10 Chapter 260 of the Acts of 2014

***Hull Public Schools***

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