

Voluntary Furlough Program Description

This information provides answers to the most commonly asked questions about benefits, seniority and pension during a voluntary furlough. It is intended to serve as a guide and should not be considered as the final authority for every situation, which may arise. Consult the Ramapo College People Operations and Employee Resources Department for further information.

All requests for a voluntary furlough must be submitted on the attached form, "Request for Voluntary Furlough." Core Leads should forward requests to the People Operations and Employee Resources Department with their recommendation to approve or deny the request. The People Operations and Employee Resources Department will advise the employee in writing whether the request has been approved or denied.

1. Q. What is a voluntary furlough?
A. Voluntary furlough is a unique opportunity to take advantage of unpaid leave time for personal use, without adverse effect on health benefits or seniority.
2. Q. For what can I use a voluntary furlough?
A. You can use a voluntary furlough to help meet family care needs, to extend a vacation, to stretch a holiday or to pursue educational opportunities. However, it is not intended to be used in place of sick or disability time or for seeking or obtaining alternate employment while retaining state-paid benefits.
3. Q. What kind of furloughs will be offered?
A. Some kinds of furlough options are:
 - a. Shorter Workday
 - 6 hour days
 - 5 hour days
 - 4 hour days
 - b. Intermittent Days or Weeks
 - 1 day / pay period
 - 1 day / week
 - 2 days/ week
 - c. Day Options

- Single day or days on one-time basis

d. Consecutive Days

- Aggregate of time up to 30 days for any one furlough in a calendar year

4. Q. Will my title or seniority be affected? (classified staff)
A. No. Your status remains the same and you will continue to accrue title seniority while on furlough.
5. Q. Will my name remain on any employment lists? (classified staff)
A. Yes. You will be notified of any available positions. If you opt to refuse appointment while on furlough leave, your name will be retained on the list in appropriate order, but you must notify the Department of Personnel Certification section when you are available for appointment.
6. Q. Will I be eligible for promotional opportunities while I am on furlough?
A. Yes, you will be notified of promotional opportunities just as you would with any other leave of absence.
7. Q. Will my anniversary date change?
A. No. Your anniversary date will not change.
8. Q. Will I be paid for a holiday if I take a furlough the day before?
A. You will be paid for the holiday if you are in pay status at least one day in the bi-weekly pay period in which the holiday falls.
9. Q. How will the furlough affect my vacation and sick leave time?
A. You will continue to accrue vacation or sick leave for intermittent or consecutive furlough days of 30 days or less.
10. Q. Can I take a furlough during my working test period? (classified staff)
A. Yes, your working test period will be extended by the number of furlough days used.
11. Q. For how long can I take a voluntary furlough?
A. With the approval of your employer, you may take up to 30 intermittent or consecutive days for any one furlough in a calendar year. An employee who wishes to extend a voluntary furlough beyond 30 days may request up to 60 days' furlough extension leave without pay for the purpose of education or family care needs only (or certain other circumstances). This

furlough extension leave should be taken in blocks of 10 days, which need not be consecutive.

12. Q. Will my health benefits coverage continue while I am on a furlough?
- A. Yes. Regardless of how your approved furlough is taken, all of your health benefits will continue. You will be responsible, however, to make any required contributions for applicable copays.
13. Q. If I have a change of family status during the voluntary furlough, can I change my health benefits coverage?
- A. Yes. You will be treated the same as an actively employed member. Simply complete a new enrollment application within 60 days of the change in family status.
14. Q. What if I am already out on a leave of absence and my health benefits coverage has terminated?
- A. If you are not currently covered by the State Health Benefits Program, you will not be permitted to re-enroll until you have returned to employment.
15. Q. Are part-time employees eligible for health benefits coverage during a voluntary furlough?
- A. No. Just as part-time employees are not eligible for the State Health Benefits while in pay status, they are not eligible for those benefits while on furlough.
16. Q. If I take a voluntary furlough for one day a week or one day a pay period, will my pension and life insurance be affected?
- A. If you are a member of PERS, your pension deduction and your contributory life premium, if applicable, will remain unchanged. If you are a member of ABP, the College's 8% contribution will be calculated on contractual base salary. Your 5% contribution will be based on actual earnings. There will be no impact on life insurance.
17. Q. How many furlough days can I take in a bi-weekly pay period before my pension and life insurance are affected?
- A. Deductions from your bi-weekly earnings are taken in the following order: Federal and State Tax, FICA, health insurance premiums, all forms of pension deductions (regular deductions, loan re-payment, arrears balance, back deductions, SACT deductions, and life insurance premiums, etc.). For members of PERS, if your bi-weekly earnings are sufficient to cover these deductions, then full credit will be given for pension and life insurance coverage. For members of ABP, you must work at least half time to qualify for pension contributions. Life insurance will continue for 93 days for unpaid leave.

18. Q. What happens to my pension and life insurance benefits when I am on a voluntary furlough?
- A. Pertaining to continuous unpaid leaves:
- No pension credit will be given. PERS members will have the option of purchasing this time.
 - Non contributory life insurance (PERS and ABP) will continue for a period of 93 days for personal leave.
 - Contributory life insurance will continue for members of PERS if premium payments are made.
19. Q. What happens to my loan, arrears, or back deduction payments when I return to payroll? (classified staff)
- A. You will return to your normal repayment schedule.
20. Q. Can I take a loan from the retirement system when I am out of the pay status on voluntary furlough?
- A. No. Only active, contributory members are eligible to take loans.
21. Q. Can I purchase the pension credit back when I return to the payroll from a furlough? (classified staff)
- A. PERS members may purchase up to 30 days of pension credit. ABP has no provision for purchase of credit.

**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
PEOPLE OPERATIONS AND EMPLOYEE RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

REQUEST FOR A VOLUNTARY FURLOUGH

NAME _____

TITLE _____

DIVISION _____

FURLOUGH DATES REQUESTED _____

Total number of requested days _____

Reason for requesting furlough (ex: family care needs, to extend a vacation, to stretch a holiday, to pursue educational opportunities, etc.)

Supervisor's Signature **Date** **Recommended** _____

Disapproved _____

Reason if disapproved _____

Core Lead Signature **Date** **Recommended** _____

Disapproved _____

Reason if disapproved _____

Human Resources Signature **Date** **Recommended** _____

Disapproved _____

Reason if disapproved _____
