

2021 Furlough Program Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. What is a furlough?

A furlough is the placement of an employee in an unpaid, temporary, no-duty leave of absence status from work for a specified period of time. A furlough may consist of (a) reduced number of work hours in a day with a proportionate reduction in pay; (b) reduced number of workdays in a week with a proportionate reduction in pay; or (c) specific days off without pay. A furlough is not a layoff or reduction in the workforce. Employees are **not** permitted to work for the university during a furlough leave.

2. Which employees are impacted by the 2021 Furlough Program?

Non-represented employees with annual salaries of \$100,000 or greater, regardless of the position funding source (*non-general funded positions are not excluded from this program*). **The furlough program does not affect your current annual salary.**

3. How do I know how much furlough time I am required to take?

You will find the furlough requirements in the following table:

Furlough Program Days Requirements

Important dates:
January 1, 2021 – start of furlough period
Last day to take furlough days - **September 19, 2021**

Annual base salary	Furlough days	% Furlough based salary reduction
12-Month Employees		
\$100,000 - \$200,000	6.5	2.5%
\$200,001 and up	10.5	4.0%
9-Month Employees		
\$100,000 - \$200,000	5.0	2.5%
\$200,001 and up	8.0	4.0%

4. When am I required to take the furlough days?

12-month employees are required to take their unpaid furlough days between January 1, 2021 and September 19, 2021. 9-month employees must take all furlough days by September 29, 2019.

5. In what increments am I required to take furlough days?

You are required to take your furlough days in either half- or full-day increments. **For fractional employees with appointment percentages less than 100% the furlough hours should be reported consistent with your actual appointment percentage. For example, an 80% appointment percentage would report 6 hours (7.5 hours x 80% = 6 hours) for each day of furlough taken.**

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6. What if I am not able to take my furlough days by the September 19, 2021 end date?

As an employee in the furlough program, you have the flexibility to plan and take your furlough days as you choose subject to your departmental needs and your supervisor's approval. You are required to take your unpaid furlough days by the September 19, 2021 end date. An analysis will be conducted on August 1, and if employees have not taken a portion of their furlough time, they will be subject to mandatory furloughs over the remaining pay periods in the fiscal year.

7. Can an employee perform university work on a day that has been identified as a furlough day?

No. Furloughs are a period of time when employees are legally prohibited from performing work for the university. On furlough days, employees should not perform work until the next scheduled working day.

8. Will an employee receive notice prior to being placed in furlough status?

Yes, the university will provide employees with no fewer than 7 days' notice of its decision to implement a university wide or unit level furlough.

9. When a furlough is implemented, what should employees do?

- Choose your furlough days or hours for an intermittent furlough.
- Submit furlough days or hours in accordance with the unit's timekeeping process.
- Employees and supervisors should consider the operating needs of the unit when determining furlough days.
- Employees must record their furlough time taken on their timesheet in the Web Time Entry (WTE) system during the pay period that the time was actually used. Employees will charge the FLT time code, which will be unpaid time.
- Furlough time can only be recorded in ½ day (3.75 hours) or full day (7.5 hour) increments for 100% FTE employees or adjusted to reflect the appointment percentage if less than 100% - please see FAQ #5 above.

10. What should supervisors do to monitor their staff's furlough time taken and remaining?

HR will provide each BAO with a monthly report of all of their employees' furlough days available, taken and furlough time remaining. Supervisors must monitor this report closely to ensure employees are taking their furlough days.

11. What are some ways units can balance managing operations when they have several employees who are participating in the furlough program?

Suggestions to manage furlough days include:

- Ensure that employees request their furlough days in advance so that operational needs can be considered
- Maintaining a departmental calendar so everyone can see when an individual is taking a furlough day
- Having backup support for employees and including the backup name/contact info. on the furlough calendar and in email out-of-office replies
- Avoid everyone taking a particular day off at the same time (i.e., Fridays, Mondays)
- Utilize some days during the Spring Break week of March 15th – 20th

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Leave usage during furlough

1. Can an employee use paid time off if available, for a furlough day?

No, furlough days are implemented as a cost savings measure for the university so the use of paid time off by employees during furlough days is prohibited.

2. Can an employee select to use an intermittent furlough day in place of a sick leave or vacation day?

Yes. When an employee is on an intermittent furlough, they may choose to use a furlough day in place of a pre-scheduled sick or vacation day. This must be pre-approved by the supervisor.

3. Is an employee allowed to use extended federal paid FMLA leave during a furlough?

No. A furloughed employee may not use any form of leave to receive wages during a furlough including 2020 federal paid sick leave under FFCRA or EFMLA.

4. Does an employee continue to accumulate vacation and sick leave while furloughed?

Yes. Employees will continue to receive sick or vacation accruals if they are paid for any hours during the period. The only time they would not receive an accrual is if they have reached the maximum vacation accrual allowed or they are unpaid for the whole pay period. Consistent with §2.7 of the Personnel Manual for Non-Represented Employees, "Vacation time does not accrue during any pay period in which a staff member is absent without earnings for 10 days."

5. Will an employee be paid for a holiday that occurs while the employee is furloughed?

To qualify for holiday pay, an employee must be eligible to receive earnings (including pay for illness leave, vacation pay, compensatory time off and related provisions) on the regularly scheduled work day immediately preceding and immediately following the holiday. Employees on an intermittent furlough continue to receive holiday pay.

6. How does a furlough impact a person on family medical leave (FMLA)? If a person is on paid medical leave (including FMLA), are they required to take a furlough?

The days an employee serves for a furlough assignment are not counted toward their 12-week FMLA limit.

Benefits Information

1. Will employees who are furloughed continue to have benefits?

All benefits eligible furloughed employees will retain their other current university benefits during the furlough. When benefits are continued during a continuous furlough, employees will be billed for employee contributions while on such furlough. For questions regarding benefits, contact Human Resources. Employee retirement plan contributions and the matching university contribution will be reduced when furlough days are taken.

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2. Can an employee adjust my retirement plan contributions in response to the reduction in pay that results from the furlough days?

Yes. Employees can change salary deferral percentages during the furlough period to adjust employee contributions, as needed. The forms for updating retirement plan deferrals can be accessed at <https://hr.wayne.edu/tcw/forms>.

3. Are employees, required to take furlough days eligible for unemployment?

You are only eligible for unemployment if your earnings are less than \$362 per week.

Additional Resources

Being impacted by a furlough can be a difficult and emotional time for affected employees. Support resources and tools are available to employees, including confidential counseling and referral to the Employee Assistance Program, <https://hr.wayne.edu/avp/eap>.

For additional questions, please contact Human Resources at askhr@wayne.edu.