

Department of the Army



ADMINISTRATIVE FURLOUGH FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

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Table of Contents

Leave and Hours of Work	3
Annual and Sick Leave Accrual	3
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)	3
Holidays	4
Adverse Actions	5
Impact Furlough has on Suspension	5
Alternate Work Schedule (AWS)	5
Impact an AWS	5
Furlough Roles and Responsibilities	5
Proposing, Oral and Replying Officials	5
Benefits	6
The Order of Precedence for Withholdings	7
Unemployment Information.....	7

Administrative Furlough Frequently Questions and Answers

LINK to OPM Guidance for Administrative Furloughs -

<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/guidance-for-administrative-furloughs.pdf>

<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/>

LINK to DoD Furlough Guidance -

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/Subpage/FurloughGuidance/>

Leave and Hours of Work:

Q1. Why should furlough days be referred to as hours versus days?

A1. Furloughs may be referenced and/or expressed in terms of calendar days or hours. However because employees in Army have different work schedules (hours of work, number of workdays, tours of duty) and type of appointments (part-time, full time, etc.), it is best for supervisors to schedule furloughs for all employees in terms of hours for simplicity and consistency.

Q2. Does discontinuous furlough of 176 hours (22 days) impact an employee's annual and sick leave accrual?

A2. Yes, the accumulation of nonpay status hours during a leave year can affect the accrual of annual leave and sick leave.

Example: When a full time employee with an 80-hour biweekly work schedule accumulates a total of 80 hours of nonpay status within a leave year (*either in one pay period or multiple pay periods*), the employee will not earn annual leave or sick leave in the pay period in which that 80-hour accumulation is reached.

If the employee again accumulates 160 hours of nonpay status during the leave year the employee will again not earn annual leave and sick leave in the pay period in which that 160-hour total is reached. Consequently, an employee would lose two pay periods of annual leave and sick leave if he or she is furloughed for 176 hours or 22 days of discontinuous furlough within a leave year.

Q3. May an employee take LWOP under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) during an administrative furlough period?

A3. Yes, an employee may take LWOP under FMLA during his or her designated furlough period. The employee may designate any hours and/or days of LWOP under FMLA as furlough time. That time would then be counted in fulfillment of the

organization's furlough requirement, and the employee would avoid being in a non-pay status during LWOP in addition to being in a non-pay status during furlough.

Q4. How should supervisors treat an employee who is on approved leave without pay (LWOP) during an administrative furlough period?

A4. If an employee is scheduled to be on LWOP during his or her organization's furlough period, the employee may request to designate LWOP hours/days as furlough time. That time would then be counted in fulfillment of the organization's furlough requirement, and the employee would avoid being in a non-pay status during LWOP in addition to being in a non-pay status during furlough.

Q5. Should part-time employees be furloughed for the same hours (176 hrs) as full time employees?

A5. No, in scheduling furlough hours for part-time employees, management should prorate their furlough hours in the same proportion to those full time employees working 80 hours bi-weekly.

Example: A part-time employee with a work schedule of 20 hours a week and 40 hours per bi-weekly pay period would for one half the hours of a full time employee. If full time employees are furloughed for 16 hours a pay period, a part-time employee would be furloughed for 8 hours a pay period.

Q6. Could an employee take paid leave or other forms of paid time off (e.g., annual, sick, court leave, earned credit hours, etc.) instead of taking administrative furlough time off?

A6. No, approved annual, sick, court leave, etc., for a day which is later designated as a furlough day will be recorded as a furlough and the employee will be placed in a nonpay status for the day. (See OPM Guidance, Page 7.)

Q7. How will employees on home leave be affected?

A7. Employees on home leave will be placed in a furlough status during days designated as furlough. Home leave adjustment is at the discretion of the leave approval official.

Q8. Should an employee be furloughed on a holiday?

A. The Comptroller General has determined that it is not appropriate to furlough an employee on a holiday, unless the furlough is for an extended number of continuous days (e.g. a furlough for 30 calendar days), and a holiday falls within that period. [Note – Employees must work either the day before or the day after the holiday in order to get pay for the holiday.]

Adverse Actions:

Q9. What impact does the furlough have on an employee who is serving, or will start serving, a suspension?

A9. Guidance will be provided on this at a later time.

Alternate Work Schedule (AWS):

Q10. Can a supervisor take employees off of AWS during the furlough period?

A10. Yes, supervisors may terminate an employee's AWS (e.g., 5/4-9) for operational necessity during the furlough period. Generally, the supervisor must notify the employee one week in advance. For bargaining unit employees, management must fulfill all statutory and contractual labor relations obligations in changing an employee's AWS.

Q11. How does furlough impact an AWS?

A11. Furlough time may impact an employee's regular day off (RDO) if the furlough time is scheduled on the employee's RDO. Supervisors may decide to move the RDO day to a different day in the pay period or change the furlough day, if possible.

Furlough Roles and Responsibilities:

Q12. Can the deciding official be the same individual as the proposing official?

A12. There is no statutory or regulatory prohibition that prevents a proposing and deciding official from being one and the same. However, in keeping with common practice and to minimize litigation risk, we recommend that organizations designate separate proposing and deciding officials and that this be accomplished at the lowest practicable level.

Q13. Can the oral reply official be the same as the proposing official?

A13. We recommend that the proposing official not function as the oral reply official for the above stated reasons. The oral reply official is a management official who can either make or recommend a final decision for the furlough action. Furlough is an adverse action, and a decision should be rendered only after carefully reviewing the facts in the proposed letter and any reply (oral and/or written) from the employee. Having the same individual functioning as the proposing official and oral reply official might give the appearance of a lack of due process.

Q14. What are the roles and responsibilities of the proposing official?

A14. As in all adverse actions, the proposing official is responsible for gathering facts, and meeting with his/her employee to issue the proposed furlough notice. The proposing official will explain to the employee the reason why he or she is receiving the proposed notice for furlough. The proposing official should also go over other information included in the proposed notice such as informing the employee of his/her right to be represented by an attorney or other person, the use of official time to prepare a response, identify who is the deciding official, as well as address general questions regarding the proposed furlough notice raised by the employee.

Q15. What are the roles and responsibilities of the deciding official?

A15. The deciding official is responsible for reviewing the facts in the proposed notice and carefully considering the employee's oral and/or written reply (if received) before making a final decision to the proposed notice. The deciding official shall make a final decision as to whether the employee should be furloughed. If the deciding official does not receive a written and/or oral reply from the employee(s), he/she can make a final decision, based on the facts presented in the proposed notice, after the reply period ends. The deciding official shall document his/her decision in the final decision notice, and should schedule a meeting with the employee(s) to issue the decision notice to the employee(s). During the meeting, the deciding official should issue the notice to the employee(s) and explain his/her rationale for the final decision. The deciding official should point out the employees' avenues of redress identified in the memo and address general questions raised by the employee(s). Employees should be referred to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) for questions concerning employee appeal rights.

Q16. What should management do when an employee refuses to sign/acknowledge receipt of a proposed or decision furlough memorandum?

A16. An employee's signature on a proposal or decision furlough memorandum does not constitute agreement with its contents; it only indicates receipt of the memorandum. An employee's refusal to sign for/acknowledge receipt of a furlough notification does not void the proposal or decision memorandum. Management officials should annotate on the memorandum, on the line reserved for the employee's signature, "Employee was issued the notice on (date) but refused to sign/acknowledge receipt of management's copy."

Benefits:

Note: *Information concerning the impact of an administrative furlough and employee benefits can be found in the OPM Guidance for Administrative Furloughs (Feb 2013, pages 9-10). The link to this OPM Guidance is provided on the first page of this document.*

Q17. When an employee's pay is insufficient to permit all deductions to be made, what is the order of precedence for withholdings?

A17. The order of precedence for civilian Federal employees applies only when gross pay is not sufficient to permit all deductions; it will be used to determine the order in which authorized deductions from an employee's pay will be processed. Additional information may be found at OPM Memorandum, PPM-2008-01; Order Of Precedence When Gross Pay Is Not Sufficient To Permit All Deductions:
<http://www.chcoc.gov/Transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalID=1477>

The order of precedence for the top eight deductions is:

1. Retirement
2. Social Security (OASDI) Tax
3. Medicare Tax
4. Federal Income Tax
5. Basic Health Insurance Premium
6. Basic Life Insurance Premium
7. State Income Tax
8. Local Income Tax

Q18. Is information available as to what the states require before processing a claim for unemployment because of a furlough?

A18. Yes. The list below provides websites or instructions for each state when filing an initial claim for unemployment; different procedures often apply when filing claims for additional benefits.

Alabama – <http://dir.alabama.gov/uc>

Alaska – http://www.labor.state.ak.us/esd_unemployment_insurance/biff-splash.htm

Arizona – <https://www.azdes.gov/landing.aspx?id=4211>

Arkansas - <http://www.arkansas.gov/esd/UI/index.htm>

California – <https://eapply4ui.edd.ca.gov/>

Colorado –

<https://www.coworkforce.com/ucontinuedclaims/default.asp?ci=0&ps=0&er=0&li=e>

Connecticut – <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/progsupt/unemplt/unemployment.htm>

Delaware – <http://www.delawareworks.com/Unemployment/welcome.shtml>

District of Columbia – <https://does.dcnetworks.org/InitialClaims/>

Florida – <https://www2.myflorida.com/apps/uc/fluid/>

Georgia – <http://www.dol.state.ga.us/>

Hawaii – <http://hawaii.gov/labor/ui>

Idaho – <http://fileforunemployment.org/2011/07/28/idaho-unemployment/>

Illinois – <http://www.ides.state.il.us/individual/certify/default.asp>

Indiana – <http://www.in.gov/dwd/>

Iowa – <http://www.iowaworkforce.org/ui/file1.htm#1>.

Kansas – <http://www.getkansasbenefits.gov/>

Kentucky – <http://www.kewes.ky.gov/>
Louisiana – [https://laors.laworks.net/laclaims/Web site/](https://laors.laworks.net/laclaims/Web%20site/)
Maine – <http://www.maine.gov/labor/>
Maryland – electronic filing not permitted if employee worked for the Federal Government in the past 18 months. File by phone at 410-949-0022 in the Baltimore area, or 1-800-827-4839 outside the Baltimore area. Information is at <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/unemployment.shtml>
Massachusetts – initial claim by phone or in person only. File by phone at 1-877-626-6800 from Massachusetts, 617-626-6800 outside Massachusetts. Information is at <http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=dlwdconstituent&L=2&L0=Home&L1=Claimants&sid=Edwd>
Michigan – <http://www.michigan.gov/uia/0,1607,7-118--77962--,00.html>
Minnesota – <http://www.uimn.org/>
Mississippi – <http://mdes.ms.gov> - form must then be brought in person to a Mississippi Job Center
Missouri – <http://www.labor.mo.gov/DES/Claims/>
Montana – <https://app.mt.gov/ui4u/index>
Nebraska – <https://uibenefits.nwd.ne.gov/BPSWeb/jsp/BPSClaimantWelcome.jsp>
Nevada – http://www.ui.nvdetr.org/UI_Agreement.html
New Hampshire – <http://www.nh.gov/nhes/>
New Jersey – http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/ui/ui_index.html
New Mexico – <http://www.dws.state.nm.us/>
New York – https://ui.labor.state.ny.us/UBC/home.do?FF_LOCALE=1
North Carolina – <http://www.ncesc1.com/individual/default.asp>
North Dakota – <https://secure.apps.state.nd.us/jsnd/uiiaclaims/login.htm>
Ohio – <http://unemployment.ohio.gov/>
Oklahoma – <https://unemployment.state.ok.us/instructions.asp?x=n>
Oregon – <http://findit.emp.state.or.us/ocs>
Pennsylvania – <https://www.paclaims.state.pa.us/UCEN/>
Puerto Rico – file by phone only, by calling 1-888-238-8889
Rhode Island – <https://uiclaims.state.ri.us/RI-ICS/Intro/index.aspx?AC=yes>
South Carolina – <http://dew.sc.gov/>
South Dakota – <http://dlr.sd.gov/ui/uibenefits.aspx>
Tennessee – <http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/unemployment.html>
Texas – <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/ui/uicclaim.html>
Utah – <http://jobs.utah.gov/ui/WebInitialCubs/Welcome.aspx>
Vermont – file by phone only, by calling 1-877-214-3330. Information is at <http://www.labor.vermont.gov/Unemployed/tabid/109/Default.aspx>
Virginia – <http://www.vec.virginia.gov/vecportal/seeker/jslogin.cfm>
Virgin Islands – file in person only; contact information is listed at <http://www.vidol.gov/OP/Contact.htm>
Washington – <http://www.esd.wa.gov/>
West Virginia – <http://www.wvuc.org/>
Wisconsin – <https://ucclaim-wi.org/InternetInitialClaims/InfoBasicRequirements.asp>
Wyoming – <http://wyomingworkforce.org/job-seekers-and-workers/unemployment-insurance/Pages/default.aspx>