



# SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jaime Alicea, Superintendent of Schools

Office of Human Resources

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## VOLUNTARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE INFORMATION

The COVID-19 Pandemic has considerably impacted all SCSD employees and the District is offering employees the opportunity to apply for an unpaid leave of absence while maintaining benefits as outlined in an agreement made with your union, which remain effective through June 30, 2021.

Below is important information for any employee considering a voluntary leave.

### Employees requesting a voluntary leave:

- May request to take it in full or partial weeks (Example: Only on Mondays and Tuesdays)
- Are taking an Unpaid leave of absence  
If an employee elects to take a **full** leave of absence, they will **NOT** be paid by the District.  
If an employee elects a **partial** week leave of absence, they **will only be paid for days worked at the employee's contractual day rate.**
- Employees on full or partial unpaid leaves of absence should be aware that the **salary and service credit that gets reported** to the New York State Retirement System **will be reduced** by any leave days.
- Depending on the length of the absence, an employee's **contractual seniority** may be affected.
- **Untenured Education staff**, accepting a voluntary leave of absence, may have their tenure period extended by the length of the leave.
- **Probationary Civil Service staff**, accepting a voluntary leave of absence, might have their probationary period extended by the length of the leave.
- Employees may be eligible for full or partial **unemployment insurance** as determined by the New York State Department of Labor.
- If an employee needs to end their voluntary leave of absence early, they may make a request to the Office of Human Resources for consideration.

### Benefits:

- Members who opt to take a voluntary leave of absence will be able to continue their medical, dental, and vision coverage at employee premium rates.  
Employees who elect a **full leave of absence** will be invoiced by the Benefits team and will need to keep payments up-to-date in order to continue benefits throughout the leave period.

- Members who have vision coverage will be able to continue their Syracuse Teachers Association coverage during the leave period.
- Flexible Spending Account members taking a **FULL** leave of absence will have no additional contributions taken, but employees can continue to submit claims for reimbursement.

Employees can change their deduction amount if they elect to take a leave of absence (For example, employees may no longer need daycare and so could stop their daycare election).

- Payroll deductions such as 21 Check option, 403b/457, union dues, or optional deductions (life insurance) will not be taken during periods of **FULL** leave of absence. Employees opting for a **PARTIAL** leave, deductions will be taken in priority order (NY State retirement, medical, dental, vision, garnishments, child support, or other deductions).
- 21 Check employees can cancel their election and will receive the amount held refunded to them. Those employees can elect to re-enroll for the 2021-2022 school year.
- **FULL** leaves of absence, depending on the length of the leave, may impact future vacation accruals and salary step movements.
- Unused personal leave or vacation leave will follow procedures outlined in bargaining unit contracts/agreements.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If the Board of Education adopts a resolution abolishing positions, those employees on a voluntary leave of absence who are least senior, **can still be laid off** according to New York State Civil Service or Education Law procedures.

To apply, you must complete the electronic Voluntary Leave Request by [CLICKING HERE](#) or on the OHR Forms and Documents web page.

**Please be advised that requesting a leave of absence DOES NOT guarantee that you will be approved. All voluntary leave requests will be reviewed by the Office of Human Resources and you will be notified, via email, whether your request has been approved or denied.**