



## CITY OF PROVIDENCE

### 4.7 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE POLICY

#### Purpose

It is the intention of the City of Providence to support employees during times of grief and bereavement, while maintaining continuity of operations. This policy is designed to provide clarity to the time allowed for bereavement, how it is requested, utilized, and additional considerations, to be supportive to employees, their families and loved ones, while maintaining the integrity and accountability of the City of Providence and its service obligations.

#### Scope

This policy applies to all employees, applicants, contractors, and volunteers associated with the City of Providence, excluding employees covered by the Fraternal Order of Police, or Local 799 of the International Association of Fire Fighters Unions, and all staff employed by the Providence Public Schools.

Nothing in this policy shall supersede, modify, or diminish any rights, benefits, or obligations contained within applicable collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) or laws. In the event of a conflict between this policy and a CBA, the CBA shall prevail for covered employees. For all other employees not covered by a CBA, this policy shall govern.

#### Definitions

**Immediate Family Member:** Shall be defined as the employee's spouse, domestic partner, parents (to include stepparents, foster parents, parents-in-law and domestic partner's parents), grandparents, siblings, children, children of a domestic partner, stepchildren, adopted children, children for whom the employee has parental responsibility, grandchildren, and in some cases may include extended family members who are domiciled in the employee's home.

**Non-Immediate Extended Family Member:** This is defined as any other non-immediate family member, such as an aunt, uncle, or cousin.

**Non-Familial Relationship:** Refers to other individuals not listed in the other defined categories or definitions herein, which include colleagues, friends, or other categories of relation.

**Regular Employee:** An employee is that is hired, appointed, and/or elected to a position that is considered permanent, not temporary or seasonal in nature, including both union and non-union employees.

#### Policy

##### 1. Bereavement Allowance

- A. Bereavement leave is designed to be utilized for grieving, travel, and services as it pertains to the death of either an immediate family member, non-immediate extended family member, or non-familial relationship.
- B. When a death occurs in an employee's immediate family, all regular, full-time employees may take up to five (5) days off with pay for purposes of bereavement.
- C. Additionally, all regular, full-time employees may take up to two (2) days off with pay following the death of a non-immediate extended family member



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- D. Paid time off may be granted in the case of people with non-familial relationships to the employee, such as colleagues, friends, or other categories of relation.
1. These may be eligible for bereavement and/or other paid time off in the form of vacation, floating holiday, or personal time; not to be provided as a paid benefit without discharge of a balance of paid time off.
  2. Such approvals are provided at the sole discretion of the Chief People Officer or their designee within the Department of People and Culture (DPC) in consultation with the employees' department, provided that notice is given as soon as possible and in a reasonable period of time. Such requests will not be unreasonably denied.
2. **Leave Requests**
- A. Employees shall inform their supervisor or department director, applicable to the standards of their department as soon as possible either following the death or in advance of services.
- B. Requests, while should be communicated verbally, shall be made in writing and include the following:
1. The reason for leave (e.g., grieving, services, travel for services, etc.)
  2. Identification of the deceased (name)
  3. Date of death
  4. Date of services when applicable
  5. Relationship to the deceased (e.g., brother, sister, uncle, etc.)
  6. Date(s) and duration requested (e.g., 2 days, 01/10/XX and 01/11/XX)
- C. The City may, at its discretion, require verification of the need for bereavement leave provided to the Department of People and Culture which may include any of the following:
1. Death certificate
  2. Obituary
  3. Affidavit
3. **Travel Considerations**
- A. Additional time off may also be granted depending on circumstances such as distance, or the employee's personal responsibility for funeral arrangements.
1. This does not guarantee additional paid time off under bereavement for the purposes of this extended time.
  2. Approval is subject to the Chief People Officer or their designee in the Department of People and Culture in consultation with the employee's department director.
- B. While the following policy establishes general guidelines for granting bereavement leave, if additional time is needed, employees should discuss other leave options with the Department of People and Culture and their manager to determine if additional considerations are needed.
4. **Religious Considerations**
- A. To the extent allowed by law, for the purposes of services and traditions, accommodations will be considered as bereavement for employees who either themselves or the deceased participate in practices and/or services which may extend beyond the duration allowed, as provided in Sections 1.B-C above.
- B. To request such accommodation(s), information shall be provided to the employee's supervisor and the Department of People and Culture – Employee Experience for review and consideration.



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- C. Documentation may be required to process such requests, and such information will be communicated to employees within a reasonable period of time.

### 5. **Compliance**

#### **A. Insufficient/Incomplete Requests**

1. While the City is dedicated to supporting employees during period of bereavement, employees are responsible for providing adequate information to ensure the department and DPC can process requests in a timely manner.
2. Requests that are not made in compliance with this policy may be delayed in processing or denied.

#### **B. Abuse / Fraudulent Leave**

1. The City does not authorize or permit employees to utilize bereavement for purposes other than that applicable to limits prescribed herein.
2. Employees found to violate this policy by applying, utilizing, or claiming bereavement leave for illegitimate or fraudulent reasons will be considered in violation of this policy in conjunction with the Workplace Theft and Misappropriation Policy and are considered grounds for immediate termination.

#### **Related Policies:**

Attendance Policy

Leave of Absence Policy

Workplace Theft and Misappropriation Policy

Code of Ethics

#### **Other Related Information:**

Local 1033 Collective Bargaining Agreement