

4.14 SABBATICAL LEAVE

4.14.1 Purpose of Sabbatical Leave

Sabbatical leaves may be awarded to qualified tenured members of the faculty for intellectual refreshment, normally to be obtained by study, research, travel, work experience, or other creative activity as delineated below:

A. Academic Study Leave

An academic study leave is one during which the faculty member pursues a program of a minimum of eight (8) units each semester or the equivalent (432 hours) in an accredited institution of higher education.

B. Independent Research Leave

An independent research leave is one which must be related to the present or prospective service. The program must be at least equivalent in effort and content to the required units as pursued above. A complete plan for such study must be approved and filed with the original application for leave.

C. Travel Leave

A travel leave is one during which the employee shall remain in travel status three and one-half (3½) months for each semester of leave granted.

D. Professional Growth

A professional growth leave is one granted for any structured experience which would cause professional growth in the employee's specialty or techniques of teaching.

E. Combination of Above

Types of sabbatical leaves may be combined. One (1) calendar month of travel is considered as equivalent to two (2) semester units when in combination. The sabbatical leave of absence shall have the ultimate objective of enhancing a faculty member's service to the Rancho Santiago Community College District and increasing its distinction. The sabbatical leave of absence is not an earned right, but is a privilege which may be granted by the Board of Trustees. It is expected, therefore, that applications shall be accompanied by a statement of a program which the applicant proposes to follow while on leave, and that, on return to regular duty, he/she shall submit a report on the result of the leave as a record of faculty growth and for retention in the District files.

4.14.2 Sabbatical Leave: Service Eligibility

Full-time faculty with satisfactory performance may request sabbatical leave. The full-time service as a faculty member in the Rancho Santiago Community College District must be at least six (6) consecutive years immediately preceding the sabbatical leave. A leave of absence, except a sabbatical leave, does not count as a break in continuity of service for purposes of sabbatical leave consideration.

4.14.3 Sabbatical Leave: Length of Leave and Compensation

For the purpose of sabbatical leave, all 175 day employees shall be considered ten (10) month employees, eligible for a semester leave (5 calendar months) or a maximum of a school year leave (10 calendar months) at eighty percent (80%) contract salary. All 192 day employees shall be considered eleven (11) month employees, eligible for a semester leave (5 ½ calendar months) or a maximum of a school year leave (11 months) at eighty percent (80%) contract salary. All 225 day employees shall be considered twelve (12) month employees, eligible for a semester leave (6 calendar months) or a maximum of a school year leave (12 calendar months) at eighty percent (80%) contract salary. The school year leave may be taken in two separate terms provided that the leave of absence for both of the separate terms be commenced and completed within a three-year period. Any period of service intervening between the two separate terms shall comprise a part of the service required for a subsequent leave. An employee may choose to apply banked leave while on sabbatical to be eligible for one hundred percent (100%) contract salary. (See Section 4.16 for banked leave provisions.)

4.14.4 Sabbatical Leave: Number of Leaves

The maximum number of sabbatical leaves granted in any one (1) year may be up to four percent (4%) of the full-time academic employees. Exceptions shall be at the discretion of the District.

4.14.5 Sabbatical Leave: Application for Leave

Application for a sabbatical leave must be filed with the Chancellor or his/her designate by December 15 for the following school year in conformance with the District approved application form. If there are remaining vacancies in the present academic year for a spring semester sabbatical leave, the employee may file application with the Chancellor or his/her designate by September 1. These spring sabbatical leaves of absence are to be within the 4% allowable. The Sabbatical leave Committee will screen applications and make suitable recommendations to the Chancellor. Should any application be denied for lack of a suitable plan, the applicant will be given an opportunity to improve his/her plan and resubmit the application within a period of two (2) weeks from the date of notification that the plan is not acceptable.

4.14.6 Sabbatical Leave Agreement

As a condition of obtaining a sabbatical leave, the employee must execute a written agreement specifying the terms and conditions of the sabbatical leave including the employee's return to service for at least one year following a semester leave or two (2) years following a two (2) semester leave. The agreement shall stipulate that the employee shall repay the District for all salary and fringe benefits received during the sabbatical if the post-sabbatical service is not met.

4.14.7 Report on Sabbatical Leave

Each employee returning from sabbatical leave must file with the sabbatical leave committee chair a written report on the District approved form no later than thirty (30) days after commencement of the semester following such leave. The purpose of the report to the committee is to demonstrate compliance with the approved sabbatical leave proposal and contract. The chair of the sabbatical leave committee shall then submit the report to the sabbatical leave committee for its consideration, and within a thirty (30) day period the committee shall by a majority vote indicate approval or disapproval. Reports, accompanied by committee recommendations, shall be presented to the Board of Trustees at a subsequent meeting. Employees are expected to be present to supplement the written report. If action by the Board of Trustees does not indicate full compliance with the established terms and purposes of the approved sabbatical leave proposal, the Board may deem such leave to have been in whole or in part a leave of absence without pay and require said employee and company to make financial restitution, in whole or in part, to the District within ten (10) months. In no event shall the employee be assessed more than the amount of pay received during the sabbatical period excluding pay for banked leave used during the time period. An employee taking a sabbatical leave solely or partially for academic study shall, within thirty (30) days after commencement of the semester following such leave, provide the District with an official transcript of work. If, in the course of the sabbatical leave, the committee determines that the employee is not carrying out the leave proposal in good faith, the employee will be contacted and granted ten (10) days to respond to the evidence. If the committee deems the response unsatisfactory, it shall recommend to the Board of Trustees termination of the sabbatical leave. The Board may immediately terminate the sabbatical leave and one (1) order the employee back to a regular district assignment or two (2) designate the remainder of the sabbatical leave a leave of absence without pay.

4.14.8 Return to Service After Sabbatical leave

At the expiration of the leave of absence of the employee, he/she shall, unless otherwise agreed, be reinstated in the position held by him/her or in an equivalent position to that held at the time of the granting of the leave of absence.

4.14.9 Salary Increase for Sabbatical Leave

Sabbatical leave shall count toward retirement and be considered as regular service to the District for purposes of advancement on the salary schedule. Employees on sabbatical leave shall be permitted to accept full-time positions for pay only when such position provides an opportunity to upgrade knowledge or abilities in a manner not immediately available otherwise. The District shall adjust compensation for sabbatical leave downward such that the total compensation shall not exceed the amount the employee could earn on campus with a full teaching load, plus eight (8) hours' overload. This does not apply to scholarships, fellowships, and other such grants.

4.14.10 Sabbatical Leave: Method of Payment

The compensation shall be paid the employee while on the leave of absence in the same manner as if the employee were teaching in the District.

4.14.11 Accident or Illness during Sabbatical Leave

Interruption of the program caused by serious illness or accident during a sabbatical leave, evidence of which is satisfactory to the District, shall not prejudice an employee regarding the fulfillment of the conditions on which leave was granted nor affect the amount of compensation to be paid such employee under the terms of such sabbatical leave. However, the Chancellor, or his/her designate, must be notified within thirty (30) days of such accident or illness.