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Chief Human Resources and Professional Development Officer

**2023 – 2024 Time Off With-Out Pay**

To: All HCPSS Employees

From: David Lerner  
Chief Human Resources and Professional Development Officer

**Excessive Absenteeism and Time Off without Pay**

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) values the importance of an appropriate work-life balance and the mental health of its staff. In collaboration with our labor partners, HCPSS has negotiated an allotment of leave that staff members are able to utilize throughout the course of a school year. This is in addition to any long-term leave approved through the Office of Human Resources.

All staff members play a vital role in the successful instruction and support of students. Therefore, it is vital that staff members be present whenever possible. The Division of Human Resources and Professional Development would like to remind staff that “Time Off without Pay” is only to be used for extenuating circumstances and not as an additional “leave type” in Workday. Although staff members can select Time Off without Pay in Workday, it is not to be used as an extension of leave because all accrued leave and unearned leave that would have been available to the staff member for the school year have been exhausted.

In addition, approval of Time Off without Pay by a supervisor in Workday does not constitute acceptance of the use of this leave. Time Off without Pay is approved in Workday to ensure that a staff member does not receive compensation for the requested time. Additionally, approval in Workday does not mean that a staff member will not be subject to disciplinary action for absenteeism or failure to adhere to their work schedule in accordance with HCPSS Board **Policy 7030 – Employee Conduct and Discipline**, Section IV. Standards, E.5. Willful Neglect of Duty.

When entering leave for an unscheduled absence into the appropriate system, staff members are to adhere to their worksite’s specific call-out procedures to ensure that the absence is properly covered and to minimize classroom and operational interruptions.

As a reminder, staff members should not provide medical documentation directly to their supervisor. Medical documentation or notes not requested by the Office of Human Resources will not excuse an absence. When medical documentation or notes are requested, the request should be made by the Office of Human Resources and should be submitted directly to that office. If a staff member requires a workplace accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job, the staff member should contact the ADA Coordinator at [ada\\_coordinator@hcpss.org](mailto:ada_coordinator@hcpss.org).

Staff members who are experiencing life events that could impact attendance are encouraged to contact the Leave Office at [hrleaveofabsences@hcpss.org](mailto:hrleaveofabsences@hcpss.org) for available options. In addition, staff members are encouraged to take advantage of the Employee Assistance Program offered through HCPSS. This is a valuable tool to assist in addressing personal life issues. Staff members can access this program by phone at 888-532-7874, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Staff members may also access it online at [www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com), Web ID: HCPSS.