

Request for Sabbatical Leave for Restoration of Health

**Prepared by PSEA Legal Division
for PSEA Members
Current as of August 7, 2020**

During this pandemic, members with underlying health conditions which place them at risk for complications associated with COVID-19, or which may otherwise prevent them from performing their job duties, may wish to consider taking a sabbatical leave of absence. Under the School Code, any person employed in public schools in Pennsylvania who has completed ten years of satisfactory service as a professional employee may take a sabbatical leave of absence for professional development, for restoration of health, or, at the discretion of the school board, for other purposes. Following the first sabbatical leave, subsequent sabbatical leaves are permitted after each seven years of service.

A school district may have local board policies that apply to sabbatical leave but may not limit the number of sabbatical leaves granted in any school year to less than ten percent of the individuals eligible for such leave. The School Code requires employers to give preference for sabbatical leaves based on the number of years since the employee's last sabbatical. In addition, school boards may have adopted additional regulations regarding preference.

An employee seeking a sabbatical leave for restoration of health must obtain documentation from a physician which states that, in the physician's medical opinion, the employee's health condition will improve during a leave for restoration of health.

No sabbatical leave is to be granted unless the employee agrees to return to employment with the district for a school term following the leave. Employees who fail to return will be required to repay benefits received while on sabbatical unless the employee is prevented by illness or physical disability from returning.

Members considering sabbatical leave should consult with their UniServ Representative concerning any requirements or questions about sabbatical leave, including those concerning rights and obligations with regard to return to employment following the leave.