

Revised June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

### POLICY ON AUTHORIZED ABSENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Effective date:** January 1, 2017

**Purpose:** To identify parameters for authorized absence for professional activities, including activities that involve domestic or international travel.

**Rationale:** Faculty and staff are expected to be on campus Monday through Friday as part of their regular assignment. This authorized absence policy is intended to ensure that authorized absence for professional activities is consistent with the mission of the University of Florida, while simultaneously meeting State of Florida regulations, enhancing the public's confidence in the University's stewardship of resources, and ensuring equity in faculty availability for on campus responsibilities.

**Qualifying Days and Activities:** There are three general categories of approvable professional leave: professional leave for non-grant related activities, professional leave for activities directly funded by a specific grant or contract, and professional leave conducted on behalf of the department/college and assigned by the chair or dean. Authorized absence requires the approval of the chair and/or dean or their designees.

**Standard Professional Leave:** Faculty, chairs, and other employees with administrative positions may be granted up to 20 business days of authorized leave for professional activities (e.g. conference participation, teaching, mentorship, etc.), as per the approval policy of their department or unit, as long as no honorarium is being received. In addition to the 20 business days for authorized leave, 8 additional transit days per year (defined below) may be approved to accommodate multiple domestic and/or international trips.

**Additional Professional Leave** (beyond the standard of up to 20 business days and up to 8 additional transit days per year): Faculty, chairs, and other employees with administrative positions may seek approval for additional authorized absences for the following professional activities:

1. Grant funded or contract activities: Activities that are paid for by **direct** costs from a research grant or contract. (Authorized absences supported by **indirect** costs are counted in the 20 days of standard professional leave.)
2. Grant reviewer for any national grant funding agency
3. Accreditation site reviewer for a health care system or professional/scientific organization
4. Professional activities conducted on behalf of the department or college as assigned by the chair or dean and approved by the dean.

**Contingencies of All Authorized Absences:**

1. The number of days authorized is based on the calendar year, January 1 to December 31.
2. For each authorized absence of domestic travel, a maximum of two days is allowed for direct travel (i.e. transit days), one day immediately prior to the event/activity and one

- day immediately after the event/activity. Annual leave must be used for more extended travel plans. Domestic travel requires approval of the chair.
3. For international travel, a maximum of four days (i.e. transit days) are allowed for direct travel, two days immediately prior to the event/activity and two days immediately following the event/activity. Annual leave must be used for more extended travel plans. International travel requires approval of the chair and dean.
  4. Faculty returning on weekends may not use authorized absence for the next business day after return. They are expected to return to work unless annual leave is approved.
  5. If required, a *Disclosure of Outside Activities and Financial Interests* form must be completed by the employee and signed by the approver(s) prior to the employee's formal acceptance of a professional activity. A *Disclosure of Outside Activities and Financial Interests* form is required for activities involving direct monetary and/or nonmonetary compensation. Examples of the latter include, but are not limited to, waiver of conference fees and coverage of/reimbursement for food and/or travel.
  6. Employees are required to use annual leave if they receive monetary compensation for their professional activities (see next section).
  7. A minimum of 10 business days prior to domestic travel, employees must submit appropriate documentation (including the signed *Disclosure of Outside Activities and Financial Interests* form, if applicable) to their department chair/designee based on departmental policy for travel authorization. Please note, department chairs may set more restrictive policy regarding the number of days required for submission of professional leave requests prior to travel (i.e. increased days).
  8. A minimum of 10 business days prior to international travel, employees must submit a PPHP Travel Authorization Request (TAR) with all appropriate documentation (including the signed *Disclosure of Outside Activities and Financial Interests* form, if applicable). Please note, department chairs may set more restrictive policy regarding the number of days required for submission of professional leave requests prior to travel (i.e. increased days).
  9. Regardless of the funding source, PPHP and UF travel policies and procedures must be followed in all cases.

**Compensation for Administrative/Professional Leave:** Faculty, chairs, and other administrative personnel will receive full pay for approved leave. Professional leave will not be granted for activities for which the employee receives direct monetary compensation. (This does not apply to travel, food or other reimbursements for which the faculty member does not receive direct compensation. *This also does not apply to monetary compensation received when serving as a grant reviewer for a federal agency such as NIH or NSF.*) If outside activities for which the employee receives monetary compensation are completed during the business work schedule of Monday-Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, annual leave must be used for any and all 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm hours/days missed. Some examples of outside activity include (though not a complete list): receiving an honorarium in excess of travel expenses, paid consulting, serving as an expert witness (this requires an additional review by the HSC Self-Insurance Program Office 273-7006 prior to approval), and being a visiting professor or an invited speaker at another institution or organization (whether for-profit or not-for-profit) for which the employee receives an honorarium. Please note that if an employee offered an honorarium donates that entire honorarium to the department or college, he or she will be eligible for professional leave.