

## 706 - LEAVE OF ABSENCE

---

**Section 706.01  
Leave Of Absence**

Full-time employees may be granted a leave of absence without pay at the discretion of the elected official or department head. The decision as to whether such leave is granted shall be based on the needs of the department. The recommended maximum length of a leave of absence is six (6) months. A leave of absence extending beyond 6 months shall require the approval of Commissioners Court.

**Section 706.01  
Voluntary Leave of  
Absence and  
Involuntary Leave of  
Absence for Medical  
Reasons**

A leave of absence for any reason except leave due to an employee's own serious health condition shall be considered a **voluntary leave of absence**.

A leave of absence due to an employee's own serious illness or injury, or pregnancy, shall be considered an **involuntary leave of absence**. This type of leave may be granted to an employee only if they are not eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act either because they have exhausted their FMLA leave or they have not been employed by Fort Bend County for the requisite 12 months and 1,250 hours to be eligible for FMLA. (for more information, see Section 704: Family and Medical Leave Act).

**Section 706.02  
Accrued Time**

An employee must use all accrued vacation time, deferred time, and compensatory time before being placed on unpaid leave of absence. Sick leave must also be exhausted if the leave qualifies under the guidelines of Section 709: Sick Leave.

**Section 706.03  
Reporting  
Requirements**

Employees on a leave of absence shall be required to report their status to their supervisor on the first workday of each week.

**Section 706.04  
Employee Benefits**

During unpaid voluntary or involuntary leave of absence, an employee shall not accrue vacation or sick time, nor receive longevity pay. The period of unpaid leave shall not be considered a break in service. However, an employee will not receive credit for service for purposes of vesting and retirement eligibility during any month in which no contribution is made to the employee's retirement account (see Section 510.03).

Employees on a voluntary leave of absence may be allowed to continue health care coverage if they pay the full cost of such benefits.

Employees on an involuntary leave of absence will be required to pay the employee's portion and the dependent(s)'s full premium of medical benefits at the rate currently in effect for active employees in order to continue coverage.

Notification and timely payments of premiums must be coordinated with Risk Management.

All other benefits will be suspended while an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence.

**Section 706.05  
Reinstatement**

Employees on an involuntary leave of absence must furnish certification from a health care provider that they are able to perform

FORT BEND COUNTY EMPLOYEE INFORMATION MANUAL

the essential functions of the job before they will be allowed to return to duty. A job description will be provided. Failure to provide return to duty certification may delay the employee's return to duty date.

Employees on a voluntary or involuntary leave of absence shall have no guarantee of reinstatement to their own or any other position in the County. Reinstatement to any position shall be at the discretion of the elected official/department head.

---

Policy Approved and Adopted By:  
Fort Bend County Commissioners Court  
July 20, 1993  
Revised: February 10, 2004  
Revised: February 10, 2009