

VII-7.26 - POLICY ON LEAVE FOR DISASTER SERVICE FOR USM EMPLOYEES

(Approved by the Board of Regents on October 11, 2002; Amended October 9, 2015; Amended June 13, 2025)

I. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy establishes the amount and use of paid leave for disaster service and applies to employees of the University System of Maryland (USM), including temporary employees, as required by the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Personnel and Pensions Article, §9-1102, which applies to all Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of state government, including units with an independent personnel system such as the USM.

II. GENERAL

A. Requirements for Leave with Pay

On request, an employee may be entitled to Disaster Service Leave with pay if:

1. the employee is certified by the American Red Cross as a disaster service volunteer; and the American Red Cross requests the services of the employee during a disaster that is designated at Level II or above in the regulations and procedures of the National Office of the American Red Cross, or
2. the employee is a member of the Civil Air Patrol; the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary; a voluntary Reservist in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); a Maryland voluntary organization active in a disaster; a volunteer emergency medical services department; a volunteer fire department; a volunteer rescue company or rescue squad; or a community emergency response team.
3. At the discretion of the President and subject to any requirements established by the institution, the President may approve disaster service leave for an employee whose services are requested by another bona fide service organization.

B. Amount of Leave Allowed

An employee may use up to 30 paid days of Disaster Service Leave in any 12-month period only after obtaining approval from the employee's appointing authority. The employer may deny the leave if the denial is based on the anticipated impact on the operational needs of the institution.

C. Extension of Leave for Prolonged or Recurrent Disaster

During a prolonged or recurrent disaster, the President may increase the number of days of disaster service leave that the employee may use under Section B, if an increase would be in the best interest of the citizens of the State.

D. Employment Status for Purposes of Certain Claims

For purposes of Worker's Compensation and the Maryland Tort Claims Act, while an employee is using Disaster Service Leave, the employee is deemed not to be a State employee.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES:

Each President shall identify their designee(s) as appropriate for this policy, develop procedures as necessary to implement this policy, communicate this policy and applicable procedures to their institutional community, and post it on the institutional website.