



Rogers Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Title:	Authorized Leave		
Policy Number:	109	Volume:	Administration
Approved By:	Tom Jenkins	Last Updated:	July 2012
CFAI Reference:	7E.2	CAAS Reference:	106.02.02
Revision Summary:	Created – April 2010 Formatted – May 2012 Benefits and Accrual Updated – July 2012		

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for employees in scheduling vacation and other authorized leave. Systematic scheduling and policy is necessary to reduce the occurrence of denied requests and overtime expenditure to maintain minimum staffing levels.

POLICY

Vacation Scheduling

Vacation scheduling is the responsibility of the employee. The employee is responsible for managing their vacation hours and maintaining awareness of hours available and scheduled.

A. Seniority-Based Vacation Scheduling

Employees will be offered the opportunity to schedule vacation days prior to January 1 of each year. This opportunity will be by seniority, whereas the most senior employee on each shift shall have precedence on which vacation days they desire to take. All requests for seniority-based vacation scheduling shall be submitted to the Battalion Chief by December 20th of each year. The Battalion Chief is responsible for gathering vacation requests and assigning them the appropriate vacation days based on seniority. Members may not place more than their annual rate of accrual on the seniority-based vacation calendar. If a member does not receive a day that they requested due to all of the leave spots previously being filled, the Battalion Chief will give that member the opportunity to select an alternate date prior to scheduling the vacation days for the next member on the seniority list.

B. High-Priority Vacation Days

It is recognized that certain dates throughout the year are highly sought after as vacation days; these dates are primarily located around the major holidays. In order to ensure fairness in distributing vacation time on these high-priority days

the following system will be used when one of these dates becomes available during the year due to a member removing their name from the leave calendar. Upon receiving a request to remove a name the Battalion Chief will consult the Seniority Vacation Scheduling forms (RFD Form 1) that were turned in the previous December in order to determine the next most-senior member who was denied the date under Seniority-Based Vacation Scheduling. That member will be given the first opportunity to accept or decline taking the date as vacation. Should that member decline to take the day as vacation the Battalion Chief will then offer the date to the next most-senior member who was denied the date under Seniority-Based Vacation Scheduling. The Battalion Chief will continue through the Seniority Vacation Scheduling forms in this manner until the leave calendar vacancy is filled. If all members who had previously requested the date decline to take it as vacation the date will be left open and it will be handled as described in Section C of this policy.

The days that will be treated as high-priority days will include the following holidays that are recognized by the City of Rogers: New Years Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and the days that immediately precede and follow these days.

C. Additional Vacation Scheduling

Employees can also schedule vacation days not scheduled by the seniority-based system. These requests are subject to availability with consideration for training requests and other non-seniority vacation days that have been scheduled. Employees requesting vacation leave not scheduled by the seniority system shall contact their Battalion Chief no later than the end of shift prior to the desired leave date. All requests made with less than 48 hours notice are deemed denied. The RFD may utilize available leave slots for training or department business as approved by the Fire Chief. When scheduling in the non-seniority based system, it is permissible to utilize 12-hour blocks (0700-1900 or 1900 - 0700). Probationary employees may request vacation under the additional vacation scheduling system so long as the requested dates occur after their one-year anniversary.

D. Use of Leave Slots for Worker's Compensation and Family Medical Leave Act Requests

Available leave slots may be utilized for Worker's Compensation (WC) and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requests. The blocking of available leave slots for these unplanned absences should occur at the time of paperwork processing. Vacation and other leave already scheduled on the calendars maintained by the Battalion Chief(s) shall not be removed for WC and FMLA. However, any available slots may be blocked to prevent unnecessary overtime expenditures.

Determining Criteria

The criteria used to approve or deny a request for leave centers around how the operations of the Fire Department will be impacted. As a general guideline, the following rules shall apply:

- Four members released per shift maximum
- After January 1, all requests for vacation on any date other than those listed as High-Priority Days in Section B are by first come first served, not seniority
- Training, vacation, and city business carry equal weight in scheduling. One will not be cancelled to allow for another.

Accrual Guidelines

All members will accrue vacation hours as time is worked. Members shall be entitled to use vacation as they earn it. Probationary members are subject to strict scrutiny for vacation usage during the first six (6) months of employment. Members may "roll over" an unlimited amount of vacation up to two times their annual rate of accrual. Members possessing vacation time in excess of two times their annual rate of accrual will have the amount in excess voided each anniversary date.