



PAID TIME OFF (PTO) Policy

EFFECTIVE: 3.16.26

Employees have ten (10) paid days each school year to use for Paid Time Off (PTO) such as medical appointments, illness, personal leave, etc. Employees also are granted the following nine (9) paid holidays: Indigenous Peoples' Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, and Presidents Day.

Religious Holidays

As an inclusive workplace, Connected Circles supports all employees in their practice of religious beliefs federal and state law. As such, Connected Circles provides reasonable accommodations for employees' sincerely held religious beliefs unless doing so creates an "undue hardship" - a substantial burden - on the operation of the school.

As this pertains to PTO, employees may use PTO for religious holidays that fall during a work day when doing so will not create substantial burden for the school. When an employee requests PTO for a religious observance, every attempt will be made to accommodate that request.

Vacation

Employees are encouraged to schedule personal appointments outside the workday when possible. Employees are required to fill out leave request forms in advance of the time needed and submit to the Executive Director or designee. Last minute requests make it difficult to support our students in a way that is required by the Agency of Education and in the student's best interest.

Employees are strongly encouraged to take personal vacation time during school vacations/shut down to assist the school's commitment to being consistent for students. Requests for personal vacation time during normal school hours may be granted on rare occasions and only at the discretion of the Executive Director. Requests for time off the day before and/or the day after a school holiday or vacation will be denied.

Personal Leaves of Absence

Personal leaves of absence may be available in certain situations. The availability and the duration of such leaves will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account factors including, but not limited to, anticipated work load and staffing, the reason for leave, the employee's work history and length of service with Connected Circles, and any and all other factors deemed relevant by the Executive Director. Typically, personal leaves of absence are granted without pay. The Executive Director may determine it is in the best interest of Connected Circles to grant a personal leave of absence with pay in rare circumstances.

Sick Time

Employees who are unable to report to work due to the illness must notify their supervisor and the Executive Director before 7a.m. on the day in question. In the case of illness or emergencies that prevent submission of a leave request prior to absence, employees should submit the leave request the day they return from time off.

Sick Time Bank

On rare occasions, an employee may exhaust their PTO because of an unexpected illness, injury, or family emergency. Connected Circles will make a pool of 10 sick days available each year for employees who have exhausted their PTO. The Executive Director will select three staff members to form an ad-hoc committee whenever a decision about the use of Sick Time Bank days must be made.

To request PTO using the Sick Time Bank, an employee must confer with the Executive Director and must provide a note from a medical professional or other appropriate official substantiating their need for the time. Once the Executive Director has verified the necessity for the request, the ad hoc committee will review the request and recommend to the Executive Director how much time to allocate from the Sick Time Bank for the specified staff member.

The Executive Director, on receiving the recommendation of the ad hoc committee, will then make a final decision and inform the employee and the Business Manager.

Extended School Year Program and Leave Time (ESY)

There is no need to complete leave request forms during the Extended School Year (ESY) program as employees complete timesheets during that time. Employees are expected to communicate **with the Director if they need to take time off. Hourly employees do not have PTO during the ESY.**

Accrued Paid Time Off

It is the policy of Connected Circles to allow for a roll-over of a max of thirty (30) PTO days at the end of every school year. Accrued and/or unused paid time off will not be compensated when employees are separated from employment.

Excess PTO Notification

Every effort will be made to notify employees when they are getting close to running out of PTO and of the process involved when/if PTO has been exhausted.

PTO will be reconciled at the end of each month during the school year and pay will be adjusted to reflect any time taken in excess of PTO. An email notification will be sent to the employee with that adjustment.

If an employee continues to exceed their allocated Paid Time Off (PTO) and the Executive Director determines that the absences are negatively affecting student relationship, **access to education, and staff morale, disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal may be taken.**

OTHER FORMS OF LEAVE:

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Because of the school's small size, we are not required to comply with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). However, we recognize that our employees may occasionally need to take unpaid leave to care for a new child, to care for a seriously ill family member, to attend to an employee's own medical issues, or to attend to issues relating to a member's military service.

If you anticipate that you might need time off to deal with family and medical issues, please speak with the Executive Director. Connected Circles seriously considers every request on a case-by-case basis.

For disability-related leave requests, the Executive Director will engage in an interactive process with the employee to determine if a leave is the most appropriate accommodation. The employee must provide a certification from their health care provider to the school to support a leave for medical reasons.

To be eligible an employee must have been employed by Connected Circles for at least twelve (12) months and worked an average of thirty (30) or more hours per week.

Workers' Compensation Leave

Any employee who is unable to work due to a work-related injury or illness and who is eligible for Workers' Compensation benefits will be provided an unpaid leave for the period required.

Jury Duty

All employees are eligible for jury duty leave. The employee must bring in the jury duty notice as soon as it is received so that appropriate arrangements can be made to cover their duties. Employees are required to call in or report for work on those days or parts of days when their presence is not required at jury duty.

Military Duty

Connected Circles will comply with all state and federal requirements relating to military leave. The employee must bring in the appropriate documentation regarding training and/or deployments within fourteen (14) days so that appropriate arrangements can be made to cover their duties.

Bereavement Leave

Connected Circles recognizes the importance of family and the need for time to grieve and attend to personal matters following the loss of a loved one.

All full-time and part-time employees are eligible for bereavement leave upon completion of their Introductory Period (90 days). Employees may take up to three (3) days of paid bereavement leave per occurrence. This leave applies to the death of an immediate family member, which includes a spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or any legal dependent.

Employees should notify their Direct Supervisor or the Executive Director as soon as possible to ensure student coverage. While we respect your privacy during this time, the school may request documentation (such as an obituary or memorial service program) for administrative records.

If an employee requires more than three days due to travel or personal necessity, they may request to use accrued regular PTO, or take additional time as unpaid leave, subject to approval by the Executive Director.

Alternative Work Arrangement

From time to time, an employee may have a conflict with the standard hours of the work day (8:15-3:30). In the event that a different arrangement is needed, it is the responsibility of the employee to request a change using the Alternative Work Arrangement Form. The form requires a clear description of the needed requested alternate work arrangement, approval of the Direct Supervisor, and approval of the Executive Director. Supervisors and the Executive Director will consider the impact of the requested arrangement on students, co-workers, and the organization. If approved, a signed copy of the request will memorialize the new arrangement and be placed in the employee's personnel file.