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412 Paid Time Off (PTO) and Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST)

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1. Purpose

Three Rivers Montessori recognizes that employees may require time away from work due to illness, family needs, personal matters, or rest and renewal. This policy provides paid time off in a manner that supports employee well-being while ensuring instructional continuity, operational stability, and fiscal responsibility.

This policy complies with Minnesota's Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) law.

2. Definitions

- A. Contract Year: The employee's defined duty year as described below.
- B. Full-Time Employee: An employee regularly scheduled to work 30 hours or more per week.
- C. Licensed Staff: Employees holding a current Minnesota teaching or administrative license.
- D. Support Staff: Full-time non-licensed employees, including paraprofessionals, administrative staff, and other support personnel.

3. Contract Period Definitions

PTO applies only during an employee's active contract period.

- A. Licensed Staff: Licensed staff contracts operate on a twelve-month basis beginning July 1 and ending June 30 annually.
- B. Support Staff and Hourly Employees: Support staff and hourly employee contracts operate on a school-year basis, typically beginning no earlier than August 15 and ending no later than June 5, based on the approved school calendar.

PTO is intended for use only during the employee's active contract period and does not apply outside those dates.

4. Front-Loaded PTO Structure

Three Rivers Montessori utilizes a front-loaded PTO model. PTO does not accrue and does not carry over between contract years. PTO is provided in full at the beginning of the employee's contract year for immediate use upon hire.

5. PTO Allocation

A. Licensed Staff

Full-time licensed staff shall receive annually:

1. 6 Sick Days(48 hours, ESST compliant)
2. 4 (32 hours) Vacation/Personal Days

Total: 10 PTO days (80 hours) per contract year

B. Full-Time Support Staff

Full-time support staff shall receive annually:

1. 6 Sick Days (48 hours, ESST compliant)
2. 2 (8 hour) Vacation/Personal Days

Total: 8 PTO days (64 hours) per contract year

C. Part Time Support Staff (under 30 hours weekly)

Part Time support staff shall receive annually:

1. 6 Sick Days (48 hours, ESST compliant)

Proration:

Employees hired after the start of the contract year shall receive PTO and ESST frontloaded on a prorated basis based on start date and remaining contract period.

6. Sick Leave (ESST)

The six (6) sick days provided annually satisfy Minnesota Earned Sick and Safe Time requirements.

- A. Sick leave may be used for any qualifying ESST purpose, including but not limited to:
- B. The employee's mental or physical illness, injury, medical care, or preventive care
- C. Care of a family member with illness or medical needs
- D. Absences related to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking
- E. Public health emergencies or school closures

- F. Funeral attendance or related financial/legal matters following a family member's death
- G. Any other purpose permitted under Minnesota ESST law

Employees are not required to disclose the specific medical condition but must provide sufficient information to determine that the leave qualifies under ESST.

7. Documentation

The School may request documentation for absences of two (2) or more consecutive workdays, consistent with Minnesota law.

Sick leave use consistent with ESST shall not result in disciplinary action or retaliation.

8. Vacation/Personal Leave

Vacation/personal leave may be used for personal reasons including travel, appointments, rest, or other non-medical needs.

Approval Requirements

- A. Vacation/personal leave:
 - 1. Must be requested in advance
 - 2. Is subject to administrative approval
 - 3. Is granted based on operational and instructional needs

Consecutive Day Limitation

To ensure continuity of instruction and school operations, vacation/personal leave is generally limited to:

- A. No more than three (3) consecutive workdays, unless otherwise approved in advance by the Executive Director.

Holiday and Break Protection

- A. Vacation/personal leave:
 - 1. May not be taken immediately before or after school holidays or scheduled breaks without prior administrative approval.
 - 2. May be limited during high-impact instructional periods.

Operational Discretion

Approval may be denied when necessary to maintain adequate staffing and program continuity.

9. PTO Usage Guidelines

- A. PTO must be used in full-day increments unless otherwise approved.
- B. Salaried employees using one full day will be charged eight (8) hours.

- C. PTO may not be used to extend employment beyond contract dates without written approval.
- D. PTO may not be used to create an early departure or delayed return from a contract period without administrative approval.
- E. Employees are expected to use PTO responsibly and in good faith.

10. End-of-Year PTO Payout

- A. At the end of each contract year:
 - 1. Unused ESST will be paid out at the employee's hourly equivalent rate.
 - 2. PTO does not carry over to the following contract year.
 - 3. ESST and PTO balances reset at the beginning of each new contract year.

This front-loaded and payout model eliminates carryover liability and supports fiscal sustainability.

11. Separation from Employment

- A. If an employee separates from employment before the end of the contract year:
 - 1. ESST will be prorated based on the portion of the contract year completed.
 - 2. Any unused prorated ESST will be paid out.
 - 3. Employees may not use ESST or PTO to extend employment beyond resignation date without approval.
- B. If an employee is terminated neither ESST or PTO will be paid out.

12. Administration

The Executive Director or designee shall administer this policy. Three Rivers Montessori reserves the right to interpret and apply this policy consistent with applicable law and operational needs.

13. Compliance with Minnesota ESST Law

This policy is designed to meet Minnesota Earned Sick and Safe Time requirements through:

- A. Front-loading of ESST hours
- B. Annual payout of unused time
- C. No carryover requirement

In the event of any conflict between this policy and applicable law, state law shall control.