

Release Time for Training

POLICY

University supervisors may release employees from normal work duties to attend training programs which promote professional development or improve job skills.

Definition

Release time is the time when an employee is released from normal work duties and compensated at the regular rate of pay to attend an approved training program.

Release Hours Per Year

An eligible full-time employee may use up to 96 hours of release time per fiscal year for training purposes. An eligible part-time employee may use hours of release time prorated according to his or her FTE percentage, e.g., a 50 percent FTE employee would be eligible for 48 hours of release time per fiscal year.

Training Plan

Prior to approving more than 20 hours of release time, a supervisor may ask the employee to submit a training plan outlining his or her development goals. An employee may use up to 20 hours of release time annually without providing information regarding how the training promotes professional development or improves job skills.

Applicability

Employees

An individual appointed to a University position is eligible to use release time.

The following classes of employees *are not* eligible to use release time:

- Employees with appointments totaling less than 50% FTE
- Probationary employees
- Employees paid solely on an hourly or piece basis

NOTE: The above classes of employees may attend directed training.

Programs

Departments may grant release time for in-service programs offered through any University unit; e.g., Human Resource Services (HRS), Environmental Health and Safety, Information Technology.

Departments may grant release time for programs offered through a reputable non-WSU organization if the training promotes professional or job skill development.

Release Time for Training

Online Learning Resource Departments may grant release time to employees for taking online training courses through the Online Learning Resource. The Online Learning Resource is an training and development resource, provided through the HRS website, which is available to all current WSU employees and students.

The University does not reimburse hours spent taking courses through the Online Learning Resource outside of regular work hours unless the training is required or directed by the supervisor.

Directed Training Any training required by the employee's supervisor is considered directed training. The supervisor determines whether or not hours devoted to directed training may be included as part of the employee's annual release time total.

Outside Work Hours Hours spent attending training outside of regular work hours are not to be included as part of the employee's annual release time total.

The University does not reimburse such training hours as extra compensation unless the training is required or directed by the supervisor.

Academic Classes Hours spent attending academic classes taken under the tuition fee waiver program described in *BPPM 60.70* are not to be included as part of the employee's annual release time total. Release time hours may not be used for academic classes.

REQUEST PROCESS

Employees are to obtain supervisory approval prior to registering for training.

Denials

A supervisor may deny a request for release time. Reasons for denial include:

- Organizational and work-related needs
- Personnel coverage
- Seasonal work commitments
- Work-related emergencies
- Employee has used up all eligible release time hours for the fiscal year.

Release Time for Training

Denials (cont.)

An employee may report patterns of repeated denials when a supervisor does not provide justification for denials or make alternate arrangements. The employee reports such cases to the appointing authority for their area, or HRS; telephone 509-335-4521.

TRACKING RELEASE TIME

The employing department is responsible for tracking hours of release time for departmental employees.

REPORTING TRAINING TIME

If an attendance roster is not circulated in class, report training hours to HRS (see *BPPM* 60.71).