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Policies Regarding Pay and Benefits While on Military Leave and Military Training

The City of Melrose, in compliance with City Ordinances, MA General Laws and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA), is providing the following information relative to compensation and benefits in the event you are called to military duty.

Additional information may be found on www.esgr.org and www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve

Compensation during Active Duty

The City of Melrose pays employees ordered to active duty the difference between their military salary and city salary for a period of time not to exceed six months. City salary is defined as base pay excluding all stipends. If a holiday falls during the six month period, the employee will receive holiday pay as defined in their respective Collective Bargaining Agreement. For purposes of Military Leave pay, base pay includes the Quinn bill for members of the Police Department. We also review base pay when calculating military pay. If an employee's military base pay is higher than their City base pay, the first six months will be unpaid; however, the employee remains eligible for benefits for that six month period. *Active service shall not include active duty for training in the Army National Guard or Air National Guard, or active duty for training as a reservist in the armed forces of the United States – see Compensation during Military Training below.*

Compensation during Military Training

While attending Training, compensation will be paid in accordance with Chapter 33, Section 59 of the Massachusetts General Laws. If an employee attends Military Training during the Federal Fiscal year or the State fiscal year they are entitled to a maximum of 17 days. If they attend training during the period which overlaps between the Federal and State fiscal years they are entitled to a maximum of 34 days. For payroll purposes this means from January 1 – June 30 they will be paid up to 17 days, if they attend Training from July 1 – September 30, which is the overlap period between the Federal and State fiscal years, they will be paid up to 34 days and if they attend Training from October 1 – December 31, they will be paid up to a maximum of 17 days. During any twelve month period of time an employee is entitled to a maximum of 34 paid Training days. The twelve month period begins with the initial training assignment.

What you must do prior to taking Active Duty or Training Leave:

- Follow "Outprocessing Checklist for Leave"
- Forward "Notice to Employer-Employee's Military Active Duty Absence" to your supervisor and HR. Inform the City about your decision to use accrued paid time off to extend your city paid leave and your decision to continue Life and Health Insurance Coverage.
- Forward copies of your military orders to your supervisor and HR. Employees will receive compensation and benefits they are entitled to only if they present a valid and current copy of their active duty/training orders to their Department Head before being activated.

What you need to do: Submit “Notice to Employer Military Active Duty Absence” to the Retirement Office.

Questions? Call the Retirement Office at 781-979-4150 or 4151.

Years of Service/Seniority

Employees on military leave who return to work are entitled to the same seniority and benefits they had on the date the leave began, plus the additional seniority and rights to benefits they would have attained if they remained continuously employed.

Health Insurance for the first six months of Active duty:

- The City continues to contribute to the premium for health insurance. If you are being paid, we will continue to deduct the employee portion from your paycheck. If you are unpaid, you can pay by check for the employee cost.
- At the end of the six months, you (and your dependents, if applicable) can:
 - Option 1:** Choose to enroll in TRICARE, the military’s insurance plan or,
 - Option 2:** You can remain a member of the City’s plan under the same guidelines and definitions of COBRA - you are responsible for paying 102% of the premium on a monthly basis and may remain enrolled in the plan for a maximum of eighteen (18) months. If you use accrued paid time off, you will continue to have the employee premium for insurance deducted on a weekly basis until you become unpaid. You can choose to enroll in TRICARE immediately as long as your orders are for more than 30 days.

While on **Military Training** an employee’s health benefits and deductions will continue. If on Military Training Leave for more than 30 consecutive days, please see option 1 and 2 listed directly above.

What you need to do: Submit “Notice to Employer Military Active Duty Absence” to HR.

Questions? Call HR at 781-979-4145. For more information on TRICARE go to their website at www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve.

Life Insurance for the first six months of Active duty: If employees are receiving City pay, the Life Insurance Policy will remain the same. When you are on unpaid leave, you have the right to convert to an individual plan for the remainder of your military duty. Once you are reinstated you can reenroll in the Life Insurance Plan.

What you need to do: Submit “Notice to Employer Military Active Duty Absence” to HR.

Questions? Call HR at 781-979-4145.

Flexible Spending Account

The IRS allows for several options. Call HR at 781-979-4145.

Reemployment

An employee who has been honorably discharged will be reemployed in the position the employee would have held if continuously employed. If, however, the employee has served 91 days or more, employers have the option to offer a job equivalent in seniority, status and pay to the job the employee would have held if continuously employed.

What you need to do: Present military discharge papers and “Notification Letter to Employer-Employee’s Military Active Duty Return” to HR as soon as possible. The City of Melrose follows the Rules of Reemployment as defined in USERRA. Employees are also encouraged to become familiar with these regulations.