

ARTICLE 13 - VACATION LEAVE ADMINISTRATION

- 13.1 General Policies and Requirements.** Employees are encouraged to utilize vacation time ~~at regular rate of pay~~ on a scheduled basis for rest and relaxation. Vacation opportunities will be defined on a unit basis, based on employees' annual allotments (see 13.5.1), and shall be posted ~~annually~~ **prior to each vacation block** on the unit and distributed equitably throughout the year. ~~If operationally feasible, the unit's~~ **On a unit-by-unit basis, total vacation allotment shall be calculated in a standardized manner prior to the approval process for each vacation block and shall be reviewed and approved by UBNPC. The Employer will make a reasonable effort to have approve at least one nurse off per shift, rounded up if necessary.** The Employer shall distribute vacation opportunities considering recommendations from the Unit Based Nurse Practice Committees (UBNPCs) for meeting operational needs. ~~The UBNPC will determine and provide~~ **There will be** a written definition of staffing requirements to meet operational needs posted in each unit. UBNPCs shall make available to all nurses a summary document regarding vacation processes reviewed and approved by each UBNPC.
- 13.2 Submission of Vacation Requests.** Vacation requests must be submitted in accordance with the Employer's electronic system. **All vacation requests must include greater than 0 hours of VCN.**
- 13.3 Vacation Time During First Six Months of Employment.** Employees whose FTE status is at least 0.4 may use a maximum of **two (2) shifts** ~~sixteen (16) hours~~ of accrued vacation leave during the first six (6) months of service. In the event of shift cancellation or curtailment, however, this maximum shall not apply.
- 13.4 In-Block Vacation Requests.** Employees shall submit requests in writing for time off in a "block" process. UBNPCs will have the right to create unit-based systems to increase visibility into vacation requests that allow current requests to be visible to all employees. The blocks are as follows:

Block One: February, March, April and May. Requests must be submitted on or before October 1. The manager will provide a response by October 31.

Block Two: June, July, August and September. Requests must be submitted on or before February 1. The manager will provide a response by February 28.

Block Three: October, November, December and January. Requests must be submitted on or before June 1. The manager will provide a response by June 30.

It is the manager's responsibility to schedule and obtain coverage for approved in-block and out-of-block vacation requests. **Coverage for vacation and other approved leaves shall be arranged using all available resources to support the nurse's work within the scope of the covering employee's practice and the boundary of their role. Nurses are not expected to work while on vacation.** ~~follow the unit's process for patient care needs; be of a nature that the work normally completed by the nurse(s) on leave shall be completed during the time the nurse is away from work, with the exception of any project work that can be paused — but does not interfere with patient care — for the duration of that leave.~~

13.4 Order of Filling of In-Block Requests. The order of approval for in-block requests for each 4-month period designated in Section 13.4 is as follows :

- a. **Annual allotment.** First priority for scheduling **in-block** vacation requests shall be given to employees who have requested time off in amounts that do not exceed their cumulative annual allotment. It is the obligation of the Employer to provide employees with the opportunity to take their annual allotted hours. **Annual allotments reset on February 1st every year.** Annual allotments are as follows for full-time employees (prorated based on FTE status for part-time employees):

Years of Service	Annual Allotment
0 months through 5 th year	~~212~~ 192 hours
After 5 th year through 10 th year	~~236~~ 216 hours
After 10 th year through 15 th year	~~260~~ 240 hours
After 15 th year through 20 th year	~~284~~ 264 hours
After 20 th year	~~308~~ 288 hours

- a. **Denied in-block. Second priority for scheduling in-block vacation requests shall be given to e**Employees whose in-block request for annual allotment time was denied **and** shall be given a seven-day opportunity to select from remaining available vacation time within that block, before requests for time exceeding an employee's annual allotment are granted. Remaining available vacation (given to those that were denied in-block requests) shall be decided based on seniority for submissions made in the same seven days.

b. **Extended vacation requests.** The third ~~next~~ priority for scheduling in-block vacation requests shall be given to employees eligible to make extended vacation requests, which are defined as requests for consecutive vacation time beyond an employee's annual allotment. To be eligible to make an extended vacation request, an employee must have ten (10) years or greater seniority, and must not have been granted extended vacation in the past three (3) years. Approved extended vacation requests will not prevent other nurses from taking their annual allotment. Extended vacation requests will be granted based on unit operational needs.

c. **Other requests exceeding annual allotment.**
Employees may be granted additional vacation, in accordance with unit operational needs, as long as it is not in conflict with annual allotment requests. Any such additional vacation that is granted will not be extended from one block to another.

13.51.1 Alternative scheduling. Each work unit or department shall have the opportunity once each calendar year to develop, by consensus of the employees on the unit and the manager, creative methods of vacation scheduling as an alternative to Sections 13.4 – ~~a-d~~ 13.6. For units that have a Unit Based Nurse Practice Committee (UBNPC), the methods will be developed with the participation of the UBNPC. Units that exercise this option will bring their vacation process alternative to the AURN/Management Cooperative Committee for discussion and review.

13.51.1 Remaining available vacation time. Block calendars showing approved vacations and remaining available vacation time shall be posted in each workplace on or before October 31, February 28 and June 30 for the respective blocks.

13.6 Application of Seniority. Employees are encouraged to discuss and resolve vacation request conflicts, and unit managers are encouraged to facilitate such discussions. In-block vacation requests shall be granted on the basis of seniority per 18.1 except as provided in this article. Employees whose annual allotment request has been approved for the end of one block and the beginning of another, however, shall not be displaced by a more senior employee requesting vacation for the next block.

13.6.1 Option superseding seniority. Employees may exercise an option superseding seniority once every other calendar year for requests made during "prime time," (in 13.7), and once every calendar year

for requests during “non-prime time.” Employees choosing to exercise this option must so indicate on the leave request form. If it turns out that such an employee did not need to exercise the option to receive the requested time off, the employee will not be deemed to have exercised the option. Seniority will be utilized when multiple employees exercise the superseding seniority option by the relevant in-block request deadline.

- 13.6.2 Special circumstances requests.** An employee may, no more than once every five (5) calendar years, exercise their option superseding seniority by requesting vacation time that is needed more than one block in advance before the request deadline for the block that precedes the one in which the dates occur, but within two (2) years of the request for a special circumstance (~~a wedding or graduation~~). This option will be deemed exercised at the time the vacation is granted. Employees whose request is approved shall not be displaced by an employee subsequently requesting vacation for the same time. Nor may an employee whose request is approved contemporaneously exercise any option under Section 13.6.1 for the same block. Employees who withdraw their special circumstance request prior to the in-block deadline for the affected block will be deemed not to have exercised this option. Upon completion of the vacation, the next five (5) year cycle begins.

- 13.7 Prime Time.** For purposes of this article, “prime time” is defined as follows:

- a. March 15 through April 15 (spring);
- b. June 15 through September 15 (summer);
- c. The fourth (4th) week in November (fall); and
- d. December 15 through January 1 (winter).

- 13.8 Out-of-Block Requests (OBR).** Requests for time off submitted after block deadlines shall be granted based on available vacation time slots reflected in the block calendars. They shall be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis, by date and time of receipt of the written request. In case of a tie, priority will first be given to an employee who has not used their annual allotment, and thereafter by seniority. Out-of-block requests must be submitted in accordance with unit protocol and received at least two (2) weeks prior to the posting of the affected schedule. The Employer shall respond in accordance with unit protocol as soon as possible, not to exceed two (2) weeks during non-in-block time lines or 30 days during in-block time lines after the request is received. If the person to whom the nurse submitted an out-of-block request does not respond within the timeline above or denies the request, then the nurse can elevate the matter to the appropriate director or their designee (other than the person who denied the request).

UBNPC may determine for equity purposes that OBR requests do not apply to allotment based on a majority in unit vote. Such determination shall be in writing and made visible to the unit.

- 13.9 Requests After Posting of Schedule.** It is the nurse's responsibility to obtain coverage for vacation requests after the schedule has been posted. While it is the nurse's responsibility to provide coverage for their shift, it is not the nurse's responsibility to fill all schedule vacancies on the unit during the period requested off. Prior to obtaining coverage, the nurse must review their request with the manager or designee (in person, via email, ~~or~~ through Employer's timekeeping system, **or through the unit's specified process**) to determine whether operational needs would be satisfied (subject to the limits above) if the request were approved. Schedule adjustments resulting from such requests may not lead to overtime. Upon agreement by the manager, the employee may seek to obtain coverage either by trading shifts with another nurse or by recruiting a part-time nurse or a resource nurse to pick up additional shift(s). The manager may also choose to approve time off without requiring the employee to obtain coverage.
- 13.10 Cancellation of Vacation Time.** The Employer may not cancel vacation time that has been approved, except in cases of emergency. If, however, an employee does not have sufficient or projected vacation or compensatory time accruals at the time the schedule containing the time off requested is posted (excluding accruals used due to any cancellation or curtailment), the employee, after having been consulted by management, shall have their vacation time off adjusted to reflect available accruals. If an employee cancels scheduled time off after the schedule is posted, the employee shall be placed back on the schedule for the relevant time period into unfilled shifts. If an employee cancels their own vacation time or does not have sufficient vacation/compensatory time accruals after an in-block request has been approved – the approved hours will still be calculated towards their use of annual allotment. UBNPCs may recommend other procedures **that do not contradict contract language**.
- 13.11 Encumbered Time.** Hours approved for vacation shall be deemed encumbered, which means that the employee may not otherwise use such hours except in the event of an FMLA/OFLA qualified absence, shift cancellation or shift curtailment.
- 13.12 Appeal of Leave Request Denials.** Leave request denials may be grieved using an expedited procedure (see Article 22.5).