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TITLE 5--ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

CHAPTER I--OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

PART 630--ABSENCE AND LEAVE--Table of Contents

Subpart L--Family and Medical Leave

Sec. 630.1201 Purpose, applicability, and administration.

Source: 58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, unless otherwise noted.

(a) Purpose. This subpart provides regulations to implement sections 6381 through 6387 of title 5, United States Code. This subpart must be read together with those sections of law. Sections 6381 through 6387 of title 5, United States Code, provide a standard approach to providing family and medical leave to Federal employees by prescribing an entitlement to a total of 12 administrative workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for certain family and medical needs, as specified in Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part.

(b) Applicability. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, this subpart applies to any employee who--

(i) Is defined as an ``employee'' under 5 U.S.C. 6301(2), excluding employees covered under paragraph (b)(2) of this section; and

(ii) Has completed at least 12 months of service (not required to be 12 recent or consecutive months) as--

(A) An employee, as defined under 5 U.S.C. 6301(2), excluding any service as an employee under paragraph (b)(2) of this section;

(B) An employee of the Veterans Health Administration appointed under title 38, United States Code, in occupations listed in 38 U.S.C. 7401(1);

(C) A ``teacher'' or an individual holding a ``teaching position,'' as defined in section 901 of title 20, United States Code; or

(D) An employee identified in section 2105(c) of title 5, United States Code, who is paid from nonappropriated funds.

(2) This subpart does not apply to--

(i) An individual employed by the government of the District of Columbia;

(ii) An employee serving under a temporary appointment with a time limitation of 1 year or less;

(iii) An intermittent employee, as defined in 5 CFR 340.401(c); or

(iv) Any employee covered by Title I or Title V of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (Pub. L. 103-3, February 5, 1993). The Department of Labor has issued regulations implementing Title I at 29 CFR part 825.

(3) For the purpose of applying sections 6381 through 6387 of title 5, United States Code--

(i) An employee of the Veterans Health Administration appointed under title 38, United States Code, in occupations listed in 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) is to be governed by the terms and conditions of regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

(ii) A ``teacher'' or an individual holding a ``teaching position,''

as defined in section 901 of title 20, United States Code, shall be governed by the terms and conditions of regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense; and

(iii) An employee identified in section 2105(c) of title 5, United States Code, who is paid from nonappropriated funds shall be governed by the terms and conditions of regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Transportation, as appropriate.

(4) The regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Secretary of Defense, or Secretary of Transportation under paragraph (b)(3) of this section shall, to the extent appropriate, be consistent with the regulations prescribed in this subpart and the regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor to carry out Title I of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 at 29 CFR part 825.

(c) Administration. The head of an agency having employees subject to this subpart is responsible for the proper administration of this subpart.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 64451, Dec. 5, 1996; 65 FR 26486, May 8, 2000]

Sec. 630.1202 Definitions.

In this subpart:

Accrued leave has the meaning given that term in Sec. 630.201 of this part.

Accumulated leave has the meaning given that term in Sec. 630.201 of this part.

Administrative workweek has the meaning given that term in Sec. 610.102 of this chapter.

Adoption refers to a legal process in which an individual becomes the legal parent of another's child. The source of an adopted child--e.g., whether from a licensed placement agency or otherwise--is not a factor in determining eligibility for leave under this subpart.

Employee means an individual to whom this subpart applies.

Essential functions means the fundamental job duties of the employee's position, as defined in 29 CFR 1630.2(n). An employee who must be absent from work to receive medical treatment for a serious health condition is considered to be unable to perform the essential functions of the position during the absence for treatment.

Family and medical leave means an employee's entitlement to 12 administrative workweeks of unpaid leave for certain family and medical needs, as prescribed under sections 6381 through 6387 of title 5, United States Code.

Foster care means 24-hour care for children in substitution for, and away from, their parents or guardian. Such placement is made by or with the agreement of the State as a result of a voluntary agreement by the parent or guardian that the child be removed from the home, or pursuant to a judicial determination of the necessity for foster care, and involves agreement between the State and foster family to take the child. Although foster care may be with relatives of the child, State action is involved in the removal of the child from parental custody.

Health care provider means

(1) A licensed Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Osteopathy or a physician who is serving on active duty in the uniformed services and is designated by the uniformed service to conduct examinations under this subpart;

(2) Any health care provider recognized by the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program or who is licensed or certified under Federal or State law to provide the service in question;

(3) A health care provider as defined in paragraph (2) of this

definition who practices in a country other than the United States, who is authorized to practice in accordance with the laws of that country, and who is performing within the scope of his or her practice as defined under such law;

(4) A Christian Science practitioner listed with the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts; or

(5) A Native American, including an Eskimo, Aleut, and Native Hawaiian, who is recognized as a traditional healing practitioner by native traditional religious leaders who practices traditional healing methods as believed, expressed, and exercised in Indian religions of the American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and Native Hawaiians, consistent with Public Law 95-314, August 11, 1978 (92 Stat. 469), as amended by Public Law 103-344, October 6, 1994 (108 Stat. 3125).

In loco parentis refers to the situation of an individual who has day-to-day responsibility for the care and financial support of a child or, in the case of an employee, who had such responsibility for the employee when the employee was a child. A biological or legal relationship is not necessary.

Incapacity means the inability to work, attend school, or perform other regular daily activities because of a serious health condition or treatment for or recovery from a serious health condition.

Intermittent leave or leave taken intermittently means leave taken in separate blocks of time, rather than for one continuous period of time, and may include leave periods of 1 hour to several weeks. Leave may be taken for a period of less than 1 hour if agency policy provides for a minimum charge for leave of less than 1 hour under Sec. 630.206(a).

Leave without pay means an absence from duty in a nonpay status. Leave without pay may be taken only for those hours of duty comprising an employee's basic workweek.

Parent means a biological parent or an individual who stands or stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a son or daughter. This term does not include parents ``in law.''

Reduced leave schedule means a work schedule under which the usual number of hours of regularly scheduled work per workday or workweek of an employee is reduced. The number of hours by which the daily or weekly tour of duty is reduced are counted as leave for the purpose of this subpart.

Regularly scheduled has the meaning given that term in Sec. 610.102 of this chapter.

Regularly scheduled administrative work week has the meaning given that term in Sec. 610.102 of this chapter.

Serious health condition. (1) Serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves--

(i) Inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care; or

(ii) Continuing treatment by a health care provider that includes (but is not limited to) examinations to determine if there is a serious health condition and evaluations of such conditions if the examinations or evaluations determine that a serious health condition exists. Continuing treatment by a health care provider may include one or more of the following--

(A) A period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days, including any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves--

(1) Treatment two or more times by a health care provider, by a health care provider under the direct supervision of the affected individual's health care provider, or by a provider of health care

services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider; or

(2) Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider (e.g., a course of prescription medication or therapy requiring special equipment to resolve or alleviate the health condition).

(B) Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or childbirth, or for prenatal care, even if the affected individual does not receive active treatment from a health care provider during the period of incapacity or the period of incapacity does not last more than 3 consecutive calendar days.

(C) Any period of incapacity or treatment for such incapacity due to a chronic serious health condition that--

(1) Requires periodic visits for treatment by a health care provider or by a health care provider under the direct supervision of the affected individual's health care provider,

(2) Continues over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition); and

(3) May cause episodic rather than a continuing period of incapacity (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.). The condition is covered even if the affected individual does not receive active treatment from a health care provider during the period of incapacity or the period of incapacity does not last more than 3 consecutive calendar days.

(D) A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. The affected individual must be under the continuing supervision of, but need not be receiving active treatment by, a health care provider (e.g., Alzheimer's, severe stroke, or terminal stages of a disease).

(E) Any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery) by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider, either for restorative surgery after an accident or other injury or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity or more than 3 consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment (e.g., chemotherapy/radiation for cancer, physical therapy for severe arthritis, dialysis for kidney disease).

(2) (Serious health condition does not include routine physical, eye, or dental examinations; a regimen of continuing treatment that includes the taking of over-the-counter medications, bed-rest, exercise, and other similar activities that can be initiated without a visit to the health care provider; a condition for which cosmetic treatments are administered, unless inpatient hospital care is required or unless complications develop; or an absence because of an employee's use of an illegal substance, unless the employee is receiving treatment for substance abuse by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services on referral by a health care provider. Ordinarily, unless complications arise, the common cold, the flu, earaches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches (other than migraines), routine dental or orthodontia problems, and periodontal disease are not serious health conditions. Allergies, restorative dental or plastic surgery after an injury, removal of cancerous growth, or mental illness resulting from stress may be serious health conditions only if such conditions require inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider.)

Son or daughter means a biological, adopted, or foster child; a step child; a legal ward; or a child of a person standing *in loco parentis* who is--

(1) Under 18 years of age; or

(2) 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability. A son or daughter incapable of self-care requires active assistance or supervision to provide daily self-care in

three or more of the ``activities of daily living'' (ADL's) or ``instrumental activities of daily living'' (IADL's). Activities of daily living include adaptive activities such as caring appropriately for one's grooming and hygiene, bathing, dressing, and eating. Instrumental activities of daily living include cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking public transportation, paying bills, maintaining a residence, using the telephones and directories, using a post office, etc. A ``physical or mental disability'' refers to a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual as defined in 29 CFR 1630.2 (h), (i) and (j).

Spouse means an individual who is a husband or wife pursuant to a marriage that is a legal union between one man and one woman, including common law marriage between one man and one woman in States where it is recognized.

Tour of duty has the meaning given that term in Sec. 610.102 of this chapter.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 60 FR 67287-67288, Dec. 29, 1995; 61 FR 64451, Dec. 5, 1996; 65 FR 37240, June 13, 2000]

Sec. 630.1203 Leave entitlement.

(a) An employee shall be entitled to a total of 12 administrative workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

(1) The birth of a son or daughter of the employee and the care of such son or daughter;

(2) The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care;

(3) The care of a spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee, if such spouse, son, daughter, or parent has a serious health condition; or

(4) A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform any one or more of the essential functions of his or her position.

(b) An employee must invoke his or her entitlement to family and medical leave under paragraph (a) of this section, subject to the notification and medical certification requirements in Secs. 630.1206 and 630.1207. An employee may not retroactively invoke his or her entitlement to family and medical leave. However, if an employee and his or her personal representative are physically or mentally incapable of invoking the employee's entitlement to FMLA leave during the entire period in which the employee is absent from work for an FMLA-qualifying purpose under paragraph (a) of this section, the employee may retroactively invoke his or her entitlement to FMLA leave within 2 workdays after returning to work. In such cases, the incapacity of the employee must be documented by a written medical certification from a health care provider. In addition, the employee must provide documentation acceptable to the agency explaining the inability of his or her personal representative to contact the agency and invoke the employee's entitlement to FMLA leave during the entire period in which the employee was absent from work for an FMLA-qualifying purpose. An employee may take only the amount of family and medical leave that is necessary to manage the circumstances that prompted the need for leave under paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) The 12-month period referred to in paragraph (a) of this section begins on the date an employee first takes leave for a family or medical need specified in paragraph (a) of this section and continues for 12

months. An employee is not entitled to 12 additional workweeks of leave until the previous 12-month period ends and an event or situation occurs that entitles the employee to another period of family or medical leave. (This may include a continuation of a previous situation or circumstance.)

(d) The entitlement to leave under paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this section shall expire at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of birth or placement. Leave for a birth or placement must be concluded within this 12-month period. Leave taken under paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this section, may begin prior to or on the actual date of birth or placement for adoption or foster care, and the 12-month period, referred to in paragraph (a) of this section begins on that date.

(e) Leave under paragraph (a) of this section is available to full-time and part-time employees. A total of 12 administrative workweeks will be made available equally for a full-time or part-time employee in direct proportion to the number of hours in the employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek. The 12 administrative workweeks of leave will be calculated on an hourly basis and will equal 12 times the average number of hours in the employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek. If the number of hours in an employee's workweek varies from week to week, a weekly average of the hours scheduled over the 12 weeks prior to the date leave commences shall be used as the basis for this calculation. Any holidays authorized under 5 U.S.C. 6103 or by Executive order and nonworkdays established by Federal statute, Executive order, or administrative order that occur during the period in which the employee is on family and medical leave may not be counted toward the 12-week entitlement to family and medical leave.

(f) If the number of hours in an employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek is changed during the 12-month period of family and medical leave, the employee's entitlement to any remaining family and medical leave will be recalculated based on the number of hours in the employee's current regularly scheduled administrative workweek.

(g) Each agency shall inform its employees of their entitlements and responsibilities under this subpart, including the requirements and obligations of employees.

(h) An agency may not put an employee on family and medical leave and may not subtract leave from an employee's entitlement to leave under paragraph (a) of this section unless the agency has obtained confirmation from the employee of his or her intent to invoke entitlement to leave under paragraph (b) of this section. An employee's notice of his or her intent to take leave under Sec. 630.1206 may suffice as the employee's confirmation.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 64452, Dec. 5, 1996; 65 FR 26486, May 8, 2000]

Sec. 630.1204 Intermittent leave or reduced leave schedule.

(a) Leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) (1) or (2) of this part shall not be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless the employee and the agency agree to do so.

(b) Leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) (3) or (4) of this part may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary, subject to Secs. 630.1206 and 630.1207(b)(6) of this part.

(c) If an employee takes leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) (3) or (4) of this part intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment or recovery from a serious health condition, the agency may place the employee temporarily

in an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and that can better accommodate recurring periods of leave. Upon returning from leave, the employee shall be entitled to be returned to his or her permanent position or an equivalent position, as provided in Sec. 630.1208(a) of this part.

(d) For the purpose of applying paragraph (c) of this section, an alternative position need not consist of equivalent duties, but must be in the same commuting area and must provide--

(1) An equivalent grade or pay level, including any applicable locality-based comparability payment under 5 U.S.C. 5304; special rate of pay for law enforcement officers or special pay adjustment for law enforcement officers under section 403 or 404 of the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-509), respectively; continued rate of pay under subpart G of part 531 of this chapter; or special salary rate under 5 U.S.C. 5305 or similar provision of law;

(2) The same type of appointment, work schedule, status, and tenure; and

(3) The same employment benefits made available to the employee in his or her previous position (e.g., life insurance, health benefits, retirement coverage, and leave accrual).

(e) The agency shall determine the available alternative position that has equivalent pay and benefits consistent with Federal laws, including the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701) and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 2000e).

(f) Only the amount of leave taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule, as these terms are defined in Sec. 630.1202, shall be subtracted from the total amount of leave available to the employee under Sec. 630.1203 (e) and (f).

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 3544, Feb. 1, 1996; 61 FR 64453, Dec. 5, 1996]

Sec. 630.1205 Substitution of paid leave.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part shall be leave without pay.

(b) An employee may elect to substitute the following paid leave for any or all of the period of leave without pay to be taken under Sec. 630.1203(a)--

(1) Accrued or accumulated annual or sick leave under subchapter I of chapter 63 of title 5, United States Code, consistent with current law and regulations governing the granting and use of annual or sick leave;

(2) Advanced annual or sick leave approved under the same terms and conditions that apply to any other agency employee who requests advanced annual or sick leave; and

(3) Leave made available to an employee under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program or the Voluntary Leave Bank Program consistent with subparts I and J of part 630 of this chapter.

(c) An agency may not deny an employee's right to substitute paid leave under paragraph (b) of this section for any or all of the period of leave without pay to be taken under Sec. 630.1203(a), consistent with current law and regulations.

(d) An agency may not require an employee to substitute paid leave under paragraph (b) of this section for any or all of the period of leave without pay to be taken under Sec. 630.1203(a).

(e) An employee shall notify the agency of his or her intent to substitute paid leave under paragraph (b) of this section for the period of leave without pay to be taken under Sec. 630.1203(a) prior to the

date such paid leave commences. An employee may not retroactively substitute paid leave for leave without pay previously taken under Sec. 630.1203(a)

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 64453, Dec. 5, 1996]

Sec. 630.1206 Notice of leave.

(a) If leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part is foreseeable based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care, or planned medical treatment, the employee shall provide notice to the agency of his or her intention to take leave not less than 30 calendar days before the date the leave is to begin. If the date of birth or placement or planned medical treatment requires leave to begin within 30 calendar days, the employee shall provide such notice as is practicable.

(b) If leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a) (3) or (4) of this part is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the employee shall consult with the agency and make a reasonable effort to schedule medical treatment so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the agency, subject to the approval of the health care provider. The agency may, for justifiable cause, request that an employee reschedule medical treatment, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

(c) If the need for leave is not foreseeable--e.g., a medical emergency or the unexpected availability of a child for adoption or foster care, and the employee cannot provide 30 calendar days' notice of his or her need for leave, the employee shall provide notice within a reasonable period of time appropriate to the circumstances involved. If necessary, notice may be given by an employee's personal representative (e.g., a family member or other responsible party). If the need for leave is not foreseeable and the employee is unable, due to circumstances beyond his or her control, to provide notice of his or her need for leave, the leave may not be delayed or denied.

(d) If the need for leave is foreseeable, and the employee fails to give 30 calendar days' notice with no reasonable excuse for the delay of notification, the agency may delay the taking of leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part until at least 30 calendar days after the date the employee provides notice of his or her need for family and medical leave.

(e) An agency may waive the notice requirements under paragraph (a) of this section and instead impose the agency's usual and customary policies or procedures for providing notification of leave. The agency's policies or procedures for providing notification of leave must not be more stringent than the requirements in this section. However, an agency may not deny an employee's entitlement to leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part if the employee fails to follow such agency policies or procedures.

(f) An agency may require that a request for leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) (1) and (2) be supported by evidence that is administratively acceptable to the agency.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 59 FR 62274, Dec. 2, 1994; 61 FR 64453, Dec. 5, 1996; 65 FR 26487, May 8, 2000]

Sec. 630.1207 Medical certification.

(a) An agency may require that a request for leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) (3) or (4) be supported by written medical certification issued by the health care provider of the employee or the health care provider of the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the

employee, as appropriate. An agency may waive the requirement for an initial medical certificate in a subsequent 12-month period if the leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) (3) or (4) is for the same chronic or continuing condition.

(b) The written medical certification shall include--

(1) The date the serious health condition commenced;

(2) The probable duration of the serious health condition or specify that the serious health condition is a chronic or continuing condition with an unknown duration and whether the patient is presently incapacitated and the likely duration and frequency of episodes of incapacity;

(3) The appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the serious health condition, including a general statement as to the incapacitation, examination, or treatment that may be required by a health care provider;

(4) For the purpose of leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a)(3) of this part--

(i) A statement from the health care provider that the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee requires psychological comfort and/or physical care; needs assistance for basic medical, hygienic, nutritional, safety, or transportation needs or in making arrangements to meet such needs; and would benefit from the employee's care or presence; and

(ii) A statement from the employee on the care he or she will provide and an estimate of the amount of time needed to care for his or her spouse, son, daughter, or parent;

(5) For the purpose of leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a)(4), a statement that the employee is unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of his or her position or requires medical treatment for a serious health condition, based on written information provided by the agency on the essential functions of the employee's position or, if not provided, discussion with the employee about the essential functions of his or her position; and

(6) In the case of certification for intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule under Sec. 630.1203(a) (3) or (4) for planned medical treatment, the dates (actual or estimates) on which such treatment is expected to be given, the duration of such treatment, and the period of recovery, if any, or specify that the serious health condition is a chronic or continuing condition with an unknown duration and whether the patient is presently incapacitated and the likely duration and frequency of episodes of incapacity.

(c) The information on the medical certification shall relate only to the serious health condition for which the current need for family and medical leave exists. The agency may not require any personal or confidential information in the written medical certification other than that required by paragraph (b) of this section. If an employee submits a completed medical certification signed by the health care provider, the agency may not request new information from the health care provider. However, a health care provider representing the agency, including a health care provider employed by the agency or under administrative oversight of the agency, may contact the health care provider who completed the medical certification, with the employee's permission, for purposes of clarifying the medical certification.

(d) If the agency doubts the validity of the original certification provided under paragraph (a) of this section, the agency may require, at the agency's expense, that the employee obtain the opinion of a second health care provider designated or approved by the agency concerning the information certified under paragraph (b) of this section. Any health care provider designated or approved by the agency shall not be employed by the agency or be under the administrative oversight of the agency on

a regular basis unless the agency is located in an area where access to health care is extremely limited--e.g., a rural area or an overseas location where no more than one or two health care providers practice in the relevant specialty, or the only health care providers available are employed by the agency.

(e) If the opinion of the second health care provider differs from the original certification provided under paragraph (a) of this section, the agency may require, at the agency's expense, that the employee obtain the opinion of a third health care provider designated or approved jointly by the agency and the employee concerning the information certified under paragraph (b) of this section. The opinion of the third health care provider shall be binding on the agency and the employee.

(f) To remain entitled to family and medical leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) (3) or (4) of this part, an employee or the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent must comply with any requirement from an agency that he or she submit to examination (though not treatment) to obtain a second or third medical certification from a health care provider other than the individual's health care provider.

(g) If the employee is unable to provide the requested medical certification before leave begins, or if the agency questions the validity of the original certification provided by the employee and the medical treatment requires the leave to begin, the agency shall grant provisional leave pending final written medical certification.

(h) An employee must provide the written medical certification required by paragraphs (a), (d), (e), and (g) of this section, signed by the health care provider, no later than 15 calendar days after the date the agency requests such medical certification. If it is not practicable under the particular circumstances to provide the requested medical certification no later than 15 calendar days after the date requested by the agency despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts, the employee must provide the medical certification within a reasonable period of time under the circumstances involved, but no later than 30 calendar days after the date the agency requests such medical certification.

(i) If, after the leave has commenced, the employee fails to provide the requested medical certification, the agency may--

(1) Charge the employee as absent without leave (AWOL); or

(2) Allow the employee to request that the provisional leave be charged as leave without pay or charged to the employee's annual and/or sick leave account, as appropriate.

(j) At its own expense, an agency may require subsequent medical recertification on a periodic basis, but not more than once every 30 calendar days, for leave taken for purposes relating to pregnancy, chronic conditions, or long-term conditions, as these terms are used in the definition of serious health condition in Sec. 630.1202. For leave taken for all other serious health conditions and including leave taken on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, if the health care provider has specified on the medical certification a minimum duration of the period of incapacity, the agency may not request recertification until that period has passed. An agency may require subsequent medical recertification more frequently than every 30 calendar days, or more frequently than the minimum duration of the period of incapacity specified on the medical certification, if the employee requests that the original leave period be extended, the circumstances described in the original medical certification have changed significantly, or the agency receives information that casts doubt upon the continuing validity of the medical certification.

(k) To ensure the security and confidentiality of any written medical certification under Secs. 630.1207 or 630.1208(h) of this part, the medical certification shall be subject to the provisions for

safeguarding information about individuals under subpart A or part 293 of this chapter.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 64453, Dec. 5, 1996; 65 FR 26487, May 8, 2000; 65 FR 38409, June 21, 2000]

Sec. 630.1208 Protection of employment and benefits.

(a) Any employee who takes leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part shall be entitled, upon return to the agency, to be returned to--

(1) The same position held by the employee when the leave commenced; or

(2) An equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, status, and other terms and conditions of employment.

(b) For the purpose of applying paragraph (a)(2) of this section, an equivalent position must be in the same commuting area and must carry or provide at a minimum--

(1) The same or substantially similar duties and responsibilities, which must entail substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility, and authority;

(2) An equivalent grade or pay level, including any applicable locality-based comparability payment under 5 U.S.C. 5304; special rate of pay for law enforcement officers or special pay adjustment for law enforcement officers under section 403 or 404 of the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-509), respectively; continued rate of pay under subpart G of part 531 of this chapter; or special salary rate under 5 U.S.C. 5305 or similar provision of law;

(3) The same type of appointment, work schedule, status, and tenure;

(4) The same employment benefits made available to the employee in his or her previous position (e.g., life insurance, health benefits, retirement coverage, and leave accrual);

(5) The same or equivalent opportunity for a within-grade increase, performance award, incentive award, or other similar discretionary and non-discretionary payments, consistent with applicable laws and regulations; however, the entitlement to be returned to an equivalent position does not extend to intangible or unmeasurable aspects of the job;

(6) The same or equivalent opportunity for premium pay consistent with applicable law and regulations under 5 CFR part 550, subpart A, or 5 CFR part 551, subpart E; and

(7) The same or equivalent opportunity for training or education benefits consistent with applicable laws and regulations, including any training that an employee may be required to complete to qualify for his or her previous position.

(c) As a result of taking leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part, an employee shall not suffer the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date on which the leave commenced.

(d) Except as otherwise provided by or under law, a restored employee shall not be entitled to--

(1) The accrual of any employment benefits during any period of leave; or

(2) Any right, benefit, or position of employment other than any right, benefit, or position to which the employee would have been entitled had the employee not taken the leave.

(e) For the purpose of applying paragraph (d) of this section, the same entitlements and limitations in law and regulations that apply to the position, pay, benefits, status, and other terms and conditions of employment of an employee in a leave without pay status shall apply to any employee taking leave without pay under this part, except where

different entitlements and limitations are specifically provided in this subpart.

(f) An employee is not entitled to be returned to the same or equivalent position under paragraph (a) of this section if the employee would not otherwise have been employed in that position at the time the employee returns from leave.

(g) An agency may not return an employee to an equivalent position where written notification has been provided that the equivalent position will be affected by a reduction in force if the employee's previous position is not affected by a reduction in force.

(h) As a condition to returning an employee who takes leave under Sec. 630.1203(a)(4), an agency may establish a uniformly applied practice or policy that requires all similarly-situated employees (i.e., same occupation, same serious health condition) to obtain written medical certification from the health care provider of the employee that the employee is able to perform the essential functions of his or her position. An agency may delay the return of an employee until the medical certification is provided. The same conditions for verifying the adequacy of a medical certification in Sec. 630.1207(c) shall apply to the medical certification to return to work. No second or third opinion on the medical certification to return to work may be required. An agency may not require a medical certification to return to work during the period the employee takes leave intermittently or under a reduced leave schedule under Sec. 630.1204.

(i) If an agency requires an employee to obtain written medical certification under paragraph (h) of this section before he or she returns to work, the agency shall notify the employee of this requirement before leave commences, or to the extent practicable in emergency medical situations, and pay the expenses for obtaining the written medical certification. An employee's refusal or failure to provide written medical certification under paragraph (h) of this section may be grounds for appropriate disciplinary or adverse action, as provided in part 752 of this chapter.

(j) An agency may require an employee to report periodically to the agency on his or her status and intention to return to work. An agency's policy requiring such reports must take into account all of the relevant facts and circumstances of the employee's situation.

(k) An employee's decision to invoke FMLA leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) does not prohibit an agency from proceeding with appropriate actions under part 432 or part 752 of this chapter.

(l) An employee who does not comply with the notification requirements in Sec. 630.1206 and does not provide medical certification signed by the health care provider that includes all of the information required in Sec. 630.1207(b) is not entitled to family and medical leave.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 3544, Feb. 1, 1996; 61 FR 64453, Dec. 5, 1996; 65 FR 26487, May 8, 2000]

Sec. 630.1209 Health benefits.

An employee enrolled in a health benefits plan under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (established under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code) who is placed in a leave without pay status as a result of entitlement to leave under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part may continue his or her health benefits enrollment while in the leave without pay status and arrange to pay the appropriate employee contributions into the Employees Health Benefits Fund (established under section 8909 of title 5, United States Code). The employee shall make

such contributions consistent with 5 CFR 890.502.

Sec. 630.1210 Greater leave entitlements.

(a) An agency shall comply with any collective bargaining agreement or any agency employment benefit program or plan that provides greater family or medical leave entitlements to employees than those provided under this subpart. Nothing in this subpart prevents an agency from amending such policies, provided the policies comply with the requirements of this subpart.

(b) The entitlements established for employees under this subpart may not be diminished by any collective bargaining agreement or any employment benefit program or plan.

(c) An agency may adopt leave policies more generous than those provided in this subpart, except that such policies may not provide entitlement to paid time off in an amount greater than that otherwise authorized by law or provide sick leave in any situation in which sick leave would not normally be allowed by law or regulation.

(d) The entitlements under sections 6381 through 6387 of title 5, United States Code, and this subpart do not modify or affect any Federal law prohibiting discrimination. If the entitlements under sections 6381 through 6387 of title 5, United States Code, and this subpart conflict with any Federal law prohibiting discrimination, an agency must comply with whichever statute provides greater entitlements to employees.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1994, as amended at 61 FR 64454, Dec. 5, 1996]

Sec. 630.1211 Records and reports.

(a) So that OPM can evaluate the use of family and medical leave by Federal employees and provide the Congress and others with information about the use of this entitlement, each agency shall maintain records on employees who take leave under this subpart and submit to OPM such records and reports as OPM may require.

(b) At a minimum, each agency shall maintain the following information concerning each employee who takes leave under this subpart:

- (1) The employee's rate of basic pay, as defined in 5 CFR 550.103;
- (2) The occupational series for the employee's position;
- (3) The number of hours of leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a),

including any paid leave substituted for leave without pay under Sec. 630.1205(b); and

(4) Whether leave was taken--

- (i) Under Sec. 630.1203(a) (1), (2) or (3) of this part; or
- (ii) Under Sec. 630.1203(a)(4) of this part.

(c) When an employee transfers to a different agency, the losing agency shall provide the gaining agency with information on leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a) of this part by the employee during the 12 months prior to the date of transfer. The losing agency shall provide the following information:

(1) The beginning and ending dates of the employee's 12-month period, as determined under Sec. 630.1203(c) of this part; and

(2) The number of hours of leave taken under Sec. 630.1203(a) of the part during the employee's 12-month period, as determined under Sec. 630.1203(c) of this part.

[58 FR 39602, July 23, 1993, as amended at 60 FR 67288, Dec. 29, 1995; 61 FR 64454, Dec. 5, 1996]

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