



## **Sick Leave Usage**

### **I. POLICY**

The sections below are used to establish a uniform policy for the administration of sick leave in the Ridgely Police Department. These policies are developed in conjunction with Town of Ridgely employee benefits.

The Chief of Police recognizes that illnesses may prevent an employee from performing the duties of their position, and if a reduction of earnings would be associated, it would be detrimental to both the employee and the Department. Therefore, a liberal sick leave policy has been provided. It should be emphasized that sick leave is a privilege granted to Town employees and should only be used when absolutely necessary and never abused.

It is the responsibility of the Chief of Police to inform his subordinates of these procedures, and to provide new employees a copy of the regulations set forth below.

### **II. AUTHORIZED TOWN SICK LEAVE**

All permanent and probationary employees shall accrue five (5) hours of sick leave for each pay period employed.

### **III. USE OF SICK LEAVE**

A. Sick Leave may only be used for an illness, injury, or visiting a licensed health care practitioner (doctor, dentist, etc.) in their office.

B. Sick Leave may also be used in rare occasions for tending to a serious illness suffered by an immediate family member (spouse, child, parent, or sibling living in the Officer's home). If another person can attend to the needs of an immediate family member, the Officer is required to fulfill their duties as an employee of the Ridgely Police Department.

C. Officers may use Sick Leave in increments of no less than two (2) hours at any one time.

### **IV. ATTENDANCE CONTROL SUPERVISOR**

The Chief of Police is the attendance control supervisor. It will be his responsibility to monitor sick leave usage and record it on a permanent document. This document will be identified as the Ridgely Police Department Work Schedule.

## **General Order No. 2-3 (Cont.)**

### **V. REPORTING ILLNESS OR INJURIES**

A. Employees requesting sick leave will report their duty status to the Chief of Police immediately. Employees must notify the Chief of Police as soon as possible prior to the beginning of their scheduled shift. After the first day of sick leave is taken and the employee will be sick any subsequent day or days, the employee must notify the Chief of Police of same as soon as possible. In the event that the Chief of Police cannot be reached, employees will make notification to the Supervisor.

B. Employees that are on duty and requesting sick leave will report their duty status to the Chief of Police and give an estimated date of returning to duty. Officers shall then notify the communications center and give an estimated date of returning to duty.

C. Employees receiving an injury while on duty or in a duty capacity will immediately notify or cause the Chief of Police to be notified of same. In all applicable cases, Employees shall fill out a Sick Leave - Injury report (RPD Form 3)

D. Employees on sick leave for (3) three consecutive days will be required to submit a doctor's certificate upon returning to duty. If this certificate is not submitted within (5) five days of returning to work, time will be charged to other earned leave or a leave of absence without pay. Upon an Employee returning to duty, a Sick Leave - Injury report (RPD Form 3) shall be filed.

E. Employees using a sick day on either side of a Holiday shall be required to furnish a physician's certificate.

F. The Town of Ridgely has adopted the Injured Workers Insurance Fund (IWIF) "Employee's Report of Injury" form for employees injured while on duty. Copies of the IWIF form are available in the Town of Ridgely Human Resources office. This form is to be completed by the injured employee before going off duty, when possible.

1. The "Supervisor's Accident Investigation", will be completed by the injured employee's Supervisor or the Chief of Police as soon as possible and preferably immediately.

2. The "Accident Witness Statement". will be completed by anyone who is a witness to the employees injury. That person can be another police officer, Town employee, citizen, etc.

G. Employees must also immediately notify the IWIF after immediate consultation with Supervision of their injury. IWIF can be contacted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by calling 1-888-410-1400. This area has no contractual medical provider and all treatment will be done by either the employee's primary care provider or an emergency medical facility.

H. Employees that are injured while on duty must submit all documentation of treatment received with their prognosis to the Chief of Police immediately. These documents must reflect the employee's exact injuries and his/her fitness for duty. If the employee is incapacitated, these documents will be submitted as soon as possible.

## **General Order No. 2-3 (Cont.)**

### **VI. ADMINISTRATION**

- A. Employees shall not be granted sick leave for hours not accrued, or in excess of account balance without approval of the Town of Ridgely Commissioners.
- B. Employees on extended sick leave shall not accrue Holidays. Employees shall take the Holiday on the day it falls in lieu of a sick day.

### **VII. UNAUTHORIZED USE OF SICK LEAVE**

Unauthorized use of sick leave is defined as:

- A. Abnormal usage, such as frequent instances of sick leave for an unsubstantiated illness or injury without the apparent need for a health practitioner.
- B. Patterns of sick leave usage which appear to circumvent the true intent of sick leave; such as the use of sick leave to extend the employee's other leave time. A further example is sick leave which sets a pattern when it always coincides with regular, weekend, holiday leave, or a specific day of the week.
- C. Use of sick leave when the employee is neither ill nor injured.
- D. Use of sick leave to work at any secondary employment.

### **VII. OTHER PROHIBITED ACTS**

- A. An employee shall not use paid sick leave for a sickness or injury sustained while engaged in outside employment activities, as a result of a self inflicted injury, illegal substance abuse, alcohol abuse, or illness or injury incurred while in the act of committing a crime or other jailable offense.
- B. An employee may not operate a Town vehicle while on sick leave without the approval of the Chief of Police, except to drive to their residence immediately after reporting.

### **VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION FOR ABUSE OF SICK LEAVE**

- A. In all instances when an employee reports off duty on an unauthorized sick leave, they will be subject to disciplinary action.
- B. In those instances where an employee's use of sick leave is questionable; the attendance control supervisor will counsel the employee. This counseling will take place as soon as the problem becomes apparent but in no case later than the third instance of questionable sick leave. Counseling should be directed at identifying and correcting the problem.
- C. In every case where an employee has been counseled because of questionable sick leave, detailed written documentation of the counseling session will be made including the employee's response

**General Order No. 2-3 (Cont.)**

D. When there is an indication that an employee is abusing the sick privilege, the attendance control supervisor may require the employee to submit a Doctor's Certificate of Disability authenticating every usage of sick leave. The intent of the reporting procedure is to control those employees who abuse the Ridgely Police Department sick leave policy.

E. Sick Leave usage may also impact the employee's evaluation. An employee using sick leave on nine or more occasions in a twelve month period will be rated unsatisfactory in work attendance and dependability. Exception to this policy would be when a doctor's certificate is on file, justifying a chronic condition.

F. Employees may also be required to authorize the release of his/her medical records of the reported illness or illnesses to the Chief of Police, who may consult with the health practitioner signing the "Certificate of Disability" about the employee's fitness for duty. The Chief of Police may also direct the employee to attend another medical professional for additional examination and/or evaluation at the expense of the Town of Ridgely.

**IX. CASH-IN BENEFIT UPON SEPERATION**

A. An employee will be entitled to the following sick leave cash-in benefits, which are provided to encourage an employee to accumulate sick leave and to reward an employee who does so and is fortunate enough not to have to use sick leave for a short-term disability.

B. Subject to any written employee agreement and Chapter 5 of the Town of Ridgely Personnel Manual, upon separation, an employee with at least five (5) years of service, and provide at least two (2) weeks written notice, may be paid for a percentage of his/her sick leave at the employee's highest level of pay under the Compensation Plan as follows:

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Percentage of Paid Unused Sick Leave</u>
5-19 years	1/2 balance, up to a maximum of thirty (30) days accumulated
20 years and over	2/3 balance, up to a maximum of sixty (60) days accumulated