

Emergency Liberal Leave Policy

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

During a declared emergency, local public transportation or other public services may be disrupted, making it difficult for employees to get to work, and access to the College campus may be restricted. Examples of such an emergency may be a ransomware attack or catastrophic failure such as heating/cooling, forest fire etc. This policy does not apply to short-term events like inclement weather or snow dates.

In such circumstances, the College will endeavor to continue providing services to students, including academic instruction, and residential and food service for students who are unable to leave the campus. Thus, it is likely that faculty and staff, will continue to work on-campus or provide services through telecommuting agreements, as outlined in Goucher's [Telecommuting Policy](#).

II. THIS POLICY SHALL APPLY TO ALL NON-FACULTY EMPLOYEES BUT EXCLUDES FULLY REMOTE EMPLOYEES. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Telecommuting staff:** employees identified by their supervisor who are required to report for work in a telecommuting capacity when liberal leave is declared.
- B. **Essential on-campus staff:** employees identified by their supervisor who are required to report for work on the campus when liberal leave is declared because they perform critical duties. This includes some Facilities Management Services staff, residence life staff, health and counseling center staff, post office, and equestrian program staff.
- C. **Fully remote staff:** employees identified by their supervisor who work remotely with little or no expectation of working on-campus.

III. DECLARING LIBERAL LEAVE

In the event of an officially declared emergency resulting in community disruption and/or requiring restricted access to the College campus, the President or designee may declare liberal leave.

Essential on-campus staff and telecommuting staff who are unable to report to work must notify their supervisors of their absence as soon as they are able. If approved, they will be entitled to use available vacation and/or sick leave, in accordance with college policies.

Fully remote staff are expected to work as scheduled. If they are unable to report to work, they must notify their supervisors of their absence as soon as they are able. If approved, they will be entitled to use available vacation and/or sick leave, in accordance with college policies.

IV. FORMS OF LIBERAL LEAVE

Liberal leave determinations do not apply to essential on-campus staff or telecommuting staff. These employees are required to report for work when liberal leave is declared, unless they are specifically excused by their supervisors, in which case they shall be subject to this policy regarding use of liberal leave.

All other eligible employees shall report their absence and use of liberal leave to their supervisors as soon as possible. Liberal leave arrangements include:

- A. **Using Available Vacation Leave:** Employees may elect to use available vacation time to account for the time missed. Employees using available vacation leave should enter the request in Workday – Absence application for approval.
- B. **Flexing Schedules:** Employees may choose to make up the missed time on a different day. The hours must generally be made up within the same pay period in which the liberal leave was used.
- C. **Using Unpaid Leave:** Should the employee not have any available vacation time and not be able to flex their schedule, the employee may take leave without pay. Employees choosing this option should make the unpaid leave request for approval as soon as possible, but no later than their next day back to work. Employees using this option should enter the request for ‘Unpaid Time Off’ in Workday – Absence application for approval.

Using Available Sick Leave: Employees may use sick leave if the absence meets the criteria for sick leave under the College’s [Family & Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\) Policy](#), [Earned Sick and Safe Leave Policy](#), or as outlined in the Employee Handbooks.

V. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

For more information or if you have questions about this policy, please contact Office of Human Resources at hr@goucher.edu.

VI. HISTORY

Updated: March 2020; January 2024.