

Expansion of Paid Sick Leave

As part of the University of California's ongoing commitment to supporting employee well-being and work-life balance for staff and academic personnel, we are excited to announce a significant expansion of paid sick leave, effective January 1, 2025. This expansion will offer greater security and peace of mind for UC's valued employees, whether full-time or part-time. For further information, please refer to: <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/work-life-support/time-off/expansion-of-paid-sick-leave/>

How is UC Expanding Paid Sick Leave:	Applicability	What is Changing?
Expanded Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part-Time ■ Academic student employees 	Eligible for 6 calendar days of paid sick leave per year, with a maximum carryover of 2 days, prorated based on appointment percentage
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Per Diem 	Eligible for 8 hours of paid sick leave per year, with a maximum carryover of 16 hours (not accrued).
<i>Note: Full-time academic employees who accrued sick leave prior to January 1, 2025, will generally not see a change to the amount of sick leave they accrue.</i>		
Protected Sick Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All Academic Employees 	Can designate up to 6 calendar days of their existing paid sick leave as “protected.” Per diem employees can designate all paid sick leave as “protected.”
Broader Qualifying Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All Academic Employees 	Sick leave may now be used for preventive care, domestic violence-related situations, and other qualifying reasons
Extended Reinstatement Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All Academic Employees 	Unused paid sick leave can be reinstated if an employee returns to UC employment within 12 months of separation, provided it was not converted to retirement service credit.
<p>UC also plans to expand paid sick leave options for represented academic appointees, subject to applicable collective bargaining agreements:</p> <p>Postdocs/PX: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/PX-Side-Letter-Expansion-of-Paid-Sick-Leave.pdf</p> <p>Researchers/RA: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/RA-Side-Letter-Expansion-of-Paid-Sick-Leave.pdf</p> <p>ASEs/BX: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/BR-BX-Side-Letter-Expansion-of-Paid-Short-Term-Leave.pdf</p> <p>GSRs/BR: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/BR-BX-Side-Letter-Expansion-of-Paid-Short-Term-Leave.pdf</p> <p>AFT Unit 18/IX: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/IX-Side-Letter-Expansion-of-Paid-Sick-Leave-Signed-2.13.25.pdf</p> <p>AFT Librarians/LX: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/LX-Article-20-Sick-Leave-2024-2029.pdf</p>		

What is “Protected” Paid Sick Leave?

"Protected" Paid Sick Leave allows employees to designate up to **6 (six) calendar days** of their accrued paid sick leave per year as "protected" when used for specific qualifying reasons. This designation ensures additional safeguards for employees, explicitly protecting them from retaliation or discrimination.

How is “Protected” Paid Sick Leave Different from Regular Sick Leave?

Regular sick leave is accrued leave that employees can use for general health-related reasons and follows standard reporting and approval processes. In contrast, protected paid sick leave is a specific designation of regular sick leave that provides explicit protections when used for qualifying reasons. By designating sick leave as "protected," employees gain additional safeguards while still accessing their regular sick leave benefits for all other eligible uses.

Qualifying Reasons for Designating Paid Sick Leave as “Protected”

Employees may designate paid sick leave as “protected” for the following reasons:

- The diagnosis, care, or treatment of an existing physical or mental health condition of the employee or the employee’s family member;
- Preventive care for an employee or an employee’s family member; or
- Those reasons specified in policy for an employee who is a victim or whose family member is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other qualifying acts of violence.

How to Report and Use Regular Sick Leave vs. “Protected” Paid Sick Leave

When reporting regular sick leave that is not designated as “protected,” employees must continue to follow existing campus procedures. Additionally, any department-specific protocols for reporting sick leave must still be adhered to.

To ensure your paid sick leave qualifies as "protected," please follow these steps:

1. Confirm you have protected paid sick leave available to use.
2. Provide notice to your supervisor. If the leave is foreseeable (e.g., a scheduled appointment), notify your supervisor in advance, including the expected dates and duration. For unforeseen absences, notify your supervisor as soon as practical.
3. Use the leave for one of the qualifying reasons outlined in policy.

When reporting protected paid sick leave, specify that it is for a qualifying protected reason, preferably in writing to avoid confusion. Be sure to follow your department’s reporting procedures. If there are concerns about the appropriate use of paid sick leave, management **must coordinate and consult with APO** before requesting verification.

How to Record Regular Sick Leave vs. Protected Paid Sick Leave on Your Timesheet

When submitting a timesheet, use the existing process to record regular paid sick leave by selecting “**Sick**” from the TRS Hour Type dropdown menu. For “protected” paid sick leave, specify this in the Timesheet Comments section (e.g., “1/15/2025: Protected Paid Sick Leave”) to ensure proper reconciliation of accruals. No additional details are required beyond indicating the designation.

Managers must review timesheets for accuracy during the approval process. If the protected paid sick leave designation is unclear or missing, the timesheet will be returned to the employee for correction.

Payroll is developing a new TRS pay code for protected paid sick leave. Updates will be shared once the new code is available.

How to Report Protected Paid Sick Leave for Academics who don’t use TRS (<https://payroll.ucmerced.edu/payroll-systems/trs>)

For Senate Faculty, Unit 18 lecturers and UNEX instructors, hiring units are responsible to tracking annual usage of protected sick leave

Retaliation Protection

The University prohibits any form of retaliation or discrimination against an employee for using or attempting to use paid sick leave designated as protected and for any other reason prohibited by policy.

Reporting Retaliation or Discrimination

Employees who believe they have been subjected to retaliation or discrimination can file a complaint through the following offices or resources:

- Human Resources Office (ELR Unit (<https://hr.ucmerced.edu/hr-units/employeeelabor-relations>))
- Academic Personnel Office (<https://academicpersonnel.ucmerced.edu/>)
- Office for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment & Discrimination (<https://ophd.ucmerced.edu/>)
- University Whistleblower Hotline (<http://universityofcalifornia.edu/hotline>) (800-403-4744).

Complaints will be referred to the appropriate office or officer for investigation.

Resources & Policies:

- UC Office of the President's Paid Sick Leave Expansion webpage (<https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/work-life-support/time-off/expansion-of-paid-sick-leave/>): find systemwide information, including FAQs, eligibility criteria, and examples of leave usage.
- APM-710: Leaves of Absence/Paid Sick Leave/Paid Medical Leave (<https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/academic-personnel-policy/policy-issuances-and-guidelines/apm-710-issuance.html>)

Who to Contact with Questions:

The administration of sick pay at UC reflects a collaborative effort between Human Resources (HR) and the **Academic Personnel Office**. APO manages academic appointments and ensures compliance with policies specific to academic appointees. This shared approach ensures equitable support tailored to the distinct needs of staff and academic personnel.

If you have questions about sick pay, please refer to the contact information below:

If you are...	Responsible Office	Contact Information:
Academic Appointee	Academic Personnel Office	Email: academicpersonnel@ucmerced.edu (mailto:academicpersonnel@ucmerced.edu)

GENERAL

You will be eligible to receive a bank of six (6) days of paid sick leave per calendar year in accordance with APM-710 (<https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/apm/apm-710-issuance/apm-710-effective-01-01-2025.pdf>) See APM-710-13, APM-710-20, and APM-710-22 for information on usage and other key details. If you are new to the University, the bank will be available for use after your first paycheck. The paid sick leave bank is distinct and separate from paid medical leave, which is described in APM - 710-11. Consistent with policy, any unused paid sick leave days in the bank expire each December 31 (or earlier if the appointment ends before then), and a new bank of six (6) days of paid sick leave is available each January 1. If you need to report usage of paid sick leave, please contact academicpersonnel@ucmerced.edu. As noted above, hiring units are responsible for tracking annual usage of protected sick leave for academics who don't report time via TRS.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

You will be eligible to receive a bank of six (6) days of paid sick leave per calendar year in accordance with (<https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/apm/apm-710-issuance/apm-710-effective-01-01-2025.pdf>) See APM-710-13, APM-710-20, and APM-710-22 for information on usage and other key details. If you are new to the University, the bank will be available for use after your first paycheck. The paid sick leave bank is distinct and separate from paid medical leave, which is described in APM - 710-11. Consistent with policy, any unused paid sick leave days in the bank expire each December 31 (or earlier if the appointment ends before then), and a new bank of six (6) days of paid sick leave is available each January 1. If you need to report usage of paid sick leave, please contact academicpersonnel@ucmerced.edu. As noted above, hiring units are responsible for tracking annual usage of protected sick leave for academics who don't report time via TRS.