Expert Advice on Outside Activities Leave

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Adedayo: Welcome to Leading Edge Online. My name is Adedayo Adeniyi. I am the director for leadership and organization development in the Office of Vice President for Human Resources. Joining me today is Sharon Williams. Sharon is a senior employee relations specialist. Welcome, Sharon.

Sharon: Thanks, Adedayo.

Adedayo: Today's focus is the outside activities leave. Sharon, can you help us to understand the principle purpose of this leave and why it was established.

Sharon: Sometimes individuals may have a need to be involved in outside activities away from campus; and this leave is a way to track that person's absence from campus.

Adedayo: Sharon, can you give us some examples of the types of absences that have been tracked using this leave?

Sharon: Anytime someone has an outside activity, first of all they need to be sure that they have been approved to engage in an outside activity; and there's a form to do that. Once -- the type of activities that someone might do would be to be involved in -- for example, they may be on a board of directors for some kind of corporation or entity. And so they may need to attend board meetings of a particular nature.
**Adedayo:** Sharon, is this leave a paid leave, or it is an unpaid leave or both? How does this work?

**Sharon:** For administrate and professional staff, this is an unpaid leave. However, administrate and professorial staff could choose to use their vacation time to stay in a paid status. For a faculty, there may be in instances where it would be a paid leave.

**Adedayo:** Sharon, what tips would you offer to supervisors in compliance with this policy?

**Sharon:** So if an employee comes to you and wants to take an outside activity leave, the first thing that a supervisor needs to be sure of is that the employee has actually filled out the proper paperwork to be approved to engage in an outside activity. If they are aware that that has been completed, then they need to know the duration of the employee's leave. A department head can approve anything from one full day to five days. Anything in excess of five days, the president's office would need to approve.

**Adedayo:** So, Sharon, it sounds as though there are two forms that need to be completed. One, to get permission to engage in outside activities; and that's done through where?

**Sharon:** Through the Office of the Vice President For Ethics and Compliance.
Adedayo: Okay. So once that form is completed through the Office of Ethics and Compliance, then they would come back and request a leave utilizing this particular leave policy?

Sharon: Yes.

Adedayo: Very good. Now, you also mentioned consecutive days. So if I -- if I'm engaged in an activity that's going to require me to be away for three days, my vice president can approve that. Say six months later I have another outside activity, volunteering on a board or something of that nature, that I need to also participate in, can my vice president still approve that, or would --

Sharon: Yes, because it's only three consecutive days. The policy specifically says, things -- activities that are five consecutive days, in excess of that would need presidential approval.

Adedayo: Very good. That's very helpful to know. Sharon, what are the common errors made when implementing this particular leave policy?

Sharon: I think some of the errors particularly are failing to request permission to engage in an outside activity and filling out that paperwork before you actually request time from your department head or the president to be gone from campus. And so it's important to make sure you have all the proper paperwork filled out.
Adedayo: Sharon, as we look to wrap things up today, are there any parting thoughts you'd like to leave with the supervisors?

Sharon: Just like supervisors to know that administrate and professional staff don't often take this leave. So I would encourage you to contact human resources should one of your employees find the need.

Adedayo: Sharon, as always, we thank you very much for your advice; and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Sharon: Thank you.