# **Sabbatical Leave policy**

This sabbatical leave policy template is ready to be tailored to your company’s needs. Use it as a starting point to set up your employment policies.

## **Policy brief & purpose**

Our sabbatical leave policy describes our requirements and procedures for offering paid sabbatical leave to our employees. This type of leave is separate from [vacation](https://resources.workable.com/unlimited-vacation-company-policy), [PTO](https://resources.workable.com/paid-time-off-company-policy) and [sick leave](https://resources.workable.com/sick-leave-company-policy) and applies only to long-term employees.

We offer [sabbatical leave](https://resources.workable.com/hr-terms/sabbatical-leave-definition) as a benefit to encourage our employees to innovate, gain knowledge and pursue their interests (e.g. volunteer, travel, research, write.) It’s one way to reward employees who have been working with us for a long time. We also want to encourage them to rejuvenate and develop their skills.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to [*full-time/ executive/ all*] employees who have been working for our company for at least [*five consecutive years*.] [Parental leave](https://resources.workable.com/parental-leave-company-policy) and long-term sick leave, [*count*] towards employees’ time of service.

## **Policy elements**

Our sabbatical leave scheme offers eligible employees up to [*five weeks*] of paid leave plus [*two weeks*] of unpaid leave after their first [*five years*] of working for our company. Every [*five years*] after that, sabbatical leave is increased by [*one paid week*] with a cap at [*eight weeks*.] You will be eligible to take sabbaticals every [*five years*] until you retire.

You [*can*] take your sabbatical to extend your standard PTO and vacation leave.

Sabbatical leave can’t be accrued. For example, if you become eligible after [*five years*] of working with us, you should take your sabbatical before you complete [*ten years*] in our company, or you lose it.

You don’t have to use the full number of weeks of paid sabbatical, but you need to use them consecutively. Your sabbatical leave [*counts*] toward years of service and when determining seniority and eligibility for salary increases.

### **Working while on sabbatical**

Some employees may want to take a sabbatical leave to freelance, do volunteer work or take up another paid job for that period. Our only requirement in these cases is that you do not work or collaborate with a competitor of our company. If you do, you may breach our non-compete agreement and we may terminate you.

### **Sabbatical for job-related research and innovation**

In some cases, employees may take sabbaticals to work on research and innovation projects tied to their role in our company. For example, a Developer may take a sabbatical to continue an innovation project they started with their team members at work. If you want to take sabbatical for such purposes, submit a brief proposal to your manager describing your ideas and plans. After your sabbatical ends, you should also report on your results.

[*Anything you accomplish related to your job during your leave will be intellectual property of our company*.] Results of activities that are unrelated to your job (e.g. writing a book, taking up new projects, creating new products) belong to you.

### **Contracts, benefits and organizational changes**

While you are on a sabbatical leave, your employment status, contract and benefits (e.g. health insurance) remain intact. We will inform you promptly about any unforeseen or organizational changes (e.g. department restructuring.)

We normally expect you to return to your position (or an equivalent) at the end of your sabbatical. If our company needs to lay off employees while they are on sabbatical (e.g. in case the branch they work in closes), we will follow the legal requirements for notice and severance pay. We will also pay any accrued vacation and sick leave.

### **Equipment and benefits**

You don’t have to return your work equipment while you’re on sabbatical. You can also use any company perks (e.g. gym membership) as usual.

We [*will*] reimburse any trainings that you choose to take during your sabbatical as long as they don’t exceed your standard training budget. We [*will not*] reimburse any other expenses while you are on sabbatical (e.g. gas, transit passes.)

## **Procedure**

Once you become eligible for a sabbatical leave, you can file a request form to your manager, plus a proposal if appropriate. Please do this at least [*two months*] before you plan to take your sabbatical. Ask HR for the request form and instructions.

Once your manager approves your request, they will notify HR.

### **How managers approve sabbaticals**

If your team members ask for a sabbatical, you must consider whether:

* The dates your team member indicates for their sabbatical coincide with significant projects that this employee has a critical role in. If your team member is absolutely needed during that time, arrange a meeting to discuss alternative dates.
* Other team members will be on sabbatical during a certain period. To avoid productivity issues, we don’t allow more than [*30%*] of people in one team to be on sabbatical at the same time. Managers should reviews requests on a first-come basis.
* This employee is under a [performance improvement plan](http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/8997-performance-improvement-plan.html) or has been through [disciplinary process](https://resources.workable.com/progressive-discipline-policy) within the previous [*six months*.] In these cases, they can’t take a sabbatical leave.

If those criteria are satisfied, managers should approve their team members’ sabbatical request. Afterwards, managers should meet with their team members to arrange how their main job duties will be covered while they’re away.

### **Non-retaliation and anti-discrimination**

Just like other types of leave, sabbaticals need to be approved or rejected according to criteria we described above. You are not allowed to discriminate when reviewing request forms and proposals or rejecting employees’ sabbatical requests to retaliate.

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| *Disclaimer: This sabbatical leave policy template is meant to provide general guidelines and should be used as a reference. It may not take into account all relevant local, state or federal laws and is not a legal document. Neither the author nor Workable will assume any legal liability that may arise from the use of this policy.* |