

## HOURS OF DUTY AND LEAVE

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To revise Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy regarding leave.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory procedures on hours of duty and leave. The page in this handbook replaces the corresponding page number in VA Handbook 5011. Revised text is contained in [brackets]. This revision clarifies policy regarding authorized absence for tardiness or absence for part of a day for full-time physicians, dentists, podiatrists, chiropractors and optometrists. This change will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5011 that is maintained on the [Office of Human Resources Management Web site](#).
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Worklife and Benefits Service (058), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management.
- 4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5011, Hours of Duty and Leave.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** None.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/Roger W. Baker  
Assistant Secretary for  
Information and Technology

/s/Rafael A. Torres  
Acting Assistant Secretary for  
Human Resources and Administration

ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION ONLY

time off without charge to leave when their personal religious beliefs require that they abstain from work during certain periods of the workday or workweek, thereby avoiding an annual leave or leave without pay charge.

b. **State and Local Holidays.** If a facility is closed on a State or local holiday because it is determined that Federal work may not be properly performed as provided in paragraph 5d of [part II,] chapter 2, [ ] absence on such day is not chargeable to leave for an employee of the facility. Such approved time off is considered authorized absence without charge to leave.

**9. AUTHORIZED ABSENCE.** An authorized absence is an absence administratively approved, which does not result in a charge to leave of any kind, or in loss of basic salary. The following will be used as the *guide* in determining the types of absences from duty which may be authorized without charge to leave.

a. **Rest and Relaxation.** The Under Secretary for Health and facility directors or the professional person acting for them are authorized to approve absence for not to exceed 24 consecutive hours for rest and relaxation for full-time physicians, dentists, podiatrists, chiropractors, and optometrists who have been required to serve long hours in the care and treatment of patients.

b. **Tardiness or Absence for Part of a Day**

(1) A full-time physician, dentist, podiatrist, chiropractor, or optometrist will be charged a full day's leave for absence for a part of a day, unless the absence is excused by officials authorized to approve leave. This authority to approve absence for tardiness and absence for portions of a day will be exercised only when such absence from duty is of short duration and will not be interpreted to cover absences of a major portion of the day wherein annual or sick leave should be properly charged. [Generally, "short duration" means less than one hour. However, additional authorized absence may be granted for unusual or unforeseen circumstances. Such additional authorized absence should not be approved as a matter of routine. When approving authorized absence, approving officials will consider any potential adverse impact on patient care as well as the frequency of requests for authorized absence by the employee.]

(2) It is incumbent upon supervisory officials to ensure that full-time nurses, nurse anesthetists, PAs, and EFDAs and part-time employees discharge their obligation to VA in terms of the number of hours for which payment is made and the number of hours actually worked in accordance with the pre-established tour of duty. An unavoidable or necessary absence from duty and tardiness of less than 1 hour may be excused. In other instances, absences or tardiness will be charged to annual leave or LWOP (with the employee's consent), or absence without leave, as appropriate. The charges to leave will come as a result of appropriate reporting in the ETA system.

(3) Repeated instances of tardiness or unexcused absences during scheduled working hours will be considered a disciplinary matter under the provisions of VA Handbook 5021 or as a matter for appropriate action with regard to probationary employees and temporary full- and part-time employees under the applicable provisions of VA Handbook 5021.

c. **Hearings Before Federal Boards, VA Boards and Committees.** Absence of employees required to appear before Federal boards, before VHA boards, or before other VA boards or committees as witnesses or as participants in the matter under consideration will be approved without charge against leave.