

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL CENTER

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MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Purpose

To establish a numbered policy statement regarding the requirement for medical certification for use of leave for sickness and/or reasons covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

General Policy

Supervisors have an obligation to ensure that leave for sickness and/or FMLA-covered reasons is properly used and documented. This can only be done when supervisory personnel stay in close contact with and receive regular updates from employees needing this kind of leave.

When employees take leave due to their own sickness, supervisors must monitor the employee's fitness for duty and, if necessary, obtain a release from the employee's health care provider before allowing the employee to return to work. This is necessary in order to provide a safe workplace for the employee, his/her co-workers, and Ag Center clientele.

Supervisors are responsible for exercising the judgment and initiative necessary to ensure that the area of medical certification is properly monitored.

Circumstances Which Require Medical Certification

Medical certification must always be provided on the official Ag Center medical certification form as prescribed in the next section. An employee should be directed by the supervisor to provide medical certification when any of the conditions listed below are present.

- The employee is on leave for more than 5 consecutive work days.
- An excuse from work from a health care provider is submitted by the employee on a prescription form or note.
- The employee is on leave consistently and repeatedly. *Examples* would be an employee who is on leave three days one week, two days the next, and four days the third week or one who is on leave 1/2-day per week for 10 consecutive weeks.
- The employee is repeatedly on leave in a pattern which suggests the possibility of abuse of leave. *An example* would be an employee who shows a pattern of being on leave on Mondays and Fridays. This must be supported by examination of the employee's leave records. If a documented pattern exists, the employee

may be required to provide a completed medical certification form for each future use of leave.

It is the employee's responsibility to obtain the completed medical certification form when so directed.

- A *release to return to work* from the health care provider must be presented for any employee who has been on leave more than 5 consecutive work days. Additionally, when an employee's medical condition is such that there is concern about his/her fitness for duty, the supervisor must advise the employee in advance that he/she will have to provide the release *before* being allowed to return to work.

Attachment: Medical Certification for Sick and/or FMLA-Covered Leave form.

The above conditions are considered as having been met regardless of whether annual, sick, or compensatory leave or leave without pay is taken if the leave is for the employee's own illness/- injury/medical treatment or for a reason covered by the FMLA.

Assistance with applying these provisions should be obtained from the Ag Center Human Resource Management Office.

Medical Certification Form

A *Medical Certification Form* has been developed to assist supervisors in obtaining the documentation required above. When any of the conditions described above are present, this form must be given to the employee and the employee directed to have it completed by his/her health care provider. It is the responsibility of each administrative unit to make certain that the attached form is initiated without delay when any of the above conditions occur.

All employees should be aware that the medical certification form is always required for absences of greater than five consecutive work days and *may* be required under other circumstances.