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<b>Family Medical Leave</b>	<b>Effective: August 24, 1993</b>
	<b>Revised: May 25, 2023</b>
APPROVED BY: HACAP Board of Directors	

## **Policy Statement**

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) is a federal law that covers all employers with 50 or more employees within 75 miles of a given work place. Employees are eligible for FMLA if they have worked for the employer for at least 12 months and have at least 1,250 hours of service with the employer during the 12 months before their FMLA leave starts.

FMLA requires employers to provide up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons. An eligible employee who takes leave under the law must be permitted to return to the same job or a job with equivalent status and pay. The employer must continue the employee's health benefits during the leave period at the same level and conditions as if the employee had continued to work. The leave may be paid, unpaid, or a combination of paid and unpaid leave, depending on the circumstances of the leave and as specified in this policy.

All eligible employees make take up to 12 weeks of leave during the 12-month time period of January 1 – December 31. Examples of events that are FMLA eligible:

1. Birth of a child, post-partum recovery and time to care for and bond with the newborn child;
2. Placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, and to care for the newly placed child;
3. To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition;
4. The serious health condition of the employee that prevents the employee from performing the essential functions of their position.

## **Standard Operating Procedures**

### **Target Audience**

All Hawkeye Area Community Action Program, Inc. employees that meet the following conditions:

- Worked for HACAP for at least 12 months;
- Worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately before the date when the leave is requested to commence;
- Covers all employers with 50 or more employees within 75 miles of a given work place.

### **Necessities**

Employee Request for Family and Medical Leave

Recertification of Health Care Provider

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Employee may be required to provide periodic recertification for a serious health condition of the employee or an immediate family member

#### Employee FMLA Status Report

Employee may be required to provide periodic reports of status and intent to return to work

#### **Implementation Steps**

To qualify to take family or medical leave under this policy, the employee must meet all of the following conditions:

- 1) The employee must have worked for the company for 12 months or 52 weeks. The 12 months or 52 weeks need not have been consecutive. Separate periods of employment will be counted, provided that the break in service does not exceed seven years. Separate periods of employment will be counted if the break in service exceeds seven years due to National Guard or Reserve military service obligations or when there is a written agreement, including a collective bargaining agreement, stating the employer's intention to rehire the employee after the service break. For eligibility purposes, an employee will be considered to have been employed for an entire week even if the employee was on the payroll for only part of a week or if the employee is on leave during the week.
- 2) The employee must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave. The 1,250 hours do not include time spent on paid or unpaid leave. Consequently, these hours of leave should not be counted in determining the 1,250 hours eligibility test for an employee under FMLA.
- 3) Covers all employers with 50 or more employees within 75 miles of a given work place.

#### A. Type of Leave Covered

To qualify as FMLA leave under this policy, the leave must be for one of the reasons listed below:

- 1) The birth of a child and in order to care for that child.
- 2) The placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child.
- 3) To care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition (described below).
- 4) The serious health condition (described below) of the employee.

An employee may take leave because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her position.

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Under the FMLA, a "spouse" means a husband or wife. Husband or wife refers to the other person with whom an individual entered into marriage as defined or recognized under state law for purposes of marriage in the state in which the marriage was entered into or, in the case of a marriage entered into outside of any state, if the marriage is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one state. This definition includes an individual in a same-sex or common law marriage that either:

A serious health condition is defined as a condition that requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care or a condition that requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider.

This policy covers illnesses of a serious and long-term nature, resulting in recurring or lengthy absences. Generally, a chronic or long-term health condition that would result in a period of three consecutive days of incapacity with the first visit to the health care provider within seven days of the onset of the incapacity and a second visit within 30 days of the incapacity would be considered a serious health condition. For chronic conditions requiring periodic health care visits for treatment, such visits must take place at least twice a year.

An employee whose spouse, son, daughter or parent either has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active military duty or who is already on covered active duty may take up to 12 weeks of leave for reasons related to or affected by the family member's call-up or service. The qualifying exigency must be one of the following:

- short-notice deployment
- military events and activities
- child care and school activities
- financial and legal arrangements
- counseling
- rest and recuperation
- post-deployment activities
- Additional activities that arise out of active duty, provided that the employer and employee agree, including agreement on timing and duration of the leave.

Eligible employees are entitled to FMLA leave to care for a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserve, or a member of the Armed Forces, the National Guard or Reserve who is on the temporary disability retired list, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty for which he or she is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or otherwise in outpatient status; or otherwise on the temporary disability retired list.

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(1) To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the covered service member.

- A "son or daughter of a covered service member" means the covered service member's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild or legal ward, or a child for whom the covered service member stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age.
- A "parent of a covered service member" means a covered service member's biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the covered service member. This term does not include parents in law.
- The "next of kin of a covered service member" is the nearest blood relative, other than the covered service member's spouse, parent, son or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the service member by court decree or statutory provisions, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered service member has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA.

"Covered active duty" means:

- "Covered active duty" for members of a regular component of the Armed Forces means duty during deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country.
- Covered active duty or call to covered active duty status in the case of a member of the Reserve components of the Armed Forces means duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation, in accordance with 29 CR 825.102.

(2) Military caregiver leave (also known as covered service member leave) to care for an injured or ill service member or veteran.

An employee whose son, daughter, parent or next of kin is a covered service member may take up to 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period to care for that service member.

The term "covered service member" means:

- a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserve) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; is otherwise in outpatient status; or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness; or
- a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness and who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National

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Guard or Reserve) at any time during the period of 5 years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes that medical treatment, recuperation or therapy.

The term "serious injury or illness" means:

- in the case of a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserve), means an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating;
- in the case of a veteran who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserve) at any time during a period when the person was a covered service member, means a qualifying (as defined by the Secretary of Labor) injury or illness incurred by a covered service member in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank or rating.
- Outpatient status, with respect to a covered service member, means the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient; or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients.

#### B. Amount of Leave

An eligible employee can take up to 12 weeks for the FMLA circumstances (No. 1) through (No. 3) above under this policy during any 12-month period. The company will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy. Each time an employee takes leave, the company will compute the amount of leave the employee has taken under this policy in the last 12 months and subtract it from the 12 weeks of available leave, and the balance remaining is the amount the employee is entitled to take at that time.

An eligible employee can take up to 26 weeks for the FMLA circumstance (No. 1) above (military caregiver leave) during a rolling 12-month period. For this military caregiver leave, the company will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured forward. FMLA leave already taken for other FMLA circumstances will be deducted from the total of 26 weeks available.

If a husband and wife both work for the company and each wishes to take leave for the birth of a child, adoption or placement of a child in foster care, or to care for a parent (but not a parent "in-law") with a serious health condition, the husband and wife may only take a combined total of 12 weeks of leave. If a husband and wife both work for the company and each wishes to take leave

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to care for a covered injured or ill service member, the husband and wife may only take a combined total of 26 weeks of leave.

#### C. Employee Status and Benefits During Leave

While an employee is on leave, the company will continue the employee's health benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued to work.

If the employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member or a circumstance beyond the employee's control, the company will require the employee to reimburse the company the amount it paid for the employee's health insurance premium during the leave period.

Under current company policy, the employee pays a portion of the health care premium. While on paid leave, the employer will continue to make payroll deductions to collect the employee's share of the premium. While on unpaid leave, the employee must continue to make this payment, either in person or by mail.

If the employee contributes to a life insurance, disability, accident, or vision plan, the employer will continue making payroll deductions while the employee is on paid leave. While the employee is on unpaid leave, the employee may request continuation of such benefits and pay his or her portion of the premiums, or the employer may elect to maintain such benefits during the leave and pay the employee's share of the premium payments. If the employee does not continue these payments, the employer may discontinue coverage during the leave. If the employer maintains coverage, the employer may recover the costs incurred for paying the employee's share of any premiums, whether or not the employee returns to work.

#### D. Employee Status After Leave

An employee who takes leave under this policy may be asked to provide a fitness for duty (FFD) clearance from a health care provider per the requirement of the job. This requirement will be included in the employer's response to the FMLA request. Generally, an employee who takes FMLA leave will be able to return to the same position or a position with equivalent status, pay, benefits and other employment terms. The position will be the same or one that is virtually identical in terms of pay, benefits and working conditions. The company may choose to exempt certain key employees from this requirement and not return them to the same or similar position when doing so will cause substantial and grievous economic injury to business operations. Key employees will be given written notice at the time FMLA leave is requested of his or her status as a key employee.

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#### E. Use of Paid and Unpaid Leave

An employee who is taking FMLA leave because of the employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member must use all paid vacation, personal or sick leave prior to being eligible for unpaid leave.

Disability leave for the birth of a child and for an employee's serious health condition, including workers' compensation leave (to the extent that it qualifies), will be designated as FMLA leave and will run concurrently with FMLA.

An employee who is using military FMLA leave for a qualifying exigency must use all paid vacation and personal leave prior to being eligible for unpaid leave. An employee using FMLA military caregiver leave must also use all paid vacation, personal leave or sick leave (as long as the reason for the absence is covered by the company's sick leave policy) prior to being eligible for unpaid leave.

When an employee is on Worker's compensation leave may, in fact, run concurrently with unpaid FMLA leave and may count toward an employee's FMLA leave entitlement, provided the reason for the absence is due to a qualifying "serious health condition" as defined in the FMLA and the implementing Department of Labor Regulation 29 CFR 825.114. However, an employee's receipt of workers' compensation payments precludes the employee from electing, and prohibits the employer from requiring, substitution of any form of accrued paid leave for any part of the absence covered by such payments.

#### F. Intermittent Leave or a Reduced Work Schedule

The employee may take FMLA leave in 12 consecutive weeks, may use the leave intermittently (take a day periodically when needed over the 12 month period) or, under certain circumstances, may use the leave to reduce the workweek or workday, resulting in a reduced hour schedule. In all cases, the leave may not exceed a total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks to care for an injured or ill service member over a 12-month period).

The company may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate the intermittent or reduced schedule, in instances when leave for the employee or employee's family member is foreseeable and for planned medical treatment, including recovery from a serious health condition or to care for a child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care.

For the birth, adoption or foster care of a child, the company and the employee must mutually agree to the schedule before the employee may take the leave intermittently or work a reduced-

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hour schedule. Leave for birth, adoption or foster care of a child must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the child.

If the employee is taking leave for a serious health condition or because of the serious health condition of a family member, the employee should try to reach agreement with the company before taking intermittent leave or working a reduced-hour schedule. If this is not possible, then the employee must prove that the use of the leave is medically necessary.

#### G. Certification for the Employee's Serious Health Condition

The company will require certification for the employee's serious health condition. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. Medical certification will be provided using the DOL Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition.

The company may directly contact the employee's health care provider for verification or clarification purposes using a health care professional, an HR professional. The company will not use the employee's direct supervisor for this contact. Before the company makes this direct contact with the health care provider, the employee will be given an opportunity to resolve any deficiencies in the medical certification. In compliance with HIPAA Medical Privacy Rules, the company will obtain the employee's permission for clarification of individually identifiable health information.

The company has the right to ask for a second opinion if it has reason to doubt the certification. The company will pay for the employee to get a certification from a second doctor, which the company will select. The company may deny FMLA leave to an employee who refuses to release relevant medical records to the health care provider designated to provide a second or third opinion. If necessary to resolve a conflict between the original certification and the second opinion, the company will require the opinion of a third doctor. The company and the employee will mutually select the third doctor, and the company will pay for the opinion. This third opinion will be considered final. The employee will be provisionally entitled to leave and benefits under the FMLA pending the second and/or third opinion.

#### H. Certification for the Family Member's Serious Health Condition

The company will require certification for the family member's serious health condition. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. Medical certification will be provided using the DOL Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition.



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The company may directly contact the employee's family member's health care provider for verification or clarification purposes using a health care professional, an HR professional. The company will not use the employee's direct supervisor for this contact. Before the company makes this direct contact with the health care provider, the employee will be given an opportunity to resolve any deficiencies in the medical certification. In compliance with HIPAA Medical Privacy Rules, the company will obtain the employee's family member's permission for clarification of individually identifiable health information.

The company has the right to ask for a second opinion if it has reason to doubt the certification. The company will pay for the employee's family member to get a certification from a second doctor, which the company will select. The company may deny FMLA leave to an employee whose family member refuses to release relevant medical records to the health care provider designated to provide a second or third opinion. If necessary to resolve a conflict between the original certification and the second opinion, the company will require the opinion of a third doctor. The company and the employee will mutually select the third doctor, and the company will pay for the opinion. This third opinion will be considered final. The employee will be provisionally entitled to leave and benefits under the FMLA pending the second and/or third opinion.

#### I. Recertification

The company may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member no more frequently than every 30 days unless circumstances have changed significantly, or if the employer receives information casting doubt on the reason given for the absence, or if the employee seeks an extension of his or her leave. Otherwise, the company may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member every six months in connection with an FMLA absence. The company may provide the employee's health care provider with the employee's attendance records and ask whether need for leave is consistent with the employee's serious health condition.

#### J. Procedure for Requesting FMLA Leave

All employees requesting FMLA leave must provide verbal or written notice of the need for the leave to the HR manager. Within five business days after the employee has provided this notice, the HR manager will complete and provide the employee with the DOL Notice of Eligibility and Rights.

When the need for the leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide the employer with at least 30 days' notice. When an employee becomes aware of a need for FMLA leave less than 30 days in advance, the employee must provide notice of the need for the leave either the same day the need for leave is discovered or the next business day. When the need for FMLA leave is not

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foreseeable, the employee must comply with the company's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave, absent unusual circumstances.

#### K. Designation of FMLA Leave

Within five business days after the employee has submitted the appropriate certification form, the HR manager will complete and provide the employee with a written response to the employee's request for FMLA leave using the DOL Designation Notice.

#### L. Intent to Return to Work from FMLA Leave

On a basis that does not discriminate against employees on FMLA leave; the company may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

#### **Process Manager**

This policy was written by the Human Resource Department for use by all HACAP operations. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Human Resources Department at 319-393-7811.