

Purpose

Northern Lights Library System (NLLS) recognizes the importance of providing leave options to employees while maintaining operational effectiveness. This policy outlines available leave types and defines relevant terms clearly.

Definitions

- Protected Leave: Job-protected leave mandated under Alberta Employment Standards (e.g., Parental, Bereavement, Compassionate Care Leave).
- Unprotected Leave: Leave not mandated by Alberta Employment Standards, approved at the discretion of the Executive Director or Executive Committee. May impact benefits, seniority, or vacation accrual.
- Short-Term Leave: Temporary absences from work lasting 20 days or fewer, approved by the Executive Director based on operational needs.
- Extended Leave: Leave exceeding 20 days (excluding protected leave), requiring Executive Committee approval.
- EI Eligible Leave: Leave for which an employee may qualify for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits (e.g., Maternity, Parental, Compassionate Care Leave).
- Bereavement Leave: Leave due to the death of an immediate family member.
- Discretionary Leave: Non-statutory leave granted at the discretion of management, possibly paid or unpaid, depending on budget and internal equity.
- Jury Duty & Subpoenaed Witness Leave: Leave granted when an employee is summoned for jury duty or subpoenaed as a witness. Employees receiving paid leave must remit court-provided allowances to NLLS.
- Immediate Family: Includes spouse or common-law partner, children (biological, adopted, foster, stepchildren), parents (biological or adoptive), siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, legal guardians or wards, or any person with a similarly close familial relationship, as determined by the Executive Director.

Policy Guidelines

Statutory (Protected) Leaves

- Employees are entitled to protected leave as defined by Alberta Employment Standards.
- Examples include parental leave, compassionate care leave, and bereavement leave.
- Employees must notify their department manager as soon as possible to arrange necessary coverage.

Unprotected and Discretionary Leaves

- Unprotected leave requests must be submitted to the Executive Director, clearly stating leave duration and rationale.

- Approval is discretionary, considering operational needs, internal equity, and budget constraints.
- Extended leave beyond 20 days requires Executive Committee approval and is not guaranteed.

Employment Insurance (EI) Benefits

- Employees taking eligible leaves (e.g., parental leave) are encouraged to apply for EI benefits through Service Canada.

Bereavement Leave

- Up to three (3) days paid bereavement leave is provided upon the death of an immediate family member, with additional leave (such as days for travel) granted at the Executive Director's discretion.

Jury Duty and Subpoenaed Witness Leave

- Employees summoned for jury duty or as subpoenaed witnesses will receive paid leave and must submit any received court allowances to NLLS.

Employee Responsibilities

- Employees must promptly communicate leave requests to their department manager.
- Employees requesting accommodation or extended leave must provide appropriate supporting documentation upon request.

Approval and Compliance

- Short-term leave is approved by the Executive Director based on operational considerations.
- Extended leave exceeding 20 days requires Executive Committee approval.
- Employees are responsible for communicating clearly about leave intentions and providing required documentation.

Review & Accountability

- This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required by legislation.
- The Executive Director ensures policy compliance and oversight.

NLLS Executive Board Chair

May 2, 2025

Date of Approval