

Effective Date: July 1, 2026

POLICY

EMPLOYMENT

Employee Handbook – Section 303A

Short-Term Sick Leave Benefit

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Human Resources

303A Short-Term Sick Leave Benefit

This policy, which takes effect on January 1, 2025, supersedes the prior Sick Leave policy. Employees may retain and use any sick leave accrued prior to January 1, 2025, even if that balance exceeds the maximum balances permitted in this policy. However, as this policy supersedes any previous sick leave policies, the terms and conditions of this Short-Term Sick Leave policy governs the terms and use of sick leave accrued prior to January 1, 2025.

To the extent any applicable paid sick/safe time/leave or similar law or ordinance provides any greater rights than set forth in this policy, such provisions are incorporated by reference and/or addressed in a supplemental policy for covered employees.

The Massachusetts Earned Sick Leave policy can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.bu.edu/hr/policies/federal-and-state-laws/massachusetts-earned-sick-time-law/>

303A.1 Definition

Short-Term Sick Leave provides employees with an authorized paid absence from work for medical care, personal illness or injury, or the care of an ill member of the employee's immediate family, attend routine medical appointments, to address the effects of domestic violence, or any other reason required by applicable law. Immediate family members are the employee's spouse, parents, parents-in-law, grandparents, siblings, and children. Short-Term Sick Leave generally applies for absences shorter than five (5) consecutive days and are not of a regularly recurring nature. Employees whose absences may qualify for leave under the FMLA or PFML, including those that are longer than 5 consecutive days or are of a recurring nature should apply for PFML Leave (Section 303B).

303A.2 Eligibility

All regular, full-time employees and regular, part-time employees scheduled to work at least 50% of the regularly scheduled workweek are eligible upon hire to accrue and use Short Term Sick Leave in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

303A.3 Annual Accrual/ Overall Accrual Cap

Eligible employees are entitled to accrue up to a maximum of thirty (30) days of Short-Term Sick Leave each calendar year starting on January 1 of each year ("Annual Accrual Maximum")

Employees also are subject to an overall accrual cap of thirty (30) days ("Overall Accrual Cap"). Once an employee's sick bank balance reaches thirty (30) days, no additional sick leave will accrue until an employee's total accrual balance drops below the thirty (30) day Overall Accrual Cap, at which point accrual will continue subject to the Annual Accrual Maximum and Overall Accrual Cap.

For employees whose accrued sick bank was greater than thirty (30) days prior to January 1, 2025, they will be entitled to keep their total accrued sick leave (even if it exceeds thirty (30) days), but no additional sick leave accrue until their total accrual balance drops below the thirty (30) day Overall Accrual Cap, subject to applicable law. Once their overall accrual balance falls below the 30-day Overall Accrual Cap, accrual will resume subject to the Annual Accrual Maximum and Overall Accrual Cap.

Employees maintain their accrued Short-Term Sick Leave when they transfer from one position within the University to another.

No department or supervisor may authorize sick leave accrual beyond the amount allowed under this section.

303A.4 Documentation

If using Short-Term Sick Leave, the University may require Employees to verify in writing that the employee used the time for a covered reason.

Further, the University may require documentation from a health care provider to be submitted to the BU Occupational Health Center that establishes the need for an employee's use of Short-Term Sick Leave, in accordance with applicable law.

After an employee uses forty (40) hours of Short-Term Sick Leave in a calendar year, the University may require documentation and/or information from the employee to determine whether the employee's leave qualifies for job-protected leave under the PFML policy or any other University leave policy, subject to applicable law.

303A.5 Compensation and Benefits

Employees maintain their regular pay and benefits while absent from work on approved paid Short-Term Sick Leave.

Employees who are absent from work and are receiving paid partial pay benefits (for example, they are out of work due to an injury sustained in the course of employment and are receiving workers' compensation benefits) or there is an unpaid waiting period before statutory pay benefits begin, employees may use accrued Short-Term Sick Leave to either supplement their benefits up to 100% of their regular pay or substitute Short-Term Sick Leave for otherwise unpaid time.

303A.6 Requests and Approvals

If the need for sick leave is unforeseeable, employees who are unable to report to work due to illness must provide notice as soon as practicable. In most cases, “as soon as practicable” generally means not less than one-half (1/2) hour after the start of the workday. Employees who are absent for more than one (1) day must notify their supervisor each day or at intervals requested by the supervisor.

If the need for sick leave is foreseeable (e.g., scheduled medical or dental appointments), employees must request time off in writing, from their immediate supervisor at least three (3) workdays in advance of the desired time off. The three-day requirement may be shortened in emergency situations. Employees are generally expected to schedule medical and dental appointments for non-work hours if possible.

303A.7 Relationship to Other Leaves of Absence

Receipt of Short-Term Sick Leave does not provide employees any right to job-protected leave that they would not otherwise have under University policy or federal, state or local law.

If an employee uses Short-Term Sick Leave for a reason that qualifies for leave under PFML, FMLA or any other Boston University policy, Short-Term Sick Leave will run concurrently with such policy. In the case of PFML, Short-Term Sick Leave taken for a reason that qualifies for leave under the PFML Policy will run concurrent with PFML regardless of whether the employee applies for benefits under the PFML Policy, to the extent permitted by applicable law.

303A.8 Other Provisions

Employees will not be paid for accrued but unused Short-Term Sick Leave at the time their employment with Boston University terminates.

END OF POLICY TEXT

Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

Related Policies and Procedures

- [Employee Handbook Policies Manual](#) (staff)
 - [303 Personal and Family Medical Leave Policies](#)
 - [303A Short-Term Sick Leave Benefit](#) [this Policy]
 - [303B Paid Family and Medical Leave](#)
 - [303C Family Medical Leave](#)
 - [303D Parental Leave](#)
 - [303E Small Necessities Leave Act](#)
- [Faculty Handbook](#) (faculty)

Related BU Websites

- [Human Resources](#)

THIS POLICY IS PART OF THE [EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK AND POLICIES MANUAL](#), AND SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OF THE POLICIES THAT COMPRISE THE HANDBOOK. THE PROVISIONS OF THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT AND DO NOT ALTER THE AT-WILL STATUS OF AN EMPLOYEE.

Categories: Employee Handbook and Policies Manual, Employment, Non-Represented Staff

Keywords: Short-Term Sick Leave, sick leave