

Garfield Heights City Schools Professional Leave Procedures

A. General Instructions

1. Professional Leave is used for educational conferences, workshops, professional meetings, school business, or visits to other schools when travel outside of the district or other expenses are incurred regardless of whether a substitute is needed. The *Application for Professional Leave* form is **also** used for chaperoning field trips, curriculum work, or professional development that occurs within the district when a substitute is needed.
2. The employee is expected to pay all expenses. Reimbursement will be issued after all paperwork listed below is received by the Center for Curriculum and Instruction. When the district initiates the request for the employee to attend a professional development event, the district may pre-pay some of the expenses (e.g., registration fees).
3. The following forms, available in all buildings, must be completed in a timely manner and sent to the Center for Curriculum and Instruction prior to and following the professional leave:
 - a. *Application for Professional Leave* (Form 242)
 - b. *Request for Reimbursement for Professional Leave* (Form 235)
 - c. *Professional Leave Follow-Up Form*
 - d. Purchase Requisition (generated by the Center for Curriculum and Instruction)
4. Any leave taken without prior written approval from the Center for Curriculum and Instruction is unauthorized and subject to disciplinary action. No reimbursements will be made for unauthorized leaves. No reimbursements will be made without a valid Purchase Order that was generated prior to the leave.

B. Applying for Professional Leave

1. Secure permission from your principal or supervisor to attend the event. Complete the required paperwork, and have it signed by the principal or supervisor.
2. Submit the **Applications for Professional Leave** (form 242), along with related brochures and explanatory material to the Center for Curriculum and Instruction according to the following timeline:
 - a. Local and Regional-10 days prior to the leave
 - b. Out of Region, but within Ohio-14 days prior to the activity
 - c. Out of State- Six weeks prior to the leave
3. The above timelines are necessary to assure proper approval, notification and generation of the purchase order. Expenses incurred without the prior generation of a purchase order will not be reimbursed.

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4. Any exceptions to these timelines must be requested in-person by the building or district administrator to the Center for Curriculum and Instruction, and will be considered only when the above timelines are clearly unrealistic. Failure to adhere to the timelines is cause for denial of the leave.

C. Expense Reimbursement Regulations

1. Upon returning from a conference/professional development activity, the **Request for Reimbursement for Professional Leave** form covering expenses of the leave must be submitted to the Center for Curriculum and Instruction within 15 days.
2. All original itemized receipts for expenditures (hotel, registration, meals, parking, etc.) shall be attached to the reimbursement form. Map Quest (or another source) should be attached to provided documentation of travel mileage from your home school to your destination and back. **Reimbursement will not be made without receipts.** Reimbursement forms must be submitted within 15 days of returning from the leave.

D. Professional Leave Follow-Up

1. Employees attending professional development events are expected to share the professional knowledge they gained with others in the organization. This sharing takes two forms.
2. First, upon returning from the event employees must submit the completed *Professional Leave Follow-Up Form* to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction along with the *Request for Reimbursement for Professional Leave* form.
3. In addition, employees returning from professional leave have the obligation to share information with the staff. Depending on the scope of the information gained from the professional development event, this may include sharing at a building, grade-level or district meeting, conducting professional development within the district, or presenting to the Board of Education.

E. Reimbursement Details

1. **Transportation:** All modes of transportation consistent with the requirements of the assignment and the efficient and economic conduct of official business will be authorized. Travel will be by the most direct and economical route.
 - a. Automobile reimbursement will be made at the district-approved rate per mile. This is the maximum rate regardless of the number of passengers. The district requires people to drive together when more than one person is attending the same conference. Operators of personal automobiles must have a valid driver's license and certification from an insurance carrier for coverage of a minimum of \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per occurrence for bodily injury liability and \$50,000 for property liability.

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- b. Local transportation such as taxicabs, airport limousines, and buses may be used when justified and pre-approved on the *Request for Professional Leave Form*. Justification must be given on the reimbursement voucher. Emergency needs should be specified on this voucher and have the approval of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction or his/her designee for payment.
 - c. Rental cars may be used when no other means of public transportation is practical or it is economically more feasible. Use of rental cars must be pre-approved on the *Request for Professional Leave Form* except under emergency circumstances.
2. **Meals:** Meals consumed by educators on official business will be reimbursed (with accompanying itemized receipts) at a cost up to \$36.00 per day.
3. **Lodging:** Any educator on official district business who requires lodging in connection with that business will be entitled to reimbursement for the cost of a single, moderately-priced room in a hotel/motel of his/her choice.
 - a. Employees must request the tax exempt rate for Ohio hotels. Contact the treasurer's office for the proper forms before you leave.
 - b. The district reserves the right to require two people of the same gender who are attending a conference to share a room if circumstances dictate.
 - c. If a person is accompanied by his/her spouse, lodging expenses will be reimbursed for the cost of a double room at a single occupancy rate.
4. **Other Miscellaneous Expenses**
 - a. Conference registration fees will be reimbursed. Please use "early bird" discounts whenever possible. No membership fees or publication fees will be reimbursed.
 - b. Parking fees and tolls will be reimbursed with receipts. Please use the least expensive convenient parking option available.