ABUSE OF SICK LEAVE

Allegany College of Maryland grants sick leave to its full-time employees at the rate of 1 1/2 days per month. A twelve-month employee receives credit for 18 sick days. Accumulated sick time provides the employee with insurance at a time of major illness and also has significant benefits at the time of retirement.

Although 18 sick days are given to twelve-month employees per year, the institutional average number of sick days used for an annual employee is less than six (6) days.

SICK LEAVE IS NOT ENTITLEMENT LEAVE. Sick leave is only to be used when an employee or a member or his/her family is sick enough to prevent the employee from reporting to his/her work assignment with Allegany College of Maryland for that day or period of time.

Each employee's sick leave is closely examined by the employee's supervisor, dean, and President. This section details some of the areas of sick leave abuse for which disciplinary action is initiated against the employee found to have abused the College's policy and procedures on sick leave.

The major areas of sick leave abuse are the following:

- excessive amount of sick leave use;
- questionable use of sick leave;
- having a discernible pattern of sick leave use;
- fraudulent use of sick leave;
- repeatedly failing to follow the proper call-in procedure for using sick leave.

a. Excessive or Questionable Use of Sick Leave

Quarterly, each supervisor is responsible for formally reviewing the use of sick leave by each employee under his/her supervision. If an employee's use of sick leave appears excessive or questionable, the supervisor shall report this fact in writing to his/her supervisor (appropriate Vice-President or the President). The supervisor, the appropriate Vice-President, or the President may require such employee to have a physical examination or to submit medical evidence confirming the necessity for the sick leave in question. If it is established that an employee used more sick leave than was medically necessary, the appropriate Vice-President or President may take appropriate administrative action, including an adjustment to the amount of sick leave allowable.

ABUSE OF SICK LEAVE (continued)

b. Having a Discernible Pattern of Sick Leave Use

A discernible pattern of sick leave use is easily detected via use of a calendar display. If an employee's sick leave appears to have been used to extend weekends (i.e., all or almost all sick leave used has been on Fridays, Mondays, or days before or after College holidays), or a particular day of the week has repeatedly been used for sick days (for example, Tuesdays), this will be cause for further investigation, possibly require medical verification, and the consideration of disciplinary action if appropriate.

c. Fraudulent Use of Sick Leave

If an employee's reason for use of sick leave is proved to be fraudulent, such fraudulence may be cause for disciplinary action, including possible suspension or dismissal.

d. Improper Procedure for Calling in Sick

The proper procedure for calling in sick is for an Allegany College of Maryland employee who has to use a sick day to call his/her supervisor at least a half-hour (30 minutes) prior to his/her regular starting time of work for that day. If the supervisor is not yet at work, the employee should call his/her supervisor at his/her home telephone number. For faculty reporting sick leave the respective faculty secretary must also be notified so proper posting of class cancellation can be accomplished.

MEDICAL VERIFICATION

Each supervisor has the right to request and require employees under his/her supervision to provide medical verification of his/her illness or that of a member of the family. This will usually occur if any one of the following conditions exist:

The employee:

1. has used three (3) consecutive sick days;
2. has a questionable pattern of sick leave use;
3. has used ten (10) or more sick days since the start of the fiscal year; and/or
4. is suspected of fraudulently using sick leave.

Medication verification is limited to a doctor's or a hospital's certification of the circumstance and nature of the illness. In the case of a family member, if more than three (3) consecutive days are

ABUSE OF SICK LEAVE (continued)

used for the family member, the employee is required to submit a medical statement from the family member's physician, certifying the nature of the family member's illness and that the family member is unable to physically care for himself/herself and therefore necessitates the employee to attend to the family member for a specified period of time. This physician's statement will be included in the employee's personnel file.