

Sabbatical Program FAQ

You may have some questions about GreenState Credit Union's Sabbatical Program, so we're here to try and answer them.

- Q) Our department is too busy and I'm the only one who knows how to do certain things, how can any of us ever afford to be out for 4 weeks?*
- A)** Staff from departments all across the credit union take off more than 4 weeks at a time for maternity leave or FMLA and their coworkers step in to handle the extra work. Planning ahead with your team to be prepared for your time out of the office will provide great opportunities for staff to cross-train and take on leadership roles.
- Q) Four weeks seems like a long time, why not allow staff to take a shorter amount if they desire?*
- A)** Many of the Sabbatical programs we researched at other institutions also required their employees to take the full time. Periods shorter than four weeks are similar to a vacation and aren't long enough to completely separate an individual from their daily work mentality. We hope this time will allow staff to truly get away and put their focus elsewhere.
- Q) Will we have access to email and work resources while on Sabbatical leave?*
- A)** Nope. Your network and email access will be shut off (including email on mobile phones) and your phone calls will be routed to others within your department. We will not collect work phones for staff, but we strongly encourage you to direct any work calls received to designated contacts in your department. We also recommend changing your voicemail to indicate you are currently out of the office. Work should not distract you from your chosen activities while on Sabbatical. Enjoy your time away from the office 😊
- Q) Are there any expectations or restrictions for how employees may utilize their Sabbatical time? Are we expected to do service projects, take classes, etc.?*
- A)** No, there are no set expectations for what an employee does while away on Sabbatical. We encourage staff to use this opportunity to relax, re-focus, and return refreshed. You can pick up a new hobby or skill, travel to a foreign land, or simply unwind at home – whatever you like!
- Q) How will incentive plans work during the leave?*
- A)** Each individual will continue to be subject to the incentive plan they fall under based on their branch or department. This does mean that staff will miss out on incentive pay from cross-sells and/or production they might have generated during their leave.
- Q) Is this a ploy to determine whether or not my position is actually required and my continued employment is beneficial to the credit union?*
- A)** Absolutely not. If you've managed to fool everyone this long, congratulations! In all seriousness, what we do hope is this will encourage business continuity and succession planning. Furthermore, it is a benefit the credit union is passionate about providing for our most tenured and dedicated employees.

- Q) *Will there be any training or preparation available to those who would like assistance or ideas on how to spend their Sabbatical?*
- A) Resources and information will be available to help prepare staff for their time out of office and offer ideas for potential activities in which they can engage. Additionally, we will encourage individuals who have taken a Sabbatical to write a short testimonial about their experience to provide even more ideas.
- Q) *Will we be required to write about our Sabbatical?*
- A) Writing a Sabbatical testimonial is completely optional.
- Q) *How will this impact year-end production goals for branch staff? Will folks get one month "forgiven?"*
- A) When staff take other time out of the office they are expected to hit their expectations and the same philosophy applies to those on Sabbatical. A best practice would be to have a discussion with your supervisor.
- Q) *When will HR send the notice to the employee when they are eligible for Sabbatical leave?*
- A) Yes, HR will notify the employee approximately 30 days before they are eligible for Sabbatical leave.
- Q) *If I am grandfathered in am I required to take the Sabbatical within two years?*
- A) No, employees grandfathered in are not subject to the two year requirement. They will have five years from the plan inception date (1/1/2016) to complete their first Sabbatical. You will be eligible for your second Sabbatical ten years after taking the first one. You will be required to complete your second Sabbatical within two years of becoming eligible.
- Q) *If I'm rated Marginal or less when I reach the required years of service for a Sabbatical do I forfeit it?*
- A) You must attain (and maintain) a rating of Successful or higher within two years of eligibility (five if grandfathered for your first Sabbatical and two if grandfathered for your second Sabbatical). If a successful or higher rating is attained, you have two years (five if grandfathered for your first Sabbatical and two if grandfathered for your second Sabbatical) from the effective date of the ranking to take your Sabbatical. If you do not, the Sabbatical is forfeited.
- Q) *If I am on Sabbatical during a paid holiday (i.e. July 4th) how does that work?*
- A) You will be paid for the entire 4 week period that you are out of the office; however, there will not be double pay for the holiday date. The holiday also does not extend the leave period.
- Q) *If there is a loss in the family while I am out of the office on Sabbatical does this end the leave?*
- A) This would have no impact on the Sabbatical period and would not extend the time out of the office. We do understand that unique circumstances can present themselves and in that case you will want to contact your supervisor/HR to work through a plan of action.
- Q) *Will taking a Sabbatical satisfy the seven consecutive days out of the office requirement for that year?*
- A) Yes, the Sabbatical will satisfy this regulatory requirement.
- Q) *Will I still be able to access the fitness center at the North Liberty Financial Center while on Sabbatical leave?*
- A) Yes, your access card will allow you to enter the Fitness Center during your leave, but all other access will be disabled. If you do not need Fitness Center access and are afraid you might lose your card while out of the office you may give your card to the IT department for safekeeping until your return.

Q) What happens if I take my Sabbatical leave during the open enrollment period for benefits such as health insurance, dental insurance, vision insurance, Flexible Spending accounts, and AFLAC?

A) If you are gone on Sabbatical during this time the HR Benefits team will contact you via personal phone or email so you don't miss out on enrollment.

Q) Where can I find the Sabbatical Leave application form?

A) The form is located in the Neighborhood. Click on the Human Resources Page > Benefits and Compensation > Time Off – PTO/Holiday/Sabbatical Tab. If you launched this FAQ from the Neighborhood you've already found the right page.

Q) Although I'm not allowed to work while on Sabbatical can I still attend GreenState Credit Union events like the Holiday Party, Casino Night, or CIT Volunteer events?

A) Absolutely, you're still a part of the family! ☺ You may attend any social events that are unpaid as well as any CIT volunteer events (including those that occur during normal working hours). You would not be double paid for those events that occur during normal working hours. Make sure to keep track of your volunteer hours so you can log them in the Neighborhood upon your return to the office from Sabbatical.