



## Court Related Absences

Effective Date:

Upon Approval

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To supplement and clarify Administrative Policy 3-11, Absence, Section 6.13 on Court Related Absences.

### 2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 It is the policy of the City of Houston (City) to honor all valid summonses and court orders and to compensate employees for court related absences only when the court appearance is in response to a summons for jury duty or is otherwise consistent with City related business.

### 3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to Administration and Regulatory Affairs (ARA) employees and supersedes all former Administration and Regulatory Affairs Department policies, procedures and directives related to court related absences.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

Jury Summons: The summons that was mailed to the employee requesting they appear in court for jury duty.

Court Attendance Slip: Slip signed by the officer of the court verifying the date and time spent in court serving on jury duty.

### 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 5.1 ARA Supervisors:

- 5.1.1 The supervisor is required to retain the documents provided by the employee.
- 5.1.2 The supervisor shall not approve Jury Duty leave requests without first obtaining a copy of the jury summons and verifying the date and time of the summons.
- 5.1.3 Upon completion of the court-related appearance, the supervisor shall obtain a copy of the employee's signed court attendance slip and ensure the Jury Duty leave hours recorded in Kronos accurately reflect the time spent in court, including reasonable travel time to and from.
- 5.1.4 The supervisor shall provide the employee permission to not return to work if there is less than three (3) hours left in the employee's shift at the conclusion of the court-related appearance and the proximity of the workplace makes it unreasonable to expect the

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employee to return that day. The additional work hours missed shall be coded as Jury Duty leave.

## 5.2 ARA Employees:

5.2.1 ARA employees receiving a jury summons are required to submit a Jury Duty leave request in Kronos within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving the summons and submit a copy of the jury summons document to their supervisor.

5.2.2 It is the employee's responsibility to obtain a signed court attendance slip indicating the time released from jury duty and to submit it to their supervisor upon returning to work. Employee should ensure that the signature of the officer of the court and the release time are indicated on the attendance slip prior to departing the courtroom.

5.2.3 It is the employee's responsibility to ensure the Jury Duty leave hour usage is accurately reflected on their time card.

## 6. POLICY DETAILS

6.1 An employee is expected to return to work to complete his/her regularly scheduled work day if: 1) at least three (3) hours remain in the regular scheduled work day, and 2) the proximity to the work place makes the return to work reasonably feasible. Employee should contact their supervisor to get verbal approval if, based on the employee's judgment, it is not reasonably feasible to return to work.

6.1.1 Employees who do not return to work without supervisor approval after being released from their court related appearance will not be allowed the use of Jury Duty leave for work hours missed outside of those spent at the court related appearance, including reasonable travel time to and from.

6.2 Subpoenas, summons, or other such court ordered appearances shall be treated in the same manner as jury duty (and the employee shall be paid for the day(s) spent in court) only when such an appearance is related, directly or indirectly, to City business or to the employee's role as a City employee.

6.3 Similar restrictions of being related to City business shall apply when an employee is called upon to offer testimony, to act as a witness, to give deposition testimony, to attend consultations with City Attorney or to provide answers to interrogatories, or to otherwise appear before a board, commission, or agency, committee or subcommittee, or other official body of the city, state, or national government.

6.4 Leave for court related absence(s) not related to City business should be requested under ARA's Vacation Leave departmental policy, and if authorized, should be charged against accrued vacation or other authorized accrued leave.

## 7. COMPLIANCE

7.1 Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Violations of this policy may result in in discipline up to and including indefinite suspension.