



Frequently Asked Questions

SICK LEAVE

Q

What is the difference between uncertified and certified sick leave?

A

Sick leave is authorized time off from work when a staff member is unable to perform his/her functions because of sickness or injury.

There are two types of sick leave:

- Uncertified sick leave – absences of up to seven working days during the annual leave cycle (April through March) for which you do not need to provide a doctor's note, for sickness, injury, or for family-related emergencies.
- Certified sick leave – absences in excess of seven working days during the annual leave cycle. You must submit a doctor's note for approval. The first 20 days of certified sick leave during the annual cycle is approved by your (local) HR official or executive office. After the first 20 days, certified sick leave is approved by the Medical Service.

>Open the Sick Leave HR Factsheet for more information

Q

What should a staff member do to in order to report the days they are out sick?

A

Staff members have an obligation to inform their supervisors as soon as possible of any absences due to illness or injury, and promptly submit the medical certificate or report, if required, to certify their sick leave. If you were unable to obtain the necessary certification at the early stage of your absence on sick leave, you have up to 20 working days following the initial absence from duty to do so.

Q

Can I leave my duty station if I am on sick leave in order to receive medical treatment in another country, including my home country?

A

A staff member on sick leave shall not leave the duty station without the prior approval of the UN medical officer who may in special circumstances, approve the request from a staff member when the competent medical facilities are not available in the duty station or when the staff member requires accompanying family care during the treatment.

Q

What are my options if I am absent due to illness for an extended period of time and have used all of my sick leave?

A

A staff member's maximum entitlement to sick leave will be determined by the type and duration of his or her appointment. When the entitlement to sick leave has been exhausted, further certified sick leave shall be charged to annual leave. When this entitlement has been exhausted, the staff member will be placed on special leave without pay at which time a determination will be made if the staff member could be considered for a disability pension.

Q

Does the doctor's note I provided for certifying sick leave have to include the diagnosis?

A

Certified sick leave of more than seven days and up to 20 days during the annual cycle requires certification without diagnosis from a licensed medical practitioner. After 20 days during the annual cycle the medical certification must include the diagnosis and you submit the certification with the diagnosis to your Medical Service.

Q

Can sick leave days be used by a staff member to attend to a family illness or emergency?

A

Uncertified sick leave (maximum 7 days leave with pay) may also be used by staff to attend to family-related emergencies. Should a staff member utilize this option, they are required to make every effort to inform their supervisor in advance of the proposed leave and of its duration. However, if this is not possible, he or she shall provide the required information on the first day taken as emergency family leave.

In cases of death or emergency of an immediate family member and additional time off is required, a staff member may apply for Special Leave (without pay) for a maximum duration of two weeks plus necessary travel time.

Q

Does my salary continue during the days I am on sick leave?

A

Yes .Sickness and emergencies are unpredictable. The Organization continues to pay your salary while you are recovering as long as it is within your maximum entitlement limits and proper medical documentation is submitted, when required.

Q

If I become sick while on annual leave, how should this be reported and subsequently recorded for time and attendance purposes?

A

Sick leave during annual leave may be approved if a staff member is ill for more than five consecutive working days (not including weekends or holidays), in any seven day period while on annual leave, including home leave, provided that the sick leave is certified. If the illness does not cover more than five consecutive working days, the entire duration of absence is considered annual leave.

Q

Is it possible to use my uncertified sick leave as "personal days"?

A

Uncertified sick leave is intended for use by staff members when they are unable to perform their duties due to illness or injury for short periods of time. Uncertified sick leave (maximum 7 days leave with pay) may also be used by staff to attend to family-related emergencies. Should a staff member utilize this option, they are required to make every effort to inform their supervisor in advance of the proposed leave and of its duration. However, if this is not possible, he or she shall provide the required information on the first day taken as emergency family leave. Leave taken for this purpose is not considered as "personal days".