

 Weill Cornell Medicine	WCM Administrative Policy and Procedure	
	Policy Title	Furloughs
	Policy Number	HR-640.11
	Department/Office	Human Resources
	Effective Date	June 17, 2025
	Last Reviewed	N/A
	Approved By	Board of Trustees Executive Committee; Endorsed by WCM-Executive Policy Review Group
	Approval Date	June 17, 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the general guidelines and procedures for furloughs.

Scope

This is a college-wide policy that applies to all faculty and staff, except for tenured faculty and unionized workers. Employees belonging to bargaining units should refer to their union contracts.

Policy

A furlough is a mandatory, temporary, unpaid reduction in appointment effort during which time impacted employees remain employed. A furlough may consist of (a) reduced number of work hours in a day with proportionate reduction in pay; (b) reduced number of workdays in a week or reduced number of work week(s) every month with proportionate reduction in pay; or (c) specific days off without pay. A furlough must be for less than six months.

Procedures

A. General Terms

Furlough decisions are made by WCM academic and HR leadership after consultation with department heads. The effective dates, terms and conditions of the furlough will be communicated in writing to the employee by Human Resources. Employees on furlough may not perform any work on WCM matters during the furlough.

B. Benefits and Services

Employees are entitled to a continuation of certain benefits while on furlough, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for each particular benefit during the furlough. Salary advances are not permitted.

Refer to Table 1 below for a summary of benefits available during furlough.

The benefits described in this summary are set forth in formal plan documents and insurance policies (if applicable). If there is a conflict between the summary of benefits described in this policy and the formal plan document and/or insurance policy, the formal plan document and/or insurance policy will control. WCM reserves the right to amend, terminate, or suspend any of the benefits described in this policy to the extent permitted by law. An amendment, termination or suspension may occur without the consent or and without prior notice to any active or former employee.

Caution: Failure to make any required premium payments on any benefit will result in the discontinuation of that benefit.

Table 1 – Benefits During Furlough

Network Identification and Access	<p>For Employees 100% Furloughed: Each department reserves the right to restrict or deactivate access to WCM's electronic systems during periods when a furloughed employee is 100% off duty. Email accounts will remain active.</p> <p>For Employees Furloughed less than 100%: Access to WCM's electronic systems will continue. Email accounts will remain active.</p>
Sick, Vacation, and Personal Leave	<p>For Employees 100% Furloughed: A furloughed employee who is a 100% off duty during the furlough period will not accrue sick, vacation or personal leave.</p> <p>For Employees Furloughed less than 100%: Employees will accrue sick, vacation and personal leave on a prorated basis, based on the number of hours and days the employee is scheduled to work during a given work week. Employees may continue to use accrued sick, vacation and personal leave during the furlough period for scheduled workdays only.</p>
Holiday Pay	<p>An employee on furlough is eligible to receive pay for WCM holidays only in the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The period of furlough is less than thirty calendar days. 2. They are placed on furlough within seven calendar days of the upcoming WCM holiday. 3. They are placed on, or recalled from, furlough during the WCM holiday. 4. They are recalled from furlough within seven calendar days after the end of the WCM holiday.
Unemployment Insurance	<p>The Department of Labor has established an automated system to apply for unemployment insurance. Call toll-free 1-888-209-8124 to apply. Note: Reporting to the local unemployment office is no longer necessary. Employees working fully remote outside of New York State can find state unemployment office contact information here.</p>
WCM Identification Card	<p>The WCM ID card is retained throughout the furlough period, and it entitles employees to the privileges that the card confers during the furlough period.</p>
Housing	<p>Through the furlough period, employees who are domiciled in WCM Housing may remain in housing under the current terms of their agreement and in accordance with WCM Housing policies. Rent payments must be made directly to WCM. Continued compliance with Housing Terms and Conditions is</p>

	required. Employees in NYP Housing should arrange for their payments through NYP Housing office.
Scheduled Vacations	A non-academic employee who is notified of an upcoming furlough may request to use accrued vacation before the start of their furlough, in accordance with WCM's Policy 121, Vacation , as applicable. The supervisor must approve such arrangements. If approved, the effective date of furlough will be the first day after the use of vacation time ends.
Medical, Dental, and Vision Coverages	All benefits-eligible employees may continue certain insurance benefit coverages during a furlough through a direct billing arrangement with the third-party billing administrator (currently, Health Equity). The third-party billing administrator will bill for continuation of coverage for Medical, Dental, Optional Vision, Optional Term Life Insurance and/or Dependent Life Insurance. Employee benefits contributions will be charged at the employee's regular rate for the period of the furlough, with the exception of Basic Life Insurance which is continued at no cost. Upon return from furlough, if applicable, benefits will be reinstated in accordance with the terms of the plans.
Basic Life Insurance	Basic Life Insurance will continue during the furlough period, provided employee continues making all required contributions.
Supplemental Life Insurance	Supplemental Life Insurance will continue during the furlough period, provided the employee continues making all required contributions and make payments directly to the third-party administrator (currently Health Equity).
Long-term Disability	<p>For Employees 100% Furloughed: Long-Term Disability coverage will cease during the furlough period. The employee can request to convert their WCM coverage to an individual LTD policy by contacting the HR Solution Center at 646-962-9247. Conversion forms are due to the provider within 31 days of coverage termination date.</p> <p>For Employees Furloughed less than 100%: Proportionate benefits continue and employees should contact the HR Solutions Center at 646-962-9247 for further information.</p>
New York State Short-Term Disability	<p>For Employees 100% Furloughed: New York State Short-Term Disability coverage continues for four consecutive weeks from the effective day of furlough without any required contributions. In such circumstances the furloughed employee will be eligible for statutory benefits provided under New York State law.</p>

	<p>For Employees Furloughed less than 100%: Proportionate benefits continue under WCM Policy. Employees should contact the HR Solutions Center at 646-962-9247 for further information.</p>
Healthcare and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)	<p>Healthcare and Dependent Care Flexible Spending (FSA) pre-tax contributions will cease as of the end of the month in which the furlough begins. The employee may submit claims incurred before the end of the month of furlough to the FSA carrier for reimbursement before March 31 of the following year. Once employment is reinstated, if applicable, employee contribution will be recalculated over the remaining pay periods in the calendar year and eligible expenses incurred during furlough through December 31 can be submitted for reimbursement.</p>
Tuition Programs	<p>Children of furloughed employees will continue to qualify for the Children's Tuition Scholarship Plan during the entirety of a furlough period.</p>
Tuition Reimbursement Plan	<p>Tuition Reimbursement Plan benefits will only be paid upon return from furlough for successfully completed courses approved before the furlough begins.</p>
Retirement Plans	<p>During a furlough, WCM will not make contributions to an employee's retirement plan. Employees are also ineligible to make contributions to their Voluntary Retirement Plan account.</p> <p>The time an employee was on a furlough will count towards credited service time for retirement or retiree medical benefits if the furlough extends beyond 30 days as long as the employee returns to employment at WCM from furlough.</p> <p>Credited service towards retirement or retiree medical benefits will only extend if the furlough is less than 30 days and the employee returns to employment at WCM after the furlough period ends.</p>
Retiree Medical Benefits	<p>Employees who have met the eligibility requirements for retiree medical benefits as of the date their furlough begins will remain eligible for those benefits.</p>
Commuter Benefit	<p>If the date a furlough begins is on or before the 4th of the month, the commuter benefit will cease at the end of the month during which the employee was furloughed. If the beginning of the furlough is after 4th of the month, the commuter benefit will cease at the end of the following month.</p>

Other

Acceptance of Temporary Employment During Furlough

Acceptance of temporary or casual employment outside of the university is permissible during the furlough period.

Compliance with this Policy

All members of the WCM workforce are responsible for adhering to this policy. Failure to comply will be evaluated could lead to corrective action, up to and including termination.

Contact Information

Human Resources Solutions Center

Phone: 646-962-9247

References

WCM HR Policy 121 - Vacation

Policy Approval

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees (BOT) Executive Committee on May 21, 2025.

This policy was endorsed by the WCM-Executive Policy Review Group on June 17, 2025.

Version History

Date	Author	Revisions
6/17/2025	Human Resources	Original date of issue.