



Please email additional questions to:
doe_info@notes.k12.hi.us

FURLOUGHS
Frequently Asked Questions
(not applicable to charter schools)
as of June 10, 2010

NOTE: For specific contract questions, please contact your union.

GENERAL

Q 1. What is a furlough?

A 1. A furlough is the placement of an employee temporarily and involuntarily in a non-pay and non-duty status by the Employer because of lack of work or funds, or other non-disciplinary reasons. Furloughs result in a reduction in workdays, which in turn results in a reduction in one's salary. Furlough days are to be considered similarly to any other unscheduled workday (i.e. Saturday and Sunday).

Q 2. Will a furlough change my employee status?

A 2. A furlough does not involve a change to one's salary range, pay grade or employment status.

Q 3. How many furlough days will teachers need to take under the agreement with HSTA?

A 3. For school year 2010-11, 10-month and 12-month teachers will be furloughed 6 and 10 days, respectively.

Q 4. How many furlough days will the superintendent, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendents, and complex area superintendents take?

A 4. For school year 2010-11, the superintendent's leadership team will be furloughed for 10 days.

Q 5. How many furlough days will HGEA employees need to take under their contract agreement?

A 5. Ten-month HGEA employees will be furloughed 6 days (school year 2010-11). Twelve-month HGEA employees will be furloughed 13 days (school year 2010-11).

Q 6. How many furlough days will UPW employees need to take under their contract agreement?

A 6. Unit 1 12-month UPW employees will be furloughed 13 days (school year 2010-11). Unit 10 12-month UPW employees will be furloughed 13 days (school year 2010-11).

Q 7. How will furlough days for HSTA or HGEA affect DOE casual hourly workers?

A 7. The following casual hourly workers will not report to work on furlough days: Part-time teachers (PTTs), Para-Professional Tutors (PPTs), Meal Count Assistants, Student Helpers, Classroom Cleaners, Adult Supervisors, A+ workers, Peer Tutors, and Work Study Enrollees. (See Unemployment Q1.)

Q 8. Can I substitute vacation or sick days for furlough days?

A 8. No. Employees may not substitute any paid leave or compensatory time off for a designated furlough day. Furlough days may not be taken in partial-day increments. Furloughed employees should withdraw their requests for vacation/personal leave on furlough days.

Q 9. How will furloughs affect sick and vacation accruals?

A 9. Sick and vacation accruals will not be affected. Employees will continue to accrue sick and vacation at their normal rate.

Q 10. When will DOE employees begin to see an adjustment in their 2010-2011 school year paychecks?

A 10. Adjustments to pay for the Superintendent's Leadership Team, 12-month DOE HGEA, and 12-month DOE UPW workers will begin on July 20, 2010 for employees hired prior to July 1, 1998, and on August 5, 2010 for employees hired on July 1, 1998 or later. Adjustments to pay for 10-month DOE HGEA employees and teachers will start on August 20, 2010 and on July 20, 2010 for 12-month teachers.

Q 11. Can furloughed employees work more than 32 hours during a furlough week?

A 11. Full-time exempt and non-exempt employees should not be permitted to work more than 32 hours during a furlough week. Duties and work responsibilities may need to be re-prioritized during these time periods. However, on few occasions, *exceptions to work beyond the 32 hours may be granted by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis and must be approved prior to the requested work date. ***Exception procedures have been sent to principals and administrators.**

BENEFITS

Q 1. What happens to my health benefits if I am furloughed?

A 1. Your eligibility for health benefits through the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund (EUTF) will continue, as long as your premium payments are made on time.

If you do not have sufficient monthly earnings to pay for your insurance premiums, the EUTF will send you a Notice of Premium Shortage with instructions on how to reinstate your health benefits. For additional information, please contact EUTF at 586-7390 (Oahu) or 1-800-295-0089 (Neighbor Islands); or visit website: eutf.hawaii.gov.

For information regarding health benefits through the Hawaii State Teachers Association VEBA Trust, please contact the HSTA VEBA Trust office at 591-2823 (Oahu) or 1-800-637-4926 (Neighbor Islands).

Q 2. May I change health plans in order to reduce my monthly deductions?

A 2. Employees may make changes to their health plans only during the annual Open Enrollment Period.

Q 3. May I make changes to my retirement and benefit plan deductions if I'm furloughed in order to reduce my monthly deductions? (e.g., ERS - NO, deferred compensation - YES, TSA - YES, PCP - NO.)

A 3. It depends. For information, contact Chasity Dezzani, DOE Personnel Management Specialist, Employee Benefits Unit at 586-3245 or by email at Employee_Benefits@notes.k12.hi.us.

Q 4. What happens to my Employees' Retirement System (ERS) service credits if I am furloughed?

A 4. The furloughs will not affect your ERS service credits as long as you work at least 15 or more calendar days (14 days in February) per month, which is equivalent to a full month of service credit for that month.

For additional information, please visit the ERS website at: www4.hawaii.gov/ers or contact ERS at 586-1735. Neighbor Islands may call toll free to Oahu for assistance.

Hawaii: 974-4000 ext. 61736

Kauai: 274-3141 ext. 61736

Maui: 984-2400 ext. 61736 Molokai/Lanai: 1-800-468-4644 ext. 61736

Q 5. Will furloughs affect my "high three" (three highest average salaried years) for Employees' Retirement System (ERS) benefits?

A 5. Yes. Furloughs will result in a pay reduction, thus your annual average salary will be reduced. However, the Employees' Retirement System will take your three highest average salaried years for computing retiring benefits.

CAMPUS VISITS

Q 1. On a furlough day, can a teacher visit her/his classroom to set it up?

A 1. We recognize historically teachers have visited their classrooms on non-work days to get an early start on lessons and to fix up their rooms. By being on campus during a furlough day, teachers may attract students to school—this type of situation not only raises safety concerns but also other liability issues. We are asking teachers for their cooperation in honoring the HSTA contract.

Q 2. On a furlough day, can HGEA or UPW employees visit their offices or workplace?

A 2. Like teachers, we are asking HGEA and UPW employees for their cooperation in honoring their collective bargaining contracts.

CLASSIFICATION/COMPENSATION

Q 1. While on furlough, can I perform duties elsewhere (e.g. telecommuting) for the DOE during my regular work hours?

A 1. No. On a furlough day, employees on furlough are not permitted to work at their regular job or any other job with the DOE. "Work" includes checking email, voicemail and using any electronic devices to check status of open items and responding to same.

Q 2. Can I volunteer to work while on furlough (or any other day) for the DOE?

A 2. No. Employees on furlough are not permitted to work at their regular job. Also, furloughed employees may not volunteer to work at their regular job or any other job with the DOE.

DIFFERENTIALS

Q 1. How will the furlough affect the National Board Certification differential teachers may be currently receiving?

A 1. Fixed-dollar amount differentials (such as National Board Certification, department chair, grade-level chair differentials, etc.) will remain the same, without reduction, so the gross differential pay will remain unchanged. Pay reductions due to furloughs will be applied to the teacher's base pay.

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT

Q 1. Are there supports available for employees to help them cope with the emotional and financial stress of the furloughs?

A 1. We suggest employees dial **211** for assistance, Monday – Friday from 6:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Or visit www.auw211.org to search the **211** online database. Provided by Aloha United Way, this free service is confidential and toll-free statewide. Multilingual assistance is available.

The Hawaii State Board of Education and Department of Education have partnered with Aloha United Way to provide students, employees, and families with information and referrals on everything from crisis intervention to job training. During these tough economic times, **211** provides hope.

HALF-TIME TEACHERS

Q 1. How do the furlough days work for a half-time teacher (specifically, if a teacher does not work on Fridays)?

A 1. The teacher and the principal will need to work together to reduce weekly hours by 3.5 hours. Weekly hours will be no more than 14 hours per week or 28 hours over 2 weeks. Individual work schedules are to be worked out with principal.

JOB SHARE

Q 1. How are teachers on job share impacted?

A 1. Schedules will have to be adjusted, and worked out with principal at school level.

LEAVES

Q 1. If an employee needs to take sick, professional, or personal leave on a furlough day what do they do?

A 1. No action is necessary. If the leave falls on a furlough day, no paperwork needs to be completed.

Q 2. Will furlough days affect leave while a HSTA or HGEA employee is out on maternity leave?

A 2. HSTA or HGEA employees on maternity leave will not be charged sick leave on furlough days. Any sick leave will only cover absences for work days excluding the furlough days. Furlough days are considered non-work, non-paid days.

PARKING

Q 1. What will happen to my State parking if I do not have enough in my paycheck to cover for parking deductions?

A 1. Your parking assignment will continue as long as you can make the payment on a timely basis. DAGS Automotive Management Division/Parking Control Branch will accept out of pocket payments. Arrangements can be made by calling (808) 586-0344. Parking fee will not be pro-rated for days not in use due to furlough.

PAYROLL – PAPER PAYCHECKS

Q 1. Many employees hired prior to 1998 still receive a paper paycheck rather than utilizing direct deposit. Will their paychecks arrive in a timely manner at schools and offices?

A 1. Employees are encouraged to sign up for direct deposit. There may be a 24 to 48 hour delay for paper paychecks to arrive at schools/offices as courier services are being reduced.

SABBATICAL LEAVE

Q 1. Will HSTA or HGEA employees on sabbatical leave be affected by the furlough?

A 1. Yes. The pay for HSTA or HGEA employees on sabbatical leave will be reduced by the furlough.

SALARY/PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Q 1. Would a furlough affect my salary?

A 1. Your salary range/base pay will remain the same. However, you would not be paid for the furlough days as they are non-work days. Reduced work days will result in a lower gross salary adjusted to reflect the furlough.

Q 2. Would furloughs impact automatic payment deductions?

A 2. It could. If you pay bills or loans through automatic pay deduction from your checking account each month, you should review your pay deductions against your adjusted income (due to furlough adjustments to pay) to ensure that sufficient funds are available to cover any deductions.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Q 1. Are employees eligible to collect unemployment insurance for the furlough days?

A 1. An employee must be either totally unemployed or working less than their normal hours and earning less than what their weekly benefit amount would be on a continuous basis. For answers, contact:

Dept. of Labor & Industrial Relations

830 Punchbowl St.

Honolulu, HI 96813

<http://hawaii.gov/labor>

Email: dliir.director@hawaii.gov

Business Hours: Mon. - Fri., 7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (except holidays)

http://hawaii.gov/labor/ui/pdf/EE_FAQ_2009_rev_4-14-09.pdf

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Q 1. Will the furlough affect my workers' compensation?

A 1. No.

NOTE: *The aforementioned is intended to briefly address important issues that may be of concern to you in the event of a furlough. This is not a legal document or contract, and may be subject to change.*