

Faculty Senate's Ad-hoc Furlough Committee Report

The intent of our furlough guidance ad-hoc committee was to assist faculty with the furlough process. Though some aspects of the furlough process appear to be functioning as intended, unfortunately we did identify problems with UW-Whitewater's furlough process.

The half-day and one-day furlough process seems to be working. Faculty should use the instructions provided by HR. These instructions have been provided by email but there is also information available at this UWW website: <https://www.uww.edu/adminaffairs/hr/covid-19-employee-resources#IntermittentFurlough>. Questions can be directed to HR at HR@uww.edu. The stated process includes coordinating with one's department chair and then using the My UW System timesheet entry of Furlough Unpaid Monthly (COVID FURLOUGH) for either 4 or 8 hours using dates that accord with the UWW academic pay plan periods (<https://uwservice.wisconsin.edu/calendars-schedules/academic-payroll/>).

Shortcomings: The process for taking consecutive furlough days does not seem to be working correctly. The process, as we understand it, is to first coordinate with one's department chair for agreement on the consecutive days of furlough to be taken. The department chair then seeks approval from their college's dean and the approved request is forwarded to HR for processing. We have been made aware of several instances of faculty requesting consecutive furlough days, receiving a letter from HR acknowledging as such, and yet no deduction being made to their paychecks. HR and higher administration have been made aware of this problem. As of the time of this report, no solution has been provided.

Unemployment Insurance (UI): Generally, individuals who experience a wage reduction equivalent to 8 hours in a 40-hour work week and who have earned less than \$500 in that week from all employers are eligible to apply for unemployment compensation. For more information, please visit: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui/>

It is unclear if faculty qualify for state unemployment benefits for consecutive days of furlough. Based on what we found, non-instructional academic staff who applied for unemployment through the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) during the time period covered by the CARES Act have been successful in receiving unemployment benefits. However, in our limited sample size of faculty we did not find instances of faculty being successful with their unemployment claims. In the cases for which we are aware the outcome of faculty claims has been either "pending" or denial of benefits. Faculty who are interested in applying for unemployment should visit this state website: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/apply/>.

We reached out to DWD for more information via phone and email but have received no response. Our caution to faculty is that it is an opaque, lengthy process and varies cases by case. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that faculty will be eligible for unemployment for any consecutive days of furlough. Faculty can certainly apply but the outcome is anything but clear.

Furlough Tips

How many days?

- 1 day/bi-weekly pay period (Intermittent Furlough)
 - o Email your supervisor for the record. Enter your furlough day on the time sheet.
 - o Intermittent furlough does not need to be requested 14 days in advance. 3 days should be sufficient.
- 2 or more consecutive days (Consecutive Furlough)
 - o Request supervisor approval 14 days in advance. HR will send you a confirmation letter after receiving approval from your supervisor(s).
- Furloughs must be submitted and approved BY THE 15TH OF EACH MONTH for the reduction in pay to occur on that monthly payroll; i.e. submit/approve furlough for the full month of September by September 15th to ensure processing on the September payroll, paid October 1st. If not completed timely, the reduction in pay will occur on the next payroll.

Where do I enter and track my furlough days?

- Enter: <https://my.wisconsin.edu/> → Time and Absence → Request Absence
- Track: <https://my.wisconsin.edu/> → Time and Absence → Payable Time
- **Instructional staff** will submit furlough hours taken as an absence request for the day they are taking, which can be entered in advance. "COVID FURLOUGH" should be selected as the absence type.
 - [UW System tipsheet](#)
- **Non-Instructional Academic Staff** need to follow the below:
 - [UW Tipsheet](#)
 - Non-Instructional Academic Staff on intermittent furlough will need to record their furlough hours on the timesheet in their portal. They will also have to fill in the timesheet for the full week when taking a furlough day.
- **Bi-weekly employee's** [furlough time entry tipsheet](#).
- **Legal holidays and the use of furlough**
 - o An employee may take furlough the day before or the day after a legal holiday. If furlough is taken both the day before and the day after a legal holiday, the employee will not earn or be paid for the holiday. To earn and be paid for a legal holiday, employees must be in pay status the day before or the day after the legal holiday. Pay status includes working or using paid leave. Furlough is unpaid time off. The full text of the policy may be found here: [Legal Holiday Policy](#)
 - o To be eligible for a paid legal holiday, you must:
 - § Be eligible for sick leave
 - § Be actively employed on the legal holiday
 - § And one of the following:
 - Be paid for the work day immediately before the legal holiday
 - Be paid for the first work day immediately following the legal holiday
 - Work on the legal holiday

*** For more questions, please refer to HR's FAQ:

<https://www.uww.edu/adminaffairs/hr/covid-19-employee-resources#IntermittentFurlough>