

Education Leave Policy	Policy Number: PA-503
Last Reviewed: 2019/09/01	Next Review: 2021/01/01

Purpose:

1. The Pinnguaq Association recognizes that its employees are a valuable asset. Employee career development and organizational development must be managed so that the Pinnguaq Association will have qualified employees to meet its future staffing needs.
2. To help meet this goal, the Pinnguaq Association may grant Education Leave to employees, subject to operational and staffing needs and budgetary considerations, in accordance with the provisions in this policy.
3. These guidelines and procedures apply to all indeterminate, salaried employees. Employees must have completed at least three years of satisfactory continuous service to be eligible for Education Leave. This requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Executive Director of the Pinnguaq Association.

Policy Statement: Employees of Pinnguaq Association may be entitled to take an Educational Leave, and apply for Educational Leave support.

1. Definitions:

- 1.1. Academic Year** is equal to two consecutive terms or semesters, usually eight months, but no more than 12 months.
- 1.2. Base Salary** refers to the employee's current rate of pay and does not include any additional compensation, benefits and allowances.
- 1.3. Continuous Service** refers to (i) (a) uninterrupted employment with the Pinnguaq Association;
- 1.4. Education Leave** refers to leave granted to an employee to take full-time postsecondary studies for a predetermined period of time (with the possibility of renewal by mutual agreement). The studies must be taken at a recognized university, college, vocational, professional or technical institute that is approved by the Employer. Education Leave includes academic upgrading when necessary to qualify employees to enter postsecondary studies. Employee participation in short term professional development activities such as workshops, seminars and conferences is considered duty travel, not Education Leave.

- 1.5. **Financial Assistance** refers to money paid to or on behalf of an employee for the purpose of participating in an educational or training program. It may include all or some portion of the employee's salary and/or course related costs.
 - 1.6. **Long Term Education Leave** refers to leave for a period of up to one Academic Year in duration (longer than six months), taken for education purposes. Additional leave may be approved if the program of study is longer than one Academic Year.
 - 1.7. **Short Term Education Leave** refers to leave for a period of less than one Academic Year (but not longer than six months), taken for education purposes.
2. **Procedures:**
- 2.1. Employees wishing to apply for Education Leave should meet with their supervisor ahead of time to discuss time frame, feasibility, costs and other pertinent factors.
 - 2.2. Applications for Short Term Education Leave must be received by the Executive Director of the Pinguuq Association at least four months prior to the date the program is scheduled to commence.
 - 2.3. Applications for Long Term Education Leave must be received prior to February 1st for a program scheduled to commence in the summer or fall semester. For courses commencing in the winter or spring semester, the deadline for receipt of applications will be September 1st of the previous year.
 - 2.4. The application form is available on the Google Website for Training and Development. The same application form is used for both Short Term and Long Term Education Leave.
 - 2.5. The completed application form should be submitted to the employee's supervisor for review and approval.
 - 2.6. The employee's supervisor will submit the completed application to the Executive Director for review.
3. **Application Review Process**
- 3.1. Education Leave may be approved for one or more of the following reasons:
 - 3.1.1. the employee's skills are obsolete and the employee needs retraining to carry out the work;
 - 3.1.2. the employee needs to take courses to keep abreast of new knowledge and techniques or to maintain certification;
 - 3.1.3. qualified persons cannot be recruited, making it necessary to train employees;

- 3.1.4. a high potential employee’s career could be enhanced by completing the education or training.
- 3.2. The following should be considered when reviewing applications for Education Leave:
 - 3.2.1. relationship of proposed curriculum subjects to present or anticipated future duties;
 - 3.2.2. whether the training has been requested by the employer or the employee;
 - 3.2.3. organization Indigenous Employment Plan and Business Plan objectives
 - 3.2.4. length of service of applicant;
 - 3.2.5. applicant’s learning plan or annual performance appraisal supports the necessity of attendance at an educational institution;
 - 3.2.6. cost of proposed Education Leave (to applicant and to the employer);
 - 3.2.7. operational requirement.
4. **Short Term Education Leave**
 - 4.1. Executive Director, in consultation with the supervisor, will review the application for Short Term Education Leave.
 - 4.2. The Executive Director will advise the applicant in writing whether the application has been approved or denied within thirty (30) days after the completed application form has been received.
 - 4.3. Periods of Short Term Education Leave may not be linked together to provide for Long Term Education Leave benefits.
5. **Long Term Education Leave**
 - 5.1. The Executive Director will establish an internal Education Leave Committee that is responsible for reviewing all applications for Long Term Education Leave that are requesting Financial Assistance. The departmental Education Leave Committee will normally consist of the following:
 - Executive Director (1);
 - Senior Manager (1)
 - Human Resources (1)

- 5.2. At the discretion of the Committee Chairperson, additional departmental representatives may be assigned to the Education Leave Committee (i.e. finance/corporate services, sector specialist etc.)
- 5.3. The Education Leave Committee will develop clear processes and an evaluation tool to make decisions on applications for education leave .
- 5.4. The Executive Director will endeavour to advise the applicant in writing whether the application has been approved or denied within thirty (30) days after the application deadline.
- 5.5. Education Leave without Financial Assistance can be approved by the Executive Director without review by the Education Leave Committee.
- 5.6. It is the employee's responsibility to clearly demonstrate in his/her application for Education Leave the relevance of the proposed program of study and how the skills and/or knowledge gained will be utilized upon his/her return to work.

6. Levels of Financial Assistance

- 6.1. The Pinnguaq Association will ensure that Financial Assistance for Education Leave (both Short Term and Long Term) is granted consistently and fairly using established guidelines.

7. Education Leave with Financial Assistance

7.1. Basic Assistance

- 7.1.1. Basic assistance is paid to all employees whose applications have been approved for Education Leave that is generally or directly related to present or future requirements of employment with the Pinnguaq Association. Basic assistance will include, but is not limited to such costs as:

- Tuition
- one-time return travel expenses from home community to location of educational institution
- books and other required materials
- laboratory fees
- registration fees

7.2. Partial Allowance in Lieu of Salary

- 7.2.1. In addition to the basic assistance described in 7.11, the employee maybe eligible to receive an allowance in lieu of present Base Salary for the duration of the

Education Leave. The allowance would be based on service of the employee, be subject to the decision of the Internal Education Leave Committee and allow for a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of Base Salary.

- 7.2.2.** This may be increased at the discretion of the Internal Education Leave Committee in exceptional circumstances.

8. Employee Agreement

- 8.1.** Before starting Education Leave, employees must show proof of acceptance by the educational institution.
- 8.2.** Employees on Education Leave must sign a Leave of Absence Agreement which stipulates the terms and conditions of the Education Leave.
- 8.3.** No Vacation Leave or Personal Emergency Leave will accrue during the Education Leave period.
- 8.4.** After successful completion of the Education Leave, the Employee will return to his/her original position or a comparable position, at a salary rate not less than that which he/she received prior to the period of Education Leave.
- 8.5.** Employees who accept Education Leave must return to employment with Pinnguaq for a period at least equal to the period of leave granted.
- 8.6.** Vacation and Personal Emergency Days will not be accrued during the Education Leave.

9. Return to Work During Leave

- 9.1.** Employment during academic breaks is optional and is counted towards returned service. Employees have two options for these returns to the workplace:

Option 1: Return with Pay

- Employee must submit a request to the Executive Director one month prior stating their desired date and length of the return to work.
- Employees must return to work for a one week period at minimum.
- Hours completed during an employees return to work, contribute to the total hours owed upon completion of schooling.
- Employees on return with pay arrangements will be considered to be on a break from education leave and paid their regular hourly wage.

Option 2: Return without Pay

- Employee must submit a request to return to work one week prior to Executive Director stating their desired date and length of the return to work.
- No minimum hours of work are required.
- Hours completed during an employee's return to work, contribute to the total hours owed upon completion of schooling. On the recommendation of the employee's supervisor, the Executive Director may recognize unpaid work at a rate of 2 times the hours worked:
 - For each 1 unpaid hour worked, 2 hours may be recognized and deducted from the employee's return to employment obligation.
- Employees on return without pay arrangements will be considered to be on education leave and all pay details related to their leave will remain in effect during their return without pay period.

10. If the employee on Education Leave:

- 10.1. Fails to complete the approved program of studies without justifiable reasons;
- 10.2. Does not resume employment with the employer following completion of the program;
or
- 10.3. Terminates employment (or is terminated) prior to completing the return of service period as described;
- 10.4. The employee shall repay the employer all financial assistance paid to him/her during the education leave or a lesser sum on a prorated basis.
- 10.5. If the Employee fails to complete this agreement through unforeseen circumstances, the Employee may request a review of those circumstances by the Executive Director and the Employee from further obligation at the Executive Director's discretion.
- 10.6. A signed, original copy of the Leave of Absence Agreement will be placed in the employee's personnel file and a copy should be retained by the department and the employee.