

## **POLICY MANUAL**

### **CHAPTER 6 - HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES**

#### **6.33 MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**

##### **Purpose**

Mississippi Lottery Corporation is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal and state law, it is Mississippi Lottery Corporation's policy that no employee or prospective employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination based on that person's membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the uniformed services of the United States. Specifically, no person will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion or other benefit of employment on the basis of such membership. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised his or her rights under applicable law or this policy. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of this policy, the employee should immediately contact the Human Resources (HR) department.

##### **Eligibility**

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are covered under this policy. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the uniformed services, including active duty, reserve or National Guard, for training, periods of active military service and funeral honors duty, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Subject to certain exceptions under the law, these benefits are generally limited to five years of leave of absence.

##### **Procedures for Military Leave**

Unless military necessity prevents it, or is otherwise impossible or unreasonable, an employee should provide Mississippi Lottery Corporation with notice of the need for leave as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances.

To request a temporary or extended military leave of absence, the employee should generally obtain a request for leave of absence form from HR. Written notice is preferred, but not required under the law or this policy.

HR will review the request for leave of absence, collect any applicable insurance premiums from the employee, generate other applicable documents and process the leave of absence accordingly. In the event of verbal notice by the employee, HR will document the military leave on a leave of absence form.

Employees on temporary or extended military leave may, at their option, use any or all personal time off during their absence.

When the employee intends to return to work, he or she must make application for reemployment to HR within the application period set forth below. If the employee does not intend to return to work, he or she should notify HR as soon as practicable.

##### **Benefits**

If an employee is absent from work due to military service, benefits will continue as follows:

An employee on extended military leave may elect to continue group health insurance coverage for the employee and covered dependents under the same terms and conditions for a period not to exceed 31 days from the date the military leave of absence begins. The employee must pay, per pay period, the premium normally paid by the employee. After the initial 31-day period, the employee and covered dependents can continue group health insurance for up to 24 months at 102% of the overall (both employer and employee) premium rate. Employees must elect coverage and make the required payments to HR in a timely manner to continue coverage.

The group term life/AD&D insurance provided by Mississippi Lottery Corporation will terminate the day the employee becomes active military.

The group long term disability insurance provided by Mississippi Lottery Corporation will terminate the day the employee becomes active military.

Voluntary supplemental life/AD&D insurance will terminate the day the employee becomes active military. Converting to an individual policy may continue voluntary dependent life insurance coverage. To exercise this conversion option, dependents must submit a written application and the first premium payment to the insurance company within 31 days immediately following the termination of coverage.

Employees do not earn personal time off while on military leave of absence status.

With respect to Mississippi Lottery Corporation's retirement plan, immediately upon reemployment, employees who have taken military leave will be eligible, at the employee's election, to make any or all employee contributions that the employee would have been eligible to make had the employee's employment not been interrupted by military service. Such contributions must be made within a period that begins with the employee's reemployment and that is not greater in duration than three times the length of the employee's military service, and in no case may the period exceed five years from the date of reemployment. Employees will receive all related contributions as if the employee had not taken military leave.

### **Reemployment**

Upon an employee's prompt application for reemployment (as defined below), an employee will be reinstated to employment in the following manner depending upon the employee's period of military service:

*Less than 91 days of military service* – reinstated to a position that the employee would have attained if employment had not been interrupted by military service; or, if found not qualified for such position after reasonable efforts by Mississippi Lottery Corporation, in the position in which the employee had been employed prior to military service.

*More than 90 days and less than 5 years of military service* – reinstated to a position that the employee would have attained if employment had not been interrupted by military service or a position of like seniority, status and pay, the duties of which the employee is qualified to perform; or, if proved not qualified after reasonable efforts by Mississippi Lottery Corporation, in the position the employee left, or a position of like seniority, status and pay, the duties of which the employee is qualified to perform.

*Employee with a service-connected disability* - if after reasonable accommodation efforts by the employer, an employee with a service-connected disability is not qualified for employment in the position he or she would have attained or in the position that he or she left, the employee will be employed in another position of similar seniority, status and pay for which the employee is qualified or could become

qualified with reasonable efforts by Mississippi Lottery Corporation; or, if no such position exists, in the nearest approximation consistent with the circumstances of the employee's situation.

### **Application for Reemployment**

An employee who has engaged in military service must, in order to be entitled to the reemployment rights set forth above, submit an application for reemployment to HR according to the following schedule:

*If service is less than 31 days (or for the purpose of taking an examination to determine fitness for service) - the employee must report for reemployment at the beginning of the first full regularly scheduled working period on the first calendar day following completion of service and the expiration of eight hours after a time for safe transportation back to the employee's residence.*

*If service is for 31 days or more but less than 181 days - the employee must apply for reemployment with HR no later than 14 days following the completion of service.*

*If service is over 180 days - the employee must submit an application for reemployment with HR no later than 90 days following the completion of service.*

*If the employee is hospitalized or convalescing from a service-connected injury - the employee must apply for reemployment with HR no later than two years following completion of service.*

### **Exceptions to Reemployment**

In addition to the employee's failure to apply for reemployment in a timely manner, an employee is not entitled to reinstatement as described above if any of the following conditions exist:

- Mississippi Lottery Corporation's circumstances have so changed as to make reemployment impossible or unreasonable.
- Reemployment would pose an undue hardship upon Mississippi Lottery Corporation.
- The employee's employment prior to the military service was merely for a brief, non-recurrent period and there was no reasonable expectation that the employment would have continued indefinitely or for a significant period.
- The employee did not receive an honorable discharge from military service.

### **General Benefits Upon Reemployment**

Employees reemployed following military leave will receive seniority and other benefits determined by seniority that the employee had at the beginning of the military leave, plus any additional seniority and benefits the employee would have attained, with reasonable certainty, had the individual remained continuously employed. An employee's time spent on active military duty will be counted toward eligibility for FMLA leave. Additionally, upon reemployment, a covered employee will not be discharged except for cause for up to one year following reemployment.

### **Documentation**

The HR department will, upon the employee's reapplication for employment, request that the employee provide Mississippi Lottery Corporation with military discharge documentation to establish the timeliness of the application for reemployment, the duration of the military service, and the honorable discharge from the military service, if applicable.