

# Saint Joseph's College Policy Guidebook

## Human Resources

Section Name: Time Away From Work

Section Number: 9.14

Effective Date: 1/1/2022

### **SUBJECT: Maine Earned Paid Leave**

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#### **Purpose:**

The Maine Earned Paid Leave (MEPL) law requires employers to provide up to 40 hours of paid leave annually to their employees. It applies to employers with 10 or more employees across the State of Maine who work more than 120 hours per calendar year.

#### **Eligibility:**

All faculty, staff, and summer student employees (not enrolled in any classes) working in Maine. This includes full-time, part-time, temporary (SJC payroll), and per diem employee categories.

#### **Effective:**

Accrual of hours begins the first day of the calendar year or first day of employment, whichever is later.

#### **Policy:**

Employees will accrue one (1) hour of MEPL for every forty (40) hours worked, up to forty (40) hours in a calendar year. Employees may use the leave for any reason and will receive the same base rate of pay from the week immediately prior to the leave.

**Employee Notice** An employee must request MEPL for a planned absence, i.e. a vacation, a scheduled doctor's appointment, etc., at least four (4) weeks in advance. In the case of an unplanned absence, i.e. a sudden illness or emergency, the employee must make a good faith effort to inform their manager of their need to use MEPL. If using MEPL, employees will be asked for their general reason for the need for leave. They are not required to provide a specific reason for their leave, but are required to abide by these notice requirements.

A manager may only deny MEPL requests for the following reasons: 1) the request is within a department blackout period (noted below), 2) the leave was planned and the employee did not provide adequate notice, or 3) the leave is planned and granting it would create hardship.

**Department Considerations** Depending upon the nature of a specific department and operational needs, departments may institute “blackout” dates. Blackout dates are times throughout the year that employees may not utilize MEPL or earned time for planned purposes. Specific periods may include, but are not limited to, time around Commencement, the start or end of the academic year, fiscal year, or calendar year, etc. To understand if your department has blackout dates, please see your manager.

**MEPL Pay Rate** MEPL is paid out at the regular rate of pay in effect the week immediately prior to the taking of leave. This rate is calculated by dividing the total straight time earnings which includes any additional compensation included in the definition of the regular rate for the week, by total hours worked. Additional compensation could be in the form of adjunct/additional faculty contracts, stipend pay, on-call pay, etc. Additional pay does not include overtime pay.

**MEPL Carry Over** Any accrued, unused MEPL may carry over to the following calendar year. The number of hours carried over will limit the number of hours an employee is eligible to accrue the following year. Example: if an employee carries over 10 MEPL hours, they are eligible to accrue an additional 30 MEPL hours maximum in the new calendar year.

**Payout at Separation from Employment** Any accrued, unused MEPL will be paid out in the employee’s last paycheck. However, if the employee has a negative MEPL balance, the MEPL time owed will be deducted from the employee’s last paycheck.

**Procedure:**

Employees not eligible for the Earned Time benefit are eligible for MEPL.

MEPL may be requested before it is accrued and may be taken in different increments than earned time.

- Non-exempt (hourly) employees may take MEPL in 15 minute increments.
- Exempt (salaried) employees may take MEPL in one hour increments.

**To Request MEPL:**

Employees request the use of MEPL through the ADP portal.

