

Sam Houston State University
A Member of The Texas State University System

**Finance & Operations Human Resources Policy HR-08 Holiday
and Skeleton Crew Days**

- SUBJECT:** Holiday and Skeleton Crew Days
- PURPOSE:** To establish a standard policy for employees to regulate the administration of holidays and days operated with limited staff or skeleton crews.
- POLICY:** It is the policy of Sam Houston State University (University) to provide benefit-eligible employees time off with pay for holidays and to periodically schedule one or more days to conserve energy and operate with limited staff or skeleton crews.
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1. Eligibility and Pay

- a. All benefit-eligible employees, those employed to work at least twenty (20) hours per week for a period of at least four and one-half (4 1/2) months excluding students employed in positions which require student status as a condition of employment, are entitled to time off with pay in recognition of approved holidays as follows:
 - (1) A paid day off for the day the holiday is observed if the employee is not on unpaid leave.
 - (2) When employment begins on the first workday of a month, payment for observed holidays falling before the first workday in that month.
 - (3) When employment ends on the last workday of a month, payment for observed holidays falling after the last workday in that month.
- b. All benefit-eligible full-time employees receive pay for the day the holiday is observed equal to eight (8) hours or one day at the regular straight time rate. All eligible employees who work less than full-time receive pay for the day the holiday is observed on a proportionate basis.
- c. Lump sum vacation payments for terminating employees with at least six (6) months state service credit are computed as though the employee actually worked, and any state or national holiday that falls within this period is not charged against accrued vacation time; that is, holidays that fall on a recognized workday have the effect of extending the accrued vacation time.
- d. If a state or national holiday falls between the dates that an employee separates from one state agency and begins employment in another state agency without a break in service, the agency to which the employee transfers is responsible for paying the employee for the holiday.

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2. Holiday Schedule

- a. The Texas Legislature determines available holidays and each biennium the Texas Comptroller publishes the available days. Texas law permits institutions of higher education to arrange the available number of holidays in a schedule that provides efficient and economical operation (i.e., to incorporate a winter break).
- b. The University specific holiday schedule is prepared, approved by the president's cabinet, and forwarded to the Texas State University System for review. Although the days may be grouped differently, the total number of holidays observed by the University is the same as those entitled by law for employees of any state agency.

3. Time for Holidays Worked

All eligible employees who are working on the day a holiday is observed are entitled to: (1) compensating time off during the twelve-month period following the date of the holiday worked to be taken as mutually agreed upon by the employee and their supervisor, or (2) pay in lieu of time off for the hours worked equal to the employee's straight time rate when approved by the employee's supervisor and taking the time off would be disruptive to normal teaching, research, and other critical functions.

Compensatory time for working on a University scheduled holiday must be taken within twelve (12) months of earning. Employees are required to give reasonable advance notice when taking compensatory time, however, do not have to specify the reason for the request.

4. Skeleton Crew Days (staff employees)

- a. Campus Open on Skeleton Crew Days. The University may schedule one or more days to conserve energy and operate administrative offices with limited staff as provided on the University's [Holiday Calendar and Skeleton Crew Days](#). During Skeleton Crew Days, the offices listed in (d) below shall remain open with, at minimum, the smallest number of employees needed to keep the department in operation. Individuals assigned to work on a Skeleton Crew Day must be physically present in the office and, unless noted otherwise in the chart below, cannot work remotely.
- b. Work Schedules. Department heads and supervisors must equitably assign employees to skeleton crew schedules. Employees not assigned to a skeleton crew and who meet the leave or work-related criteria described in (c) below do not have to report to work on designated days.
- c. Employee Time Reporting.
 - (1) Non-exempt employees who do not work during Skeleton Crew Days must use and report compensatory time accrued in advance or accrued leave on the employee's semi-monthly time sheet. Compensatory time is earned as detailed in policy [HR-16 Work Schedules & Employee Compensation](#). Supervisors should provide ample opportunity for non-exempt full-time employees to earn compensatory time. If compensatory time and accrued leave are not available, a non-exempt employee must report to work on a Skeleton Crew Day.
 - (2) Exempt employees are expected to work the time necessary to accomplish the requirements of the job and do not accrue compensatory time. Exempt employees who are not assigned to a skeleton crew, have completed the requirements of their job, and have supervisor

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approval, are not required to work on Skeleton Crew Days. An exempt employee records only accrued leave taken on the semi-monthly report.

- d. **Offices Remaining Open on Skeleton Crew Days.** The University designates the President's Office, administrative offices for each campus and senior or divisional vice presidents, and those offices listed below as required to remain open on all non-holiday weekdays. A senior or divisional vice president may direct other offices remain open as needed.

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|--|---|
| Academic Affairs Academic Success Center** Dean's Offices Newton Gresham Library** Office of Research & Sponsored Programs SAM Center SHSU Online* The Woodlands Center | Finance & Operations Compliance & Insurance Controller's Office Emergency Management Facilities Management Facilities Business Services People Operations Procurement & Business Services University Police Department |
| Strategic Enrollment & Innovation Admissions Endpoint Management* Financial Aid & Scholarships Networking* IT Systems & Operations* Information Security & Compliance* IT Support Services (Service Desk) Office of the Registrar Student Account Services Veterans Benefits Processing Visitor Services | Student Affairs Dean of Students Health Center Residence Life Services for Students with Disabilities** Student Counseling Center Lowman Student Center |
| Integrated Marketing Communications Digital Media | University Advancement Alumni Relations Development |

*Offices with an asterisk may be remote and individuals assigned to a skeleton crew from such an office do not need to be physically present on campus.

**Offices with two asterisks are open on any Skeleton Crew Days scheduled during a class day as indicated on the Academic Calendar.

Questions about working on Skeleton Crew Days should be addressed to the supervisor or department head.

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5. Varying Work Schedules

Departments with work schedules other than the normal Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., will insure their eligible employees working unusual schedules observe the proportionately equivalent number of holidays each year as do employees working normal schedules.

6. Observing Religious Holidays

Employees are entitled to observe the optional religious holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Good Friday in lieu of any state holiday.

7. Time Reporting for Non-Exempt and Exempt FLSA Status

A staff employee's "Personnel Time Report" must reflect the number of hours worked during a pay period in which a holiday falls, including hours worked on a designated holiday. If an employee works on a holiday, the time worked should be reported in the appropriate time earned column following current "Personnel Time Report" guidelines. When the employee later uses the time, it is likewise recorded on the "Personnel Time Report". If an employee is to be paid for working on the holiday in lieu of compensatory time off, the hours worked on the holiday should be recorded in the appropriate time paid column. Those hours will be paid in the next regular check after the "Personnel Time Report" is submitted.

8. Essential Personnel

Essential personnel are designated by the employee's job description or notification of the designation by the appropriate Vice President, Dean, or Department head. Essential personnel may differ during an emergency or a closure event (see [PRE-07](#) and [FO-Pay-35](#)).

Essential personnel are identified as early as possible during an emergency-related closure, and respective department heads will notify employees as needed.

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By: Rhonda V. Beassie, VP for Administration