We Represent US Government Employees
LiUNA! 1776
Feel the Power

LIUNA Local 1776
PO Box 1794, Abita Springs, LA 70420 · 1 (800) 569-5861 · www.local1776.org

FACT SHEET

Military Leave: 20 Days a Year

Federal employees in the National Guard and Reserves now get 20 days (160 hours) of paid military leave every fiscal year, five more than before, and can carry up to 20 unused days into the next year.

THE BASICS

What Changed and Who Gets It

For years, regular military leave was 15 days a year. Section 1109 of the defense act for fiscal year 2025 (Public Law 118-159, signed December 23, 2024) changed "15 days" to "20 days" in the leave law, 5 U.S.C. 6323(a). It raised both the leave you get each year and the most you can carry over, and it took effect the day it was signed. Local 1776 pushed for this increase for years, along with other federal unions.

It covers any full-time federal civilian employee whose appointment is not limited to one year and who serves in the National Guard or Reserves. That includes dual-status technicians. Part-time employees get a proportional share.

This is the leave for regular military duty: active duty, active duty training and inactive duty training (drills). While you are on it you keep your full civilian pay *and* receive your military pay, and you keep earning annual and sick leave.

It is not the same as Law Enforcement Leave, the extra 22 workdays for emergency duty and contingency operations, where your civilian pay is reduced by your military pay. See our Law Enforcement Leave Fact Sheet.

THE DETAILS

Days, Hours, Pay and Carryover

1. 20 Days, 160 Hours

Military leave is credited on October 1, the start of each fiscal year. A full-time employee on a 40-hour week gets 160 hours (20 days of 8 hours). Part-time employees and those on uncommon tours of duty get a share in proportion to their regular hours: for example, 80 hours for an employee scheduled 40 hours a pay period.

2. Carry Over Up to 20 Days

Up to 20 unused days carry into the next fiscal year, so you can have as many as 40 days available in one year. Leave you carry over is lost if you do not use it in that next year.

3. Only the Hours You Would Have Worked	You are charged military leave only for hours you would otherwise have worked and been paid for; the smallest charge is one hour. For inactive duty training (usually 2, 4 or 6 hours) you are charged only for the training and the travel it needs. Weekends and holidays inside a period of military duty are not charged.
4. Both Paychecks	Your civilian pay stays the same while you are on this leave, including any premium pay you would have received (except Sunday premium pay), and you receive your military pay as well. You can also use annual leave, sick leave (where its rules allow), compensatory time off for travel or leave without pay for military duty, and mix them.
5. The First Year	The new law arrived partway through fiscal year 2025, so everyone got 5 extra days as of December 23, 2024, on top of the 15 already credited (up to 35 days that year, counting 15 carried over from 2024). If you used annual leave or leave without pay for qualifying military duty after December 23, 2024, before your agency told you about the extra days, the Office of Personnel Management says your agency may let you swap up to 5 of those days for military leave.
6. Other Kinds of Military Leave	Law Enforcement Leave (5 U.S.C. 6323(b)): 22 workdays each calendar year for emergency duty ordered by the President, the Secretary of Defense or a Governor, or for a contingency operation; your civilian pay is reduced by your military pay. Technicians only (6323(d)): 44 workdays for certain duty overseas.