

		CITY OF DECATUR PERSONNEL POLICY	
Chapter 04	Benefits		
Section 10	Paid Time Off (PTO)		
Revised By:	Nate Mara, City Manager	Revised Date:	December 22, 2025
Approved By:	City Council	Effective Date:	January 1, 2026

04.10 Paid Time Off

Regular full-time employees accrue Paid Time Off (PTO) each pay period as part of their employee benefits. PTO refers to paid time away from work that may be used for vacation, illness, or personal matters.

In a calendar year employees will be granted PTO according to the chart below:

Years of Tenure	Annual Hours	Pay Period Hours	Max Accrual	Annual Hours	Pay Period Hours	Max Accrual	Annual Hours	Pay Period Hours	Max Accrual
week/shift	40	40	40	12 shift	12 shift	12 shift	24 shift	24 shift	24 shift
1-5	128	4.9231	256	134	5.1538	268	168	6.4615	336
6-10	168	6.4615	336	177	6.8077	354	228	8.7692	456
11-15	208	8.0000	416	220	8.4615	440	288	11.0769	576
16-20	248	9.5385	496	263	10.1154	526	348	13.3846	696
21 +	288	11.0769	576	306	11.7692	612	408	15.6923	816

A. Accrual and Usage

- a. PTO is earned from January 1 through December 31 each calendar year.
- b. Accrual rates are based on the employee’s tenure and are scheduled according to their anniversary date.
- c. Effective 01/01/2026 accruals will be distributed over 26 pay periods.
- d. PTO may be used in increments of one hour or more.
- e. PTO must be used before any unpaid leave is taken.
- f. PTO is not accrued during any type of leave of absence.
- g. Regular part-time employees do not earn PTO leave.

B. Position Changes and Separation. Upon separation from employment, employees will be paid for unused PTO up to a maximum of two times their current accrual rate.

C. Requesting and Recording PTO

- a. PTO must be used for any time off other than approved holidays.
- b. Requests should be submitted in advance whenever possible and are subject to supervisor approval.
- c. PTO hours must be recorded according to the employee’s normal workday.

Recording Example:

1. If your regular shift is eight hours and you take a full day off, record eight hours of PTO.
 2. If your shift varies, record the number of hours scheduled for that day.
 3. Partial-day PTO must be recorded in one-hour increments.
- d. PTO is paid at the employee's regular rate of pay and is not subject to overtime.

D. Use and Scheduling of PTO Leave

- a. PTO leave is an earned benefit intended to provide employees with paid time away from the work environment to pursue activities that will promote the well-being of the individual.
- b. PTO leave may be used for purposes of attending to personal business, inability to get to work because of inclement weather, or for other purposes.
- c. Employees must schedule their annual PTO leave in accordance with their department's guidelines governing PTO scheduling and utilizing the Leave Form, located on the City of Decatur website:
 1. Whenever possible, PTO time will be scheduled at the convenience of employees.
 2. Department Directors must be certain that PTO does not interfere with the normal functions and activities of department operations.
 3. Employees are encouraged to submit their preferred PTO schedule to their appropriate supervisor as far in advance as possible to relieve any scheduling problems that may develop.
 4. Employees must make sure they have an approved PTO request on file before leaving for PTO to ensure proper payment of PTO leave.
- d. No more than 10 consecutive regularly scheduled workdays may be taken as PTO at one time, unless the Department Director or their designee grants an exception.
- e. Certain positions may be required to take one week of PTO annually, at the discretion of the department director and where applicable. Guidelines for this requirement are outlined in the applicable department policy.
- f. Official City-observed holidays occurring while an employee is on approved paid leave are considered paid holidays and do not affect PTO leave balances.
- g. Paid PTO leave is not considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.
- h. Only regularly scheduled working days taken off shall be counted as PTO days.

E. Maximum Accruals.

- a. The maximum number of PTO days that may be accumulated is two times the employee's current annual accrual rate.
- b. All PTO time in excess of the employee's current maximum are lost during the year end payroll closing process.

F. Compensation for PTO Leave.

- a. PTO is paid at the employee's base rate at the time of PTO.
- b. PTO is not assessed on overtime or any special forms of compensation.
- c. PTO time is paid only for hours the employee would ordinarily have worked.
- d. Employees will not be paid for any unused PTO, except upon separation of employment, or if an employee is precluded from taking a scheduled PTO due to City and/or department needs.
- e. Upon termination, retirement, resignation, or death, an employee shall be paid for accrued PTO leave up to a maximum of two times the employee's current annual accrual rate at the rate of pay the employee was receiving at the time of separation.
- f. Only employees who have successfully completed their initial probationary period of 90 days of employment with the City are entitled to this payout provision upon separation.

G. Donation of Leave. The purpose of this policy is to identify the rules and procedures regarding the donation of leave to city employees on unpaid or Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave.

- a. City employees may donate PTO and compensatory leave time to employees on continuous leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or continuous City Leave of Absence (City LOA) whose qualifying leave balances have been exhausted, including sick leave.
- b. The City does not require donation of leave. Donation of leave is a voluntary choice by individual employees.
- c. In determining eligibility to request and receive donated leave, the City does not discriminate on the basis of membership in a protected class, whether gender, age, an employee's disability, if any (as that term is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act), or any other class protected by law.
- d. Employees eligible to receive donations must:
 - 1. be on continuous FMLA or City LOA for their own condition or be on continuous FMLA for an eligible dependent's condition;
 - 2. be eligible to accrue PTO leave and have exhausted all available PTO, sick leave, holiday, and compensatory leave.
- e. Employees eligible to donate PTO, holiday, and compensatory leave must:
 - 1. be employed with the City for at least one year; and
 - 2. be eligible to use their accrued leave.

f. Donation Maximums:

1. Leave for an employee's own serious health condition is the lesser of 180 calendar days after accrued leave is exhausted or the minimum required to cover the approved leave period under FMLA or City LOA.
2. Leave for an eligible dependent is the lesser of 30 calendar days after accrued leave is exhausted or the minimum required to cover the approved leave period under FMLA.

g. Donation Procedures:

1. All communication regarding an employee's eligibility and request for donations will come from Human Resources.
2. Eligible employees requesting donations must contact Human Resources.
3. Employees eligible to donate time must complete a Donation of Leave form, located on the City of Decatur website and submit the form to Human Resources.
4. Donated PTO or compensatory leave will be subtracted from the donor's balance and transferred to the recipient in an hour-for-hour transfer regardless of accrual rate or hourly value of the donors leave.
5. Processed donations are final and cannot be withdrawn.
6. Unused donated leave will remain in the donor's leave balance and not the recipient's leave balance.

H. Definitions

- a. **Compensable Hours:** The hours worked or taken in a month must equal 130 for full-time employees and 200 for 24-hour fire employees before PTO hours will be accrued.
- b. **PTO Day:** A "PTO day" is defined as an 8-hour period for all employees, other than employees with shifts differing from 8-hour shifts. For example, a "PTO day" for 24-hour fire shift personnel is defined as a 24-hour period. Employees are not required to take a full day of PTO; they may take PTO in 1-hour increments.
- c. **Eligibility.** All full-time employees begin accruing paid PTO leave at the end of the first pay period. Part-time, temporary, and seasonal employees do not accrue PTO leave.
- d. **Authorized Use of PTO Leave.** PTO may be used at the employee's discretion with the approval of the supervisor. The supervisor should grant PTO as long as the absence does not create an undue hardship. While the City recognizes that there are emergencies and unforeseeable circumstances, PTO should typically be used as approved by the supervisor.
- e. **Minimum Increments.** PTO leave must be taken at a minimum of one hour. PTO leave taken in increments of less than one hour should be made up within the same work week.
- f. **Failure to Report Absence/Abuse of PTO Leave.** Employees should make every effort to obtain approval from their supervisor before use of PTO leave. Employees should only request time off without notice in the case of an emergency.

- g. **Use of Other Leave.** If approved by the department director (and in the case of a department director, by the City Manager), employees may use accrued PTO leave, compensatory time, other accrued paid leave, or leave of absence without pay, but only if an employee has no accrued PTO leave. Official holidays observed by the City while an employee is on approved PTO leave will be treated as a paid holiday, rather than a day of PTO leave. Under certain circumstances and with the approval of the department director/manager/supervisor, the employee may flex the work schedule (“flex time”) to attend to medical or dental appointments. This is acceptable provided that work time is approved and accurately recorded on the timesheet for the week or work cycle in which flex time was approved. Under no circumstances can flex time to make up time missed extend beyond the affected workweek or work period.
- h. **Documentation.** Employees requesting paid PTO leave must complete a leave form, located on the City of Decatur website and submit it to their supervisor for approval. Abuse of PTO leave may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.
- i. **Family and Medical Leave Act Leave.** Any absence that qualifies for both Family and Medical Leave Act leave and PTO leave will follow the guidelines set out in this policy and will typically be counted as both.
- j. **Payment for Unused PTO Leave.** No employee shall be entitled to payment in lieu of using PTO leave time except when separating from employment with the City of Decatur and then only the amount of the maximum accrual. If the needs of the City and/or Department preclude the taking of scheduled PTO, Department Directors may submit a request for the employee to be paid up to 40 hours for PTO in excess of the maximum accrual. It is the responsibility of the Department Director to submit a request to payroll for payout of PTO in excess of up to 40 hours over the employee’s maximum accrual rate before calendar year end. The request should provide justification for this payment using the PTO Payout Request Form. This form may be obtained from the Human Resources Department and is also found on the City of Decatur website.