

Reference Document	Section 214, 302,706,707, 710, 711, 714,719, 1002 of the General Order ERP Section 101(7),
Commencement Date	1 January 2018
Review Date	The review date is 12 months after the commencement date and every three years after that.

POLICY STATEMENT

1 Intent

OAG is providing leave to ensure a safe, healthy and productive workplace. Leave provisions for full-time staff is governed by the minimum provisions of the relevant General Orders, Employment Relations Promulgation, and policies as approved by OAG.

The term '**leave year**' means a period of twelve months of service according to the financial year (August-July).

2 Objective

Leave may be granted for various purposes, and it is recognised that a staff on leave remains employed by the OAG. The staff maintains continuity of service while on leave, however exceptions are provided in this policy e.g., maternity leave.

Granting of leave is usually subject to the condition that suitable arrangements can be made to carry on essential work within the area concerned. In dealing with any application for leave, the Directors/Deputy Auditor-General will need to take into consideration the needs of the group and the leave request of the staff.

3 Scope and Purpose

It is essential that appropriate notification of all absences be provided to Registry. As well as sending an application for leave for updating and processing of leave balances, prior to proceeding on leave.

This policy applies to all OAG staff who are provided with leave entitlement through their contract of service.

4 Definitions and Acronyms

Policy Maker Auditor-General

Management Auditor-General, Deputy Auditor-General and Directors

5 Supporting Documents/References

General Order

Policy Development Framework

Employment Regulation Promulgation

6 Keywords

Leave Entitlement

Leave Accrual

Unused Leave

Leave approval

New Staff Appointment

Termination of Contract

Maternal/Paternal Leave

Sporting Leave

7 Supporting Procedures and Guidelines

The guidelines to the policy are attached as Annexure 1-7 to this policy. This information will provide the background to the development of the policy should Officers need clarification.

RESPONSIBILITIES	
Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation	Corporate Services
Compliance	Corporate Services
Development and/or Review	Corporate Services
Interpretation and Advice	Deputy Auditor-General

ANNEXURE 1 – Annual Leave

1.0 Principles

The following principles will apply to this policy:

- a) All OAG staff will be informed of their contractual entitlement for annual leave upon signing their employment contract. For temporary relieving appointment, all leave entitlements shall be detailed in offer letter.
- b) Staff must make every effort to take their full annual leave entitlement during the leave year for which it is given.
- c) The Directors/ team leaders will ensure that work plans for the year are developed taking into account the full leave entitlement for their staff.
- d) Requests for annual leave will be made online and recorded by Administrative Officer Registry to ensure that accurate records are available.
- e) All requests for annual leave will be fully considered and decisions reached on a fair, equitable, objective and justifiable basis within the context of the business and operational needs of the OAG.
- f) Staff should give as much notice as possible when requesting annual leave, taking into account arrangements for managing annual leave. For example, staff taking more than 10 consecutive days of leave, shall obtain approval 2 weeks prior to the planned leave dates. For annual leave less than 10 days, staff shall get approval between 3-5 days prior to taking leave. Unless the leave is treated as unforeseen or emergencies that may arise. Staff must take 10 annual leave days consecutively and the rest of the annual leave days can be taken on a piece meal basis. For the December/January period, OAG staff are encouraged to utilize 10 days consecutive annual leave and spend time with their families and the Office shall operate with minimal staff.
- g) Administrative Assistant Registry will accommodate requests for annual leave where short notice has been given, taking into account the needs of the OAG service, however this will be monitored by Registry.
- h) Registry will regularly review the outstanding annual Leave entitlements for the staff in an effort to ensure that all leave entitlement is used each year.

2.0 Entitlement to Annual Leave

The current entitlements include:

- a) Annual leave shall be granted as 21 working days for all staff
- b) Annual leave which has been earned may be taken through prior approval through the channel of reporting lines and a notification to be sent to Administrative Assistant Registry during the leave year.
- c) Staff may be allowed to carry over up to a maximum of 10 working days leave entitlement from one leave year to the next and any leave in excess of 10 days shall be deferred either on staff's request or by management for a period not exceeding six (6) months.

- d) Annual leave shall normally be taken when due or within the leave year. The Registry shall ensure scheduling of leave to avoid extending the leave entitlements at any time of the year. This will be done by leave entitlements being assessed and taken once due. As such, at anniversary of financial year end date, the maximum of 10 days shall be carried forward to the next year.
- e) In very special circumstances staff can carry over more than 10 days annual leave however, this must be approved by the Deputy Auditor-General.
- f) Leave on resignation
In the event of resignation, termination of appointment on any grounds or death of an Officer, the Officer or his/her legal representative shall be paid pro-rata compensation for:
 - Annual leave - due to the staff up to the date of his resignation, termination or death.
 - Resignation- staff shall take annual leave out of the notice period, not exceeding 10 working days, to allow for work hand over. However, this must be approved by the Deputy or Auditor-General. The staff shall utilize the outstanding leave within the notice period.
- g) Leave on Retirement:
In the event of retirement from the Service whether at the staff's own request or at the instigation of OAG, the staff shall be granted:-
 - Annual leave on pro-rata basis.
- h) Leave on medical grounds:
In the event of a staff being authorized to proceed on leave on medical grounds, if recommended by a Medical Board, the staff may be granted:-
 - Annual leave on a pro-rata basis.

3.0 Annual Leave Requests

Request for annual leave shall be made in writing or electronically, and as far in advance as possible so that team leaders can attempt to re-organize work or cover where necessary. For example, staff taking more than 10 consecutive days of leave, shall obtain approval 2 weeks prior to the planned leave dates. For annual leave less than 10 days, staff shall get approval between 3-5 days prior to taking leave.

As appropriate, the line supervisors will respond to requests as soon as available and give notice of approval or refusal.

In the event if a staff is planning to take annual leave to travel overseas, the office shall provide an overseas leave letter. Should a staff have their request subsequently refused, the OAG will not be liable for any loss incurred by staff where they need to cancel arrangements made or paid for.

Staff are entitled to deduction of annual leave, in case of emergency or unforeseen circumstance. Staff shall inform their supervisor regarding their emergency leave and should apply for annual leave before 10am the next working day.

4.0 Unused Leave at the end of a Leave Year

Staff are encouraged to take all their leave within the current leave year.

In exceptional circumstances, staff may be able to carry forward more than 10 days annual leave to the following leave year where they have been unable to take the leave within the current year. In such cases approval shall be obtained from the Deputy Auditor-General (DAG).

Listed below are the criteria:

- Where the line manager has confirmed that staff could not use the remaining leave entitlement for OAG reasons, e.g. busy period, or shortage of staff.
- Where the staff has been absent from work for a prolonged period due to illness and was unable to take their leave due to that absence.
- Where the staff went on maternity leave earlier than expected, and was unable to utilize leave entitlement before the maternity leave began.
- Where the staff was recalled from leave.

5.0 Approval of Leave

Request for Annual Leave shall be made through respective Audit Manager direct line supervisors to the Directors/DAG or approval. Human Resource and the Administrative Assistant registry shall maintain leave balance and entitlement for leave which will be calculated and sent to respective managers before approval is sought.

6.0 Authority for Grant of Leave

The authority for the grant of annual leave as below:

- All staff leave shall be approved by Department Heads.
- All Directors & Deputy Auditor-General's leave shall be approved by the Auditor-General.
- Auditor-General's leave shall be communicated to Constitution Office Commission for their information and determination.

7.0 New Staff Appointment

New appointee shall not be granted annual leave within the first three months of appointment to the OAG. However, they can apply for sick leave and bereavement leave.

8.0 Cancellation of Leave

There may be occasions where, for Office reasons, staff may be asked to cancel a period of approved annual leave. In these circumstances, Corporate Services will discuss all options with the staff concerned, before making a decision, and will also consult with the relevant Audit Manager/Director.

If leave is to be cancelled by the office, DAG will decide whether the staff will be reimbursed for any reasonable costs incurred or the staff may take the leave afterwards.

9.0 Termination of Employment

By their last day of service, staffs are usually required to have taken no more and no less than the amount of annual leave to which they are entitled. This means that they must try to take all outstanding annual leave before their last day of service, especially if they are due to resign or retire.

However, if on the last day of service, leave taken is less than service entitlement - the untaken leave should be utilized before staff departure. However, this must be approved by AG or DAG.

10.0 Calculation of Leave for Staff

Annual leave shall normally be taken when due.

For the purpose of this policy, the calculation of leave and leave allowance on a pro-rata basis shall be on the completed months served in the leave year and leave allowance or passage earning period respectively.

Example:

A contract was signed on 01 January 2017 with a leave entitlement of 21 days and on the 18 July 2017, the staff decided to resign or raised question on the leave entitlement.

Calculation:

21 days divide by 12 months multiply by 6 months (from Jan to June)

$21/12 * 6 = 10.5$ days

Note: taking into account months calculated would be 6, as staff has only completed 6 months.

ANNEXURE 2 - Sick Leave

Bio Metric system

A Biometric system has been installed in the office to record the attendance of all staff. The immediate supervisors will be responsible for ensuring that their staff sign in and sign out every day.

Any absence from duty occasioned by late arrival or early departure from work except in respect of sickness shall be deducted from a staff's salary and disciplinary action will be taken for persistent late comers.

Notification of Absence

Where a staff is absent on sick leave, wherever practicable, they are expected to contact their immediate Manager before 10 am in order to advise the reasons for and the expected duration of their absence. If a staff is leaving work due to illness, he/she will inform their supervisor before doing so.

Outpatient Sick Leave

A staff shall be entitled to outpatient sick leave up to 21 days in any one leave year. It includes 6 sick days without sick sheet and 15 sick days with sick sheet. This requirement shall be waived for absences on grounds of illness of not more than one day at a time; such absence shall not exceed an aggregate period of six days in any one leave year. The sick days without sick sheet will be taken on separate days (not consecutive) within the leave year up to a maximum of 6 days. Outpatient sick leave shall be supported by a medical certificate obtained from any registered medical practitioner. This leave cannot be accumulated.

Inpatient Sick Leave

A staff required to undergo treatment as an inpatient of a hospital or required by a registered Medical Practitioner to be confined to his home on grounds of illness shall, in addition to his outpatient sick leave, be entitled to a further period of up to 60 days sick leave on full salary in any one leave year. This leave cannot be accumulated. The staffs are required to provide a full medical report to justify such a claim for inpatient sick leave.

On the recommendation of a medical board, inpatient sick leave on full salary may be extended up to a maximum of 180 days. Thereafter, sick leave with or without full salary shall be at the discretion of the Auditor-General.

Absence from Duty – Medical Certificates

Where a staff falls sick and is required to proceed on sick leave for any period exceeding twenty-four hours, the staff shall obtain the medical certificate from the registered medical practitioner. The medical certificate will be dispatched when making application for sick leave with OAG.

The staff should forward the medical certificate to the Administration Assistant Registry who will be responsible for its insertion in the staff's personal file, and recording in the leave schedule which will provide a continuous medical history of the staff.

The Department Heads shall be responsible for reporting to the Auditor-General and Deputy Auditor-General any case in which the staff falls dangerously ill while at work to seek further medical advice.

Medical Attention

New appointees are also required to pay for medical examination as a pre-employment check which is later reimbursed by OAG upon appointment.

Medical Board

The OAG may arrange for a medical board from the Ministry of Health to ascertain whether a staff is capable of performing the duties of his/her post or of any post to which it may be proposed to transfer him/her. It will be conducted by a panel of 3 independent medical practitioners.

A staff who has been found by a Medical Board to be medically unfit for further service, may be called upon to retire.

Staff taking excessive sick leave may be subject to medical examination as determined by Auditor-General in consultation with responsible Director/Deputy AG.

Unclaimed Sick Leave

Sick leave entitlement shall not be accumulated, nor would unused sick leave be compensated. There will be no payment on termination/resignation/redundancy or retirement for outstanding sick leave.

Sick Leave Extension

Where a staff's sick leave entitlement has been exhausted and the staff remains absent, by application from the staff's Director to the Deputy Auditor-General additional sick leave may be approved based on the following circumstances:

- Take into account the staff's length of service, performance and personal circumstances.
- Provided that the provisions of this sub-section shall not apply to women staff who shall have been admitted to hospital for sickness arising out of pregnancy, maternity and complications arising therefrom.

OAG Initiatives to reduce sick leave:

- OAG aims to create the appropriate working environment by providing hand sanitizers with the aim that sickness spread can be minimized through good hygiene practices and taking initial precautions. With this initiatives, OAG aims to maintain full staff attendance for working days.
- Ergonomics and the right equipment for staff is extremely important. Having the right desk, chair and other office furniture can lead to increased productivity, prevent irritability within the workplace and long term injuries due to poor posture. Hence OAG, will ensure that user friendly office furniture's are given to staff.
- The importance of frequent breaks- allowing staff to take a break for a couple of minutes or tea breaks will give staff the opportunity to stretch and also rest their eyes. A simple walk around the office can help staff who have been under stress to relax and relieve eyes from the strain of looking at a computer screen.

Attendance violations

- Number of absences, number of times coming in late, and number of early departures, all of which exceed the daily working hours;
- Failing to get permission for leaving early or coming in late;
- Failing to give advance notice of an absence when possible;
- Failing to report an absence properly; and
- Failing to submit medical certification upon request.

The continued violation may incur salary deduction as one-off payment.



ANNEXURE 3 – Bereavement Leave

Office of the Auditor-General may grant staff bereavement leave of up to three days in any one leave year on application. This leave shall be additional to any other leave to which a staff is entitled under this policy guideline.

Entitlement

Bereavement leave shall be applicable to OAG staff member's family, relatives or friends.

The OAG understands that staffs may need time during working hours on account of bereavement for loved ones, and/or caring for dependants. For this purpose, the OAG makes provision for bereavement leave up to a maximum of 3 days.

New appointees shall also be entitled to 3 days bereavement leave upon joining OAG, notwithstanding that they complete the first 3 months of continuous employment with OAG.

In special circumstances, the Auditor-General shall consider additional days as bereavement where such additional days are essential for the staff member to travel for the funeral and/or the principal place of condolence gathering, and where such travel takes more than 12 hours each way (by most direct and shortest route) if within Fiji, or where such travel involves travelling out of Fiji. In these circumstances the number of days involved in travelling through the shortest route to the funeral or the principal place of condolence gathering shall be considered for bereavement leave.

Where a death occurs outside of Fiji, the staff shall be entitled to 1 day paid leave in addition to the 3 days entitlement, unless the staff is travelling to attend the funeral of their spouse, mother, father or mother/father-in-law in which case the staff shall be entitled to 3 days without loss of pay.

For staffs who experience a death outside their immediate family, leave may be granted as time off without pay, or as annual leave.

Procedures for Applying for Bereavement Leave

Respective Directors must ensure that when possible the staff gives at least one (1) day notice in advance of taking such leave.

Contribution for Sympathy

Voluntary collections within OAG are also permitted for presentation of a 'reguregu' to the family of a deceased staff or on the death of an immediate family member of an OAG staff.

ANNEXURE 4 – Maternal/Paternal Leave

It is both an essential part of equal employment opportunity and an effective management practice, encouraging staff to return to the OAG after childbirth, and allowing organisation to retain skilled and experienced staff.

Time off for Ante-natal/Post-natal Care

Staff are entitled to time-off to attend ante-natal or post-natal clinics as required by the consultant GP, provided that she applies for time-off through the prescribed sick leave application.

Notification Requirements

- Staff requiring time off for ante-natal and/or post-natal care must inform their manager/supervisor of the absences as far, in advance, as possible.
- Staff must provide a certificate from a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse specifying the possible date of delivery.
- A staff must notify of her intention to begin maternity absence as early as possible, but no later than 20 working days before maternity absence starts.

A staff who has applied for but has not yet commenced maternity leave who suffers illness related to her pregnancy may take such paid sick leave as she is then entitled to.

Maternity Leave

A female staff employed in a workplace who expects to give birth is entitled to maternity leave and abstain from work for a period of 84 consecutive days subject to providing OAG with a certificate from a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse specifying the possible date of birth.

A female staff is entitled to pay maternity leave as follows:

- i) for the first 3 births, to the normal remuneration she would have received as if she had been at work; and
- ii) for the 4th and subsequent births, to half the normal remuneration she would have received as if she had been at work.

New Appointees

OAG will allow provision of maternity leave for all newly appointed staff.

Restriction on termination

No staff must be terminated from employment on grounds of pregnancy. Where a termination occurs while a staff is pregnant, the burden of disproving that the termination was related to that condition rests with the OAG. If, after three months from the expiration of her maternity leave, a staff remains absent from work, as a result of illness (certified by a registered medical practitioner) arising out of her pregnancy or the birth of her child rendering her unfit for work, her employer may give her notice of termination. Unless the staff is taking additional annual leave together with maternity leave.

Required Notice

A staff who wishes to take maternity leave will give not less than 20 working days written notice of the date on which she wishes to commence maternity leave. Such notice should also specify the date on which the staff intends to return to work and must be supported by a medical certificate from the registered medical practitioner, or such specialist as she may have been referred to, stating the expected date of confinement.

Should the staff desire, annual leave may be taken in conjunction with maternity leave, provided the total combined absence is no more than 105 days.

Staff who returns to her employment after maternity leave—

- Must be appointed to the same or equivalent position held prior to proceedings on maternity leave, without any loss of salary, wages, benefits and seniority; or may be appointed to a higher position.
- No staff shall be terminated from employment on grounds of pregnancy.

Parental Leave

Paternity leave is provided to allow male staff to take time off work to be able to support their partner during or immediately following the birth of their child.

A male staff is entitled to 5 working days on full pay, in order to provide support to the mother of his child. This may be taken to coincide with the baby's birth, or within the first 6 weeks thereafter, and must be supported by documentary proof of paternity.

A male staff is entitled to pay paternity leave as follows:

- i) for the first 3 births, to the normal remuneration he would have received as if he had been at work; and
- ii) for the 4th and subsequent births, to half the normal remuneration he would have received as if he had been at work.

Leave conditions

The staff has been employed for at least 6 months prior to the date of birth of the child and shall apply paternity leave stating the expected date of confinement/delivery.

The 5 days paternity leave will be on full pay, and will be in addition to any earned annual leave which the staff may wish to take in addition.

Payment for paternity leave will be made on the normal fortnightly pay days falling during the period of paid paternity leave and will not be paid in advance. Paternity leave cannot be accumulated or deferred past first 6 weeks following the child birth.

When paternity leave is applied together with other leave (e.g., annual leave with pay), the combined application shall be sent for approval and that once the application has been approved, any proposed variation to the leave must be applied for in the same way. Upon reapplication, the effective date of the paternity leave could be brought to 2 days prior to the date of expected delivery.

Where the baby is born prematurely, it is reasonable to take the original "expected" date to be the formal date for this purpose.

ANNEXURE 5 – Study Leave

Staff on Study Leave [Full Time Study]

In the case of staff on study leave for extended periods the registry shall ensure that a statement is placed in the staff's confidential file referring to his/her absence.

If at the end of a training course, attachment or a visit of three to twelve months' duration, a staff has no annual leave to his/her credit, he/she shall be granted five (5) working days leave on full salary before being required to resume duty.

If the training course, attachment or visit is of more than twelve month's duration and the Officer has no annual leave to his/her credit, he/she shall be granted ten (10) working days leave on full salary before being required to resume duty.

A staff sitting examinations in connection with a course approved by the OAG/ Government will be granted study leave for such examinations.

A staff who is granted study leave with salary shall be required to sign an undertaking to serve the OAG/ Government for such period as specified in the rules governing bonding of recipients of in-service training. There will be a standard OAG bonding procedure to cover trainees on study leave.

Allowance for Attendance

A staff who is required by OAG to undertake a training course or attachment outside Fiji will continue to receive his/her salary and will be paid such allowances and travelling expenses as appropriate.

In- Service Training Course

A staff who is given leave for In-service Training Course at an institution within Fiji will be granted the full salary, any other fee required by the Training Institution and at the discretion of the Auditor-General.

Unauthorized leave

Where an officer has taken course, training or program of study without prior approval of the Auditor-General and has applied leave for such purpose, the leave shall be not be approved:

- If the duration of study is more than 3 months.
- If travel is required outside the normal workplace or outside Fiji.
- If travel is not sponsored by OAG, sponsored bodies or other sponsoring partners.

ANNEXURE 6 – Special Leave

Staff shall be entitled to the following leave:

Public Holidays

All full-time staff shall be entitled to time off without loss of pay for the standard public holidays as gazetted by the government of Fiji.

In addition to the standard public holidays the OAG will also observe any, other holiday gazetted as a special public holiday for Fiji.

Sporting Leave

A staff who is selected to be an official or a member of a Fiji National Sporting team shall be granted leave on full salary up to 60 days in any one year, such period to include local and overseas training sessions. This leave can only be approved by the Auditor-General. Leave in excess of 60 days shall be on leave without salary.

Educational Leave [Part Time Study]

OAG regards continuing study as capacity building, which is essential in keeping the OAG moving forward. A staff who is enrolled in local institute, professional development institutes including CPA or ACCA and so forth. In order to be eligible for educational leave, staff must communicate the studies that they are doing to Corporate Services. The studies must be approved by Director/DAG. Educational leave will be offered per unit, one (1) day for the day of the exam and one (1) day before exam day.

8 Monitoring

The Administrative Assistant Registry and Senior Administration Officer (HR) will monitor the leave applications and keep a record of annual leave balances for all staff.

9 Review

To ensure effectiveness of this policy it will be reviewed 12 months after implementation and every 3 years after that. Taking into account any challenges to the policy and any changes to legislation and national guidance.

10 Who to Contact About this Policy

Any queries is directed to Deputy Auditor-General.

11 Approval

The annual leave policy becomes effective on the date approved by the Management Committee, unless stated otherwise.

12 Revision/Change Log

Version 1.0	
Policy endorsed by:	Executive Management Committee
Policy approved by:	Auditor-General
Policy effective from:	1 January 2018
Policy to be reviewed by:	1 January 2019
Manager responsible for policy:	Manager Corporate Services



Appendix – Leave Application



APPLICATION FOR SICK LEAVE

Full Name:		EDP / File No.:	
No. of Days:		W.E.F:	
Reason:			

This absence is/is not supported by a Sick Sheet

Scan and insert your Sick Sheet on this space here.

Authorised by Deputy Auditor-General or Director of Audit

Signature		Date	
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**APPLICATION FOR ANNUAL LEAVE, RETROSPECTIVE LEAVE,
BEREAVEMENT LEAVE, STUDY LEAVE, EDUCATIONAL LEAVE,
MATERNAL/PATERNAL LEAVE & SPECIAL LEAVE**

Please check the appropriate boxes

Annual Leave
 Retrospective Leave
 Bereavement Leave
 Study Leave
 Educational Leave
 Maternal/Paternal
 Special Leave

APPLICANT

Full Name: Click here to enter your name.		Designation: Click here to enter text.
PF No: Enter number.	EDP No: Enter Number.	Group / Team: Choose your group.
No. of Days: Click here to enter text.		Effective from: Click here to enter a date.
Reason: Click here to enter the reason.		
Signature: 		Date: Click here to enter a date.

RECOMMENDING OFFICER

Designation: Choose an item.	Recommended: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Comments: Click here to enter comments.	
Suggested Relief: Click here to enter text.	
Signature:	Date: Click here to enter a date.

APPROVING OFFICER

Designation: Choose an item.	Approved: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Comments: Click here to enter comments.	
Signature:	Date: Click here to enter a date.

RECORDING OFFICER

Leave Year: Click here to enter text.	No. of Days Annual Leave Due: Click here to enter text.
No. of Days Debited: Click here to enter text.	
Resume Duty on: Click here to enter a date.	Balance Available: Click here to enter text.
Signature:	Date: Click here to enter a date.



APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF STUDY

Full Name:		EDP / File No.	
Institute		Semester/Trimester	
Programme		Course Code	
Course Title		Sponsored/Private	
Comments: <i>State number of units to be completed for this program</i>			

The approval must be supported by course registration

<i>Scan course registration on this space here</i>			
Authorised by			
Signature		Date	