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Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) Days

Policy prompt

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Notice: This resource is intended to assist schools in devising their own policy on Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided, schools are advised to consult up to date circulars, legislation and/or guidelines if they have specific queries regarding this topic.

This note is for guidance only and does not purport to be a legal interpretation.

Background: Rule 58 of the Rules for National Schools provides for the allowance of extra personal vacation for teachers who attend “*a course or courses of instruction or study approved by the Minister*”. With the exception of one-teacher schools, substitute cover is not allowed for EPV days. Consequently, in drawing up a policy, the welfare and educational needs of the pupils should take precedence over all other considerations.

Please note: This policy prompt should be read in conjunction with [Circular 37/97 Extra Personal Vacation](#), [Rule 58 of the Rules for National Schools](#), [Circular 0035/2009 Extra Personal Vacation EPV](#) and [Circular 0032/2007 Teacher Absences](#), or any updates thereof.

Issues the school should address may include:

Application and approval:

- Are teachers advised that certification of attendance and completion of a qualifying summer course must be presented to the principal at the start of the school year?
- Is there a specified date by which the certification of attendance should be submitted?
- How long are these certificates retained in the school?
- How are EPV days applied for?
- Consider whether applications should be made directly to the chairperson of the Board of Management or to the principal? [CPSMA recommends that applications should be made to the Board of Management.]
- Should applications be verbal or in writing?
- How much advance notice is required?
- How are approved applications recorded?
- Is there a limit on the number of teachers that may avail of EPV days on any given day?
- If yes, how will the decision be taken in the event of multiple applications for any given day?
- Is there a limit on the number of EPV days that a teacher may avail of at any one time?
- Can EPV days be taken to extend other leave, where substitute cover is not allowed (e.g. wedding leave, exam leave etc.)?
- Can EPV days be used to extend school holidays/bank holidays/school closures?
- Are there any periods of time when EPV days cannot be taken e.g. during the month of June?

- Are there other preclusions to the granting of EPV days e.g. staff meetings, planning days, days when other classes are on school tours, Christmas Concert days, Confirmation day etc?
- If so, will any exceptions be made and who will make these decisions?
- In the case of job-sharing arrangements, has the Board of Management stipulated a maximum number of EPV days allowed for each teacher, as part of the job sharing agreement (bearing in mind that the combined EPV allowance of the two teachers should not be less than the equivalent allowance of a whole-time teacher)?

Organisational issues:

What arrangements are made for teaching of class/es of teacher/s availing of EPV days? e.g.

- How are classes redistributed when a teacher is on extra personal vacation?
- Are distribution lists compiled at the start of the school year?
- Who divides the class on the day?
- How is attendance recorded and who is responsible for completing the attendance record in the absence of the class teacher?
- Are pupils made aware of their yard arrangements i.e. do they go to their own yard or to the yard of their host/temporary class?
- Are other colleagues advised in advance that they will have additional pupils in their class on a particular day, when a class is being redistributed?
- How are the names of pupils recorded in the host/temporary class (for fire drill purposes)?
- Are pupils advised of the evacuation procedures that relate to their host/temporary class?
- Has the teacher who is availing of EPV leave ensured that ample, appropriate work has been given to each pupil?
- Has this work been communicated to the host teacher/s?
- Who will ensure that pupils have the required textbooks and other resources to complete their work in their “host” class?
- What additional arrangements should be made or will be necessary for junior classes e.g. specific arrangements for arrival/dismissal?
- Has consideration been given to the availability of suitable furniture in the host/temporary class i.e. age and size appropriate?
- Is there additional furniture available in classrooms, or will furniture need to be transferred?
- Who is responsible for the reorganisation of furniture – prior and post EPV?
- Does the supervision roster include arrangements for providing supervision for EPV days and other short-term absences i.e. for teachers to swap days if they are scheduled to complete supervision duties?

NOTE: Some Boards of Management choose to pay a substitute directly from school funds. CPSMA advises extreme caution regarding this practice for a number of reasons, including the following: (1) The availability of resources; (2) Service will not be reckonable for panel or pension purposes; (3) Any direct payments must be made through the school’s payroll system. (4) Responsibility for making statutory deductions (tax, PRSI, USC etc.) rests with the Board of Management. (5) P45 and P60 to be issued for each period of employment, even if it is of one day’s duration.