

MEMO

TO: All Teachers
FROM: GFPS Human Resources
Great Falls Education Association
DATE: Spring, 2011
RE: Teacher Doctor Notes & Teacher Substitute Request Call-In

Doctor notes provided by the teacher are a form of communication between the teacher and the District. Doctor notes are considered to be private information and are maintained in confidential files. The contents of a doctor note is only shared with District personnel on an as-need basis. The main purposes for requesting a doctor's note are:

1. To be able to place a substitute on the correct day(s);
2. To document a need for the sick leave;
3. To be able to plan for the required length of a substitute; and/or
4. To ensure that the teacher is well enough to return to teaching duties. This protects the teacher and also protects the District from claims that the District compelled an employee to come back to work when they were not healthy enough to do so.
5. To prove the legitimacy of the absence. A request for this reason is rarely used and only when there is a suspicion, allegation, or questionable pattern of sick leave use. A note may be requested for these reasons as part of an official investigation with official notification to the teacher.

Doctor notes can be hand-delivered to the HR Office or faxed to 268-6094. Doctor's offices will fax the note for the patient.

* Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) has leave provisions that are specific to each employee's circumstances. Contact HR when taking leave involving FMLA. Here is a link to FMLA information:

<http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us/DistrictInformation/Board/BoardPolicy/bpsecfive.htm#5328>

In order to expedite the placing of substitutes for the entire district, please consider the following when calling the sub clerk:

Keep your request short...for example, there is no need for all the details of your illness

Be sure to include the following:

- Date out
- School, grade, subject, 7:00 a.m. class
- Reason for request—the choices are (all but personal/family sick leave require an Administrative Approval form in addition to the sub clerk phone call):
 - Personal/Family Sick Leave
 - Personal Leave
 - Without Pay
 - Extra-Curricular
 - Curriculum Development
 - School Business
 - Staff Development
 - Bereavement
 - Bereavement Non-Family
 - Jury Duty
 - Witness Duty
 - Military Duty
 - Association/Union

See the following chart for more details regarding specific requests for doctor notes. Teachers may submit a doctor note at anytime, however, they feel that enhanced communication with the District is appropriate. The District appreciates this enhanced communication:

(over...)

	Purpose of Sick Leave	When Required	Reason
A.	Emergency Room Visit	To document return to work.	#4
B.	Pre-planned medical procedure—teacher	To document surgery date and return to work date	#1, #3 & #4
C.	Pre-planned medical procedure—family member	To document surgery date and return to work date	#1 & #3
D.	Emergency medical procedure and/or admission to hospital—teacher	To document return to work.	#4
E.	Doctor’s appointment—teacher or family member	No note required	NA
F.	Teacher giving birth	For any length of maternity absence, a note is required to document return to work	#4
G.	Paternity Leave—only for five (5) days	May use five (5) days of accrued leave. No note required. (A note is required if it is medically necessary for the father to be with the mother and/or baby for a longer period of time.)	NA, (#2 & #3)
H.	*Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for birth of a teacher’s child	Sick leave, in the amount the teacher has accrued on her own or has donated to her, can be taken for up to six (6) weeks, for a normal recovery. No note required to take sick leave. A note is required to return to work.	#4
I.	*FMLA leave beyond six (6) weeks due to medical necessity	A note is required that says it is medically necessary to be out for another six (6) weeks. A note is required to return to work.	#2 & #4
J.	Family member giving birth; birth of a new family member (i.e. daughter;grandchild)	Family illness may be taken while the family members (mother and/or baby) are in the hospital and longer if it is medically necessary for the teacher to care for a family member. No note is required while family member (mother and/or baby) are in the hospital. A note is required if it is medically necessary for the teacher to be with the family member for a longer period of time.	#2 & #3
K.	Serious extended illness for teacher defined as being out of work for several consecutive days AND undergoing on-going treatment by a doctor	A note is requested when the doctor communicates a need to the teacher to be out of work for an extended time. A note is required to return to work.	#2, #3 & #4
L.	Serious extended illness for family member defined as a need to be out of work for several consecutive days to care for the seriously ill family member	A note is requested when the doctor communicates a need for the teacher to be out of work for an extended time to care for the family member.	#2 & #3
M.	Reoccurring intermittent leave— teacher	To document dates and to return to work in the interim time periods.	#1, #3 & #4
N.	Reoccurring intermittent leave—family member	To document and communicate dates of absence	#1 & #3
O.	Catastrophic illness as defined by Article 7.5.b.	A note is required. Also see “serious extended illness” (K) above.	#2 & #4
P.	Workers compensation	Forms are required signed by the doctor if a doctor visit is involved.	Workers Comp requirements
Q.	Short-term sickness	No note required.	NA