




STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

October 28, 2020

TO: Assistant Superintendents
Complex Area Superintendents
Principals (All)
School Administrative Assistants
Teachers (All)

FROM: Dr. Cynthia A. Covell 
Assistant Superintendent
Cynthia A. Covell (Oct 28, 2020 22:18 HST)

SUBJECT: Early Return From Leave For Teachers - 2020-2021 School Year

Department of Education (DOE) teachers who are on leave without pay (LWOP) for 30 or more calendar days are automatically extended to the end of the semester. The Early Return From Leave program allows teachers on LWOP for 30 or more calendar days to return early from their leave. Teachers requesting to return early from leave must do so in writing.

The deadline for a teacher to return early from leave **for the 2020-2021 school year** is April 9, 2021. A teacher returning early from leave after the deadline date can only return as a day-to-day substitute teacher. Exceptions to allow teachers to return after the deadline date are made on a case-by-case basis (e.g., the principal requesting the early return from leave of their teacher).

Teachers on the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave are not required to submit an early return request letter and can return to work after the FMLA leave is completed.

Early Return from Leave Procedures

1. The teacher submits a written request for early return from leave to the Office of Talent Management (OTM), Teacher Reclassification Unit, specifying the following information:
 - a. Reason(s) for returning early from leave;
 - b. Teacher's current phone number and address; and
 - c. Date available to return early from leave.

Note: To process the request, Form DOE OTM 300-001, *Application for Leave of Absence Certificated School-Level Employees*, must be submitted to the principal or immediate supervisor and Personnel Regional Officer (PRO) for approval before it is forwarded to the Employee Records and Transaction Section (ERTS). LWOP action must be processed and recorded in the e-HR system *before* submitting a written request for early return from leave.

If requesting early return from leave for health reasons, the teacher also submits a medical note (such as a doctor's note), clearing the employee to return to work. The medical note must indicate the date the teacher can return to full duty.

2. If the request for early return is approved, the OTM will:
 - a. Notify the teacher via letter that their request for early return from leave has been approved, that his or her respective PRO will be looking for suitable vacancies, and that the teacher will continue to be on leave until he or she is selected for a vacancy;
 - b. Forward the approval letter to the respective PRO of the district to which the early return was requested, and to the ERTS; and
 - c. Provide information to the PRO on the date of the teacher's availability, the teacher's current phone number and address, and the teacher's area of preparation (Hawaii Teacher Standards Board license).
3. The respective PRO will:
 - a. Place the teacher into a suitable vacancy;
 - b. Contact the teacher regarding their placement; and
 - c. Notify the ERTS that a placement has been made for the teacher to return early from leave.
4. The ERTS will process a Form 5 with a return from leave action for the teacher returning early. The Form 5 will be forwarded to the teacher and the school.
5. If the request for early return is not approved, the teacher remains on leave until the expiration date of their leave. Please refer the teacher to the General Information section on the application for leave form, DOE OTM 300-001.

Should you have any questions, please contact Grace Takai, Personnel Specialist, Teacher Reclassification Unit, via email at grace.takai@k12.hi.us.

CAC:gt

c: Deputy Superintendent
Director, Personnel Management Branch; Teacher Recruitment Unit; Teacher Reclassification Unit; ERTS; Labor Relations Section; PROs, Certificated