



Fact Sheet

Vacation

This English translation is provided for convenience purposes only. The original German text fully prevails.

§ 79 et seq. of the implementation ordinance of the employment act of the Canton of Zurich (VVO)

Entitlement

Employees are entitled to the following amounts of vacation per calendar year:

- Up to and including the calendar year of their 20th birthday,
as well as trainees 27 days
- From the beginning of the calendar year of their
21st birthday 25 days
- From the beginning of the calendar year of their
50th birthday 27 days
- From the beginning of the calendar year of their
60th birthday 32 days

The entitlement is determined according to the employee's employment level. In the years in which the employee joins and leaves the University, vacation is granted on a pro rata basis. Any excess days of vacation taken in the year in which the employee leaves the University will be offset against their salary.

Taking Vacation

Vacation is designed to promote rest and relaxation and should be taken. The employer UZH determines the time at which vacation can be taken, taking the employees' wishes into consideration to the extent that this is compatible with operational interests. Vacation should be distributed in such a way that employees can cover for one another without the need to employ temporary staff. As a basic principle, two weeks of vacation per year are to be taken consecutively.

In principle, vacation is taken in the current calendar year. If in exceptional cases this is not possible, the vacation should generally be taken by the middle of the following calendar year at the latest. If more than two weeks of vacation are carried over into the next year or in exceptional cases vacation is taken in advance, this must be approved by the employee's line manager and signed off by next-higher line manager level.

The Executive Board of the University (EB) has defined the responsibilities as follows:

	Faculties	Central Services	Direct reports of members of the Executive Board of the University
1. Approval	Direct line manager (DLM)	Direct line manager (DLM)	Direct line manager (DLM)
2. Signature	Next-higher line manager level (at least head of institute/department)	Next-higher line manager level (at least direct report of members of the EB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Vice President Faculty Affairs and Scientific Information (PR FSI) — Direct reports of the PR FSI: the President — Direct reports of the President: the PRI FSI
Escalation level	Dean	Member of the EB	None

Employees who transfer to another organizational unit of UZH must compensate their vacation, extra hours and overtime balances at their old place of work. If their new line manager is willing to take on such balances, they may be transferred in exceptional cases.

Compensation of more than one consecutive day is only permitted after employees have taken all their vacation. This means that as a rule, employees must take their vacation before they are allowed to compensate extra hours (= positive working time balance).

This principle does not apply absolutely, however. For example, compensation of extra hours of up to one day is always permitted. This makes it possible, for example, to take advantage of what are known as “bridge days” (e.g. after Ascension Day) or to compensate a small number of extra hours (e.g. by finishing work earlier or by taking the morning off at Sechseläuten or Knabenschiessen). However, employees must have taken all their vacation before they are permitted to take consecutive compensation days.

Taking Vacation during a Period of Continued Pay Resulting from Illness or Accident

If an employee wishes to take vacation during a period of (partial) inability to work, they must be in a position to benefit from vacation (“ferienfähig”)¹. Usually, this is the case if an employee is partially unable to work; if they are completely unable to work, they must present a doctor’s note which confirms their ability to benefit from a vacation. If the employee is able to benefit from vacation, the relevant vacation days are deducted from their vacation balance in full regardless of whether they are completely or partially unable to work. The period of continued pay is interrupted for the length of the vacation and extended accordingly. In other words, the full salary is paid during the vacation.

Ban on Paying out Vacation Balance

In principle, paying out vacation balances is prohibited during an existing employment relationship. It is only permitted as an exception in the following cases, subject to approval from the Human Resources department:

- If the employment relationship has been terminated and the notice period served, but it was not possible for the employee to take the vacation before the end of the notice period for operational or compelling personal reasons.
- Vacation that has not yet been taken at the time of the employee’s death will be paid out to the survivors

¹ A distinction must be made between (in)ability to work (“Arbeits[un]fähigkeit”) and the ability to benefit from vacation (“Ferienfähigkeit”). The latter applies when an employee is in a position to enjoy rest and recreation during their vacation despite having an existing health impairment. Unlike the inability to work, which can be expressed as a percentage, the ability to benefit from vacation is either given in full or not at all.

From an administrative perspective, vacation balances must be paid out by means of a change authorization. To do this, line managers and employees should please contact the responsible HR representative in their organizational unit.

Reduction in the Event of Unpaid Leave and Sickness/Accident

In the event of unpaid leave, the vacation entitlement will be reduced by a twelfth for each full month of leave. In the event of total inability to work due to non-work-related sickness or a non-work-related accident, the vacation entitlement will be reduced by a twelfth from the fourth month for each additional full month of absence. In this case, all absences due to total inability to work (including single days of absence and irrespective of whether the absences relate to the same sickness or accident), will be added together irrespective of the calendar year, provided the inability to work was 100%. Provided the employee works again at their full workload for six consecutive months, previous absences due to sickness or accident will not be taken into account when it comes to reducing their vacation entitlement in case of a new absence. Repeated absences with less than six months' time between them will be counted in their entirety, but only if they occurred less than five years prior to the new absence.

Vacation entitlement is not reduced for other types of absences (work-related sickness, work-related accident, maternity leave, military or civil service, etc.).

Employees who are obliged to keep a record of their working hours or who do so voluntarily are responsible for recording the reduced vacation entitlement in their timesheet. It is the responsibility of line managers to check this. In case of questions, employees and line managers should contact the HR representative for their organizational unit.

Legal Information

This fact sheet summarizes the most important provisions on the topic of vacation. Only the provisions of the applicable laws and ordinances are legally binding.