



Town of Chester Time & Attendance Policy

Last Updated: 9/9/2026

Approved: 9/21/2026

Workweek

The payroll workweek for Town employees is Sunday 12:01am to Saturday at midnight 12:00am.

The regular work week for full-time employees, except as hereafter provided, shall be forty (40) hours, divided into five (5) days, Monday through Friday, with employees regularly scheduled to work eight (8) hours per day. Employees may be required to work different schedules other than normal work hours at the discretion of the town to meet the varying needs and conditions of our business. Schedules will be arranged by each Department Head. Changes in work schedules will be announced as far in advance as practicable. Please be advised, however, that advance notice may not always be possible.

Employees working six (6) or more consecutive hours per day will be required to take a half-hour paid break for lunch unless they have signed a waiver. Employees who are required to work four (4) hours a day are entitled to a fifteen (15) minute break.

Overtime

There may be times when an employee will need to work overtime so that the Town may successfully meet the needs of the citizens of Chester. All overtime for employees must be approved in advance by the department head.

All hourly wage employees are eligible for overtime and shall be paid as follows:

One and one half (1.5) time the employee's regular rate of pay for all time worked in excess of forty (40) hours worked in any one payroll week, or in excess of eight (8) hours worked in any one payroll day.

Two (2) times your regular hourly pay for all hours worked on Sundays and paid holidays.

You will be paid a four (4) hour minimum paid at one and half times your regular hourly rate of pay for emergency call outs Monday through Saturday. However, should the normal workday begin before any such four (4) hour period expires you will be paid at one and one half (1½) time your regular hourly rate until the time the normal workday begins. No pyramiding of minimum four (4) hour periods shall be allowed.

You will be paid a four (4) hour minimum paid two (2) times your regular hourly rate of pay for emergency callouts on Sundays and on paid holidays. However, should the normal workday begin before any such four (4) hour period expires you will be paid at two (2) times your regular hourly rate until the time the normal workday begins. No pyramiding of minimum of four (4) hour periods will be allowed.

Vacation, holidays, jury service, bereavement leave, and other leaves of absence will not be included as hours worked for the purpose of calculating overtime pay.

Mutual Aid – when employees are sent to another utility to assist in storm damage, and the Department is reimbursed by such utility for services provided, such employees will receive a rate of double time their normal straight time rate for all hours worked. This will include time taken for meals and time traveled to and from the host utility.

Time Off

Regular employees working for the Town at greater than twenty (20) regularly scheduled hours per week are eligible to participate in the following benefits programs offered by the Town unless otherwise indicated. Employees will be eligible for these benefits the first of the month after their date of hire. When an employee leaves employment benefits will continue through the end of the month and any monies owed for that month of coverage will be deducted from their last pay.

Further information on the Benefits in this section may be obtained from the Town Administrator and/or Benefits Specialist. To the extent that any information contained in the Summary Plan Descriptions (SPD) for these benefits differs from the information in these policies the SPD shall prevail.

Nursing Breaks

In compliance with federal law which requires the provision of unpaid, reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk, the Town of Chester subscribes to the following policy:

- An employee will be provided with a reasonable break time to express breast milk for her nursing child for the first year of the child's life. These break periods will be given each time the employee has need to express breast milk. If the employee elects to take these break periods in conjunction with her regular break time an additional 15 minutes of release time will be allowed. This will provide the employee with two 30-minute breaks. Any additional break time required by the employee will be unpaid.
- A lactation room is provided as a private and sanitary place for a breastfeeding employee to express milk during work hours. This room provides an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water. An employee may use her private office area, or other suitable area, for milk expression if she prefers.
- An employee may use her own cooler packs to store expressed breast milk or may store milk in a designated refrigerator/freezer. Employees are expected to appropriately maintain the refrigerator.
- Management and staff are expected to provide an atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees.

Holidays

A. The Town of Chester observes twelve (13) paid holidays.

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day	Columbus Day
Presidents' Day	Veteran's Day
Patriots' Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Independence Day	Juneteenth
Christmas Day	

B. In order to receive holiday pay, non-exempt employees must work the day before and after the holiday unless the employee is on an approved vacation or personal day.

C. Holidays falling on Saturday will be observed on Friday those falling on Sunday will be observed on Monday.

D. If a designated holiday occurs while an employee is on vacation leave, no charge for the holiday will be made against vacation leave. Similarly, if a designated holiday occurs the day before or the day after an employee is on a personal leave the employee will still be eligible for his/her holiday pay.

E. Employees who must work on Town observed holidays will be paid two (2) times for hours worked in addition to regular holiday pay.

F. The Town of Chester acknowledges that federal and state law requires that the town accommodate the religion of its employees. As such, employees will not be penalized for exercising their religious beliefs and with the approval of the employee's department head, employees that wish to be absent from work for religious holidays will be able to do so, provided however, that such time off is without compensation or that leave time is used.

Vacations

All regular full-time employees are eligible to accrue monthly and use paid vacation in accordance with the schedule below. Regular part-time employees who are scheduled and regularly work at least twenty (20) hours per week for the Town will also accrue vacation time monthly, as follows, on a pro-rata basis. For Regular Part-Time Employees, one (1) day of vacation shall equal one-fifth (1/5) of the regularly scheduled hours worked per week. The amount of vacation leave earned shall be determined on your length of service as of your anniversary date.

The vacation period shall be the Town's fiscal year, July 1 to June 30, and the schedule shall be as follows:

SERVICE	LENGTH
Six months but less than One year	5 days

One year but less than Five years	10 days
Five years but less than Ten years	15 days
Ten years but less then Eleven years	20 days
Eleven years but less then Twelve years	21 days
Twelve years but less then Thirteen years	22 days
Thirteen years but less then Fourteen years	23 days
Fourteen years but less then Fifteen years	24 days
Fifteen years and over	25 days

Employees may roll over up to one (1) week of accrued vacation. This must be put in writing from the employee to the Selectmen with the department head signing off so that they are aware of the request. All rollover vacations must be applied for by June 15 of the current fiscal year. All rolled over vacation time must be used by January 1 of the next year.

Approval for vacation time is subject to the operational needs of the Town of Chester. A conflict in scheduling vacation leave among employees will be resolved by the department head on the basis of when the employee requested the leave, seniority, particular work assignments in process and upcoming operational needs. All requests for vacation time must be submitted in writing at least two (2) weeks in advance for approval unless a shorter period of notice is more beneficial to the department.

Employees who are separated from employment will be paid for all their accrued, unused vacation at the time of termination.

(Part-time employees are not entitled to leave under these policies unless otherwise specified.)

Bereavement Leave

In the event of a death of a regular employee's spouse, child, mother, father, grandparent, grandchildren, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or equivalent step-relations, the employee will be entitled to a maximum of five (5) consecutive working days, one of which shall be the day of the funeral, at his or her regular rate of pay. In the event of the death of a regular employee's aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, or cousin, the employee will receive two (2) paid day of leave in which to attend the funeral of that relation.

Military Leave

A regular full-time employee required to perform military duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, under the provisions of M.G.L. c.33: 54, or required to serve an annual tour of duty as a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States, shall be granted a military leave of absence and shall be entitled to the difference between the military pay and his regular base weekly wage, for not more than fourteen (14) working days. An employee, upon request, may combine his military leave with his regular vacation leave. An employee must present a copy of his/her military orders to

his/her department head. Employees who are called to duty will be reinstated to their previous position in accordance with applicable Federal law.

Personal Days

Regular full-time and benefited part-time employees are eligible for three (3) personal days each year. Part-time employees are eligible for paid personal leave pro-rated in proportion to their regularly scheduled hours of work. The days will be distributed all at once in the beginning of the fiscal year.

A regular employee wishing to take personal time must make a request to his/her department head. Personal days are non-cumulative and must be used in the year earned. Additionally, accrued, unused personal days will not be paid to an employee when he/she leaves employment or is terminated from the Town.

Jury Duty Leave: Employees who are called to serve as jurors in state court will be paid their full wages for the first three days of jury duty. Employees who serve as grand or traverse jurors in Federal Court or whose jury service in state court extends longer than three days will be paid the difference between his/her regular rate of pay and the compensation paid to the employee for such jury service for a period of time not to exceed three (3) weeks. Employees must submit proof of jury service in order to receive compensation under this provision.

Sick Leave

An employee can use sick leave when the employee or the employee's child, spouse, parent or parent of a spouse is sick or had a medical appointment. Notification should be given as soon as possible but, in any case, within one (1) hour after the regularly appointed starting time.

Regular full-time employees accrue sick leave at the rate of one hour for every 30 hour worked. Employees start earning sick time on their first day of employment and may begin using earned sick time ninety (90) days after starting work.

Regular part-time employees who are scheduled and regularly work at least nineteen and a half (19.5) hours in a given week shall be eligible for paid sick leave based upon the above section, on a prorated basis.

Additional unpaid sick leave, above the specified limits, may be requested in writing to the Selectboard. It is the sole discretion of the Selectboard whether to grant additional sick leave.

Please refer to the towns Earned Sick Time Policy for more information.

Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Basic Leave Entitlement

The FMLA provides up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or childbirth.
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care.
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

Military Family Leave Entitlements

Qualified Exigency Leave - Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or who has been notified of a call to covered active duty in the US Armed Forces, whether as a member of a regular component of the Armed Forces or as a member of the National Guard and Reserves may use their twelve (12) week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

Military Caregiver Leave - FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to twenty-six (26) weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single twelve (12) month period. For purposes of this leave, an eligible employee includes the servicemember's parent, spouse, son or daughter, or nearest blood relative, or individual designated as next of kin in writing by the servicemember.

A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list; or

Or a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness if the veteran was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the period of five (5) years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes that medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

For the purposes of Military Caregiver Leave, a serious injury or illness means:

1. a serious injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty; or
2. a serious injury or illness that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces and that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating.

Benefits and Protections

During FMLA leave, we will maintain your health insurance coverage on the same terms as if you continued to work, if you have indicated your intent to return to work at the end of your FMLA leave. Arrangements to pay the employee share of such benefits must be made by contacting the Town Administrator and/or Treasurer, or designee. If you do not return to work upon the completion of your FMLA leave, the Town may recover the cost of any payments made to maintain your health insurance coverage, unless the failure to return to work was for reasons beyond your control. Use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of FMLA leave.

Employees who return to work on or before the expiration of their FMLA leave will be restored to their original or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. Employees on FMLA leave are, however, not entitled to any greater rights than they would otherwise have been entitled had they continued as active employees at the Town. Some key employees may not be entitled to reinstatement at the conclusion of their FMLA leave. Key employees will be notified of their status as such at the time of their leave request.

Eligibility Requirements

Employees are eligible for FMLA if they have worked for the Town for at least one (1) year and have worked at least one thousand two hundred fifty (1,250) hours during the twelve (12) months prior to the start of the requested leave, and if at least fifty (50) employees are employed by the Town.

Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two (2) visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may also meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations.

Intermittent leave is not, however, available to care for a child during the first twelve (12) months after birth, adoption, or placement in foster care. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

If you use intermittent leave, you must comply with our regular call-out procedure for each day on which you are absent, including specifically referring to the FMLA-qualifying reason for the leave.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

Employees eligible for FMLA leave must use accumulated paid leave concurrently with their FMLA leave until all such paid leave is exhausted. Employees must comply with the Town's normal paid leave policies.

The Leave Year

The Town has designated a rolling leave year, which determines FMLA leave eligibility by reference to the amount of FMLA leave taken during the twelve months immediately preceding the request for FMLA leave. This rolling leave year does not apply to Military Caregiver Leave. The leave year for Military Caregiver Leave is a single twelve (12) month period that begins on the first (1st) day of the employee's leave.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide thirty (30) days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When thirty (30) days' notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the Town to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, a covered family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for Military Family Leave. Employees also must inform the Town if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employees may be required to provide a fitness for duty statement before they return after an FMLA leave for their own serious health condition. If you are required to provide this statement, you will be notified at the time that your leave is approved.

Additional Employer Responsibilities

The Town will also comply with the FMLA by not:

- Interfering with, restraining, or denying the exercise of any right provided under FMLA.
- Discharging or discriminating against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

FMLA Questions and Concerns

If you have any questions about your FMLA rights or responsibilities or if you disagree with a decision, we will make regarding FMLA leave entitlement, please contact the Town Administrator or designee to resolve your concerns as soon as possible.

Enforcement

To enforce rights under the FMLA, an employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination or superseding any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

This information is current as of February 20, 2020 for details on current applications of FMLA, you can find them at the U.S. Department of Labor at DOL.gov

Medical Leave of Absence

Employees who are not eligible for FMLA leave or who have exhausted their available FMLA leave and who are disabled as defined under state or federal law may be eligible for an unpaid leave of absence as a reasonable accommodation to their disability, if that leave of absence will allow them to return to work and perform the essential functions of their position. Employees who wish to take a Medical Leave of Absence must submit a request in writing to their department head. Requests for leaves of absence under this provision must be accompanied by medical documentation attesting to the medical need for the leave and a date certain by which time the employee will be able to return to work. Employees returning from a Medical Leave of Absence will be required to provide documentation from their treating physician attesting to their ability to perform the essential functions of their position with or without reasonable accommodation.

A minimum of two weeks' notice is required, unless the need for the leave is unforeseeable, in which case, a request for leave must be submitted within two (2) working days of the date on which the employee understands that there is a need for a leave under this provision.

Parental Leave

Full-time employees who have been employed for three (3) months are entitled to eight (8) weeks of unpaid leave to 1) give birth, 2) for the placement of a child under the age of 18 that the employee is adopting or intends to adopt, or 3) for the placement of a child under the age of 23 if that child is mentally or physically disabled, that the employee is adopting or intends to adopt. To be eligible for this leave, the employee must give the Town at least two (2) weeks' notice of the anticipated date of departure and the employee's intention to return to work at the end of their leave or, if delayed notice is beyond the employee's control, as much notice as possible

Parental leave is unpaid, but employees may use their accrued paid sick, vacation, or personal time in order to receive pay during this leave, if they wish to do so. At the conclusion of parental leave, employees will be restored to their previous or similar position unless business conditions have eliminated the position or restructured their job

during the employee's absence. Parental leave will run concurrently with leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, if the employee is eligible for such leave.

If both parents are employed by the Town, they, together, will be eligible for a total of eight (8) weeks of leave. Employees who take more than eight (8) weeks of leave will not be guaranteed reinstatement unless otherwise required by state or federal law. Questions about parental leave may be addressed to the Town Administrator.

Personal Leaves of Absence

Under special circumstances, an employee who has been employed by the Town for at least twelve (12) months may request, in writing, an authorized leave of absence without pay from the Selectmen. While on an authorized leave of absence, the employee will not be eligible for any employment-related benefits. The Town will make reasonable efforts to return the employee to the same or similar job as held prior to the leave, subject to staffing and business requirements. Personal Leaves of Absence will not exceed one (1) year.

If an employee is absent for three (3) consecutive workdays without notifying the Town, it is assumed that the employee has voluntarily abandoned his/her position with the Town, and the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act requires employers to reasonably accommodate employees due to pregnancy and/or pregnancy related conditions, including but not limited to, lactation or the need to express breast milk for a nursing child. It is the policy of the Town of Chester to comply with all Federal and state laws concerning the employment of pregnant people and persons with conditions related to pregnancy.

It is the Town of Chester's policy not to discriminate against pregnant employees or those persons with conditions related to pregnancy as defined under state and federal law with regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

The Town of Chester will accommodate pregnant individuals and those with pregnancy-related conditions as defined under state or federal law if the accommodation is reasonable and does not impose an undue hardship and if the individual can, either with or without the accommodation, perform the essential functions of a job. If you believe that you are pregnant or have a pregnancy-related condition and that you need accommodation to perform the essential functions of your job, you must speak to the Town Administrator.

Any pregnant applicant or applicant with a pregnancy-related condition who can perform the essential functions of a job with or without reasonable accommodation, without undue hardship, will be given the same consideration for that position as any other applicant.

The Town Administrator is responsible for implementing this policy, including resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety, and undue hardship issues.

Small Necessities Leave Act

In addition to leave to which they may be entitled under the FMLA, eligible employees are entitled to twenty-four (24) hours of unpaid leave during a rolling twelve (12) month period, measured backwards from the first date of leave, for any of the following purposes:

1. To participate in educational activities of their children
2. To take a child to a routine medical appointment
3. To accompany an elderly relative to a routine medical appointment or to appointments for other professional services related to the elder's care.

If an employee's need for this leave is foreseeable, the employee must give seven (7) days' notice before the date the leave is to begin. If the need for the leave is unforeseeable, the employee must give as much notice as possible under the circumstances. Employees may choose to substitute paid vacation, personal, or sick leave for any SNLA (Small Necessities Leave Act) leave. SNLA leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule where necessary.

Workers Compensation

In the event of occupational injury or illness, you may be protected in accordance with the provisions of the Workers' Compensation law. Any employee who becomes injured during the course of the workday while performing his/her job duties may be eligible for benefits, which include payment for lost time and medical expenses.

Any employee who is injured while at work must immediately report the incident to their supervisor, Town Administrator or the Selectboard for proper handling. Medical attention as required will be provided in accordance with the provisions of the Workers' Compensation law.

Employees must complete and forward an incident report to their supervisor, who will forward the form to the Town Administrator, or designee, within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident. The supervisor will also complete a First Report of Injury form, as required by the Department of Industrial Accidents, and forward it to the Town Administrator for filing with our workers' compensation carrier. It is then the responsibility of our carrier to process the claim for payment of medical expenses, lost time wages, etc.

There is a five-day waiting period for benefits from Worker's Compensation. During the waiting period, as well as any uncompensated time off, the employee will have access to his/her vacation or sick time. Workers' Compensation will go back to the initial date of injury, after the employee is out over twenty-one (21) days and pay the employee for the five (5) days waiting period.

Once the employee receives the check from the workers' compensation carrier, the employee must turn the check over to the town office to be re-issued to the employee, minus any regular deductions.

The required forms may be obtained from the Town Administrator and/or Treasurer, or designee. Failure to follow procedures may jeopardize benefits.

Domestic Violence Leave

The Town of Chester will provide employees up to fifteen (15) days of unpaid leave in a 12-month period if the employee or a covered family member of the employee is a victim of abusive behavior. The Town has designated a rolling leave year, which determines domestic violence leave eligibility by reference to the amount of leave taken during the twelve months immediately preceding the request for domestic violence leave.

An employee will be entitled to leave under this policy if the employee is a victim of domestic violence or abusive behavior or a covered family member of a victim of domestic violence or abusive behavior. For purposes of this policy, domestic violence or abusive behavior includes stalking, sexual assault, or kidnapping. Covered family members include the following relationships: spouse, fiancée, of a victim of domestic violence or individual with whom the victim of domestic violence has a substantive dating relationship; someone with whom the victim of domestic violence has a child in common; or the parent, stepparent, step-child, sibling grandparent, grandchild, or guardian to a victim of domestic violence.

Employee leave must be directly related to abusive behavior, such as seeking or obtaining medical attention, counseling, victim services or legal assistance; securing housing; obtaining a protective order from a court; appearing in court or before a grand jury; meeting with a district attorney or other law enforcement official; or attending child custody proceedings or addressing other issues directly related to abusive behavior.

Employees who take domestic violence leave must exhaust all paid leave before receiving unpaid leave, unless the employer determines otherwise.

Employees must provide their supervisor with advance notice of the decision to use the leave, unless there is a threat of imminent danger to the health or safety of the employee or a member of the employee's family. An employee who does not give notice must notify their supervisor within three (3) workdays that the leave was being taken under the Act's leave provisions. The notice may be provided by certain specified individuals other than the employee. Those who take leave under the new law cannot lose any employment benefit accrued prior to the date on which the leave was taken and are entitled to the restoration of their original jobs or an equivalent position, unless changes to business circumstances make restoration impossible.

The Town of Chester will not take negative action against employees for unauthorized absences if, within 30 days of the last day of absence, the employee provides

documentation that the absence was due to domestic violence. The forms of acceptable documentation include documents such as a police report documenting abusive behavior. See the Town Administrator for a complete list of acceptable documentation and the individuals who can provide this documentation. The Town of Chester may require the employee to provide documentation, evidencing they, or their family members, has been a victim of abusive behavior even if the employee provides advance notice of the leave.

With limited exceptions, information related to the employee's leave must be kept confidential by the employer. The Town of Chester will not retaliate against or discriminate against an employee who exercises his or her rights under this policy.

Print Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date: