Can employees carry over any unused vacation time into the new fiscal year?

Vacation time is not intended to be carried over from year to year. Its purpose is to support the health and well being of Dartmouth College employees and promote rest, relaxation and time away from work. Employees forfeit unused vacation time at the end of a fiscal year, unless the supervisor and department head, in consultation with a Human Resources Consultant and approval from HR leadership, approve the employee carrying a specific amount of time to the next fiscal year for operational reasons or other significant circumstances. In addition to ensuring that employees take their time for their own well-being, the policy serves to ensure appropriate staffing levels throughout the year and in the year ahead as well as fiscal responsibility in managing absences and accrual banks.

What must a supervisor do to request a vacation carry over for a staff member?

A supervisor must provide the operational justification and reasoning in support of the request as well as the amount of time requested for carryover. Requests should be provided to the HR department liaison and then to the assigned HR Consultant in the Office of Human Resources for review. Requests must include:

- The operational reason for an employee’s inability to use their remaining vacation time in the current fiscal year
- The specific number of hours or days requested to be carried over, which should not exceed more than five working days except in very rare circumstances.
- A plan for the employee to use the carried-over time early in the coming fiscal year
- Supervisor and department head approval

What is considered a sufficient operational reason or significant circumstance?

Reasons may vary widely across work units, and may include an area having significant staffing shortages and increased service demands, such that allowing staff to take all their vacation time prior to the end of the fiscal year would result in excessive or unreasonable burdens for other staff, compromise service needed to support the academic mission/remote learning, or excessive overtime for other team members. Once compiled for a particular area or unit, requests should be submitted to the HR Consultant for review with HR leadership. HR will not be approving vacation rollover requests solely due to an employee’s inability to travel or take a previously planned vacation due to COVID-19 or solely because the employee does not want to lose the time.
When can a supervisor submit a request?

First, a supervisor should be working with their team members throughout the year and well in advance of the end of the fiscal year to ensure all team members are able to schedule their time away from the office in a manner that ensures appropriate work coverage. If by May 1 a supervisor determines there will be significant operational challenges that would prevent a staff member from using their time prior to the end of the fiscal year or if unexpected work challenges arise due to vacancies or other circumstances, the supervisor should begin reviewing any requests with their department head, first exploring all opportunities to ensure staff members can schedule and take their time before the end of the fiscal year. Once compiled for a particular area or unit, requests should be submitted to the HR Consultant no later than May 25, 2020. For consistency, HR asks that the divisional HR or departmental liaison coordinate the requests to central HR for their respective areas.

Requests made between May 1 and May 25 will be reviewed on a weekly basis beginning the first week in May. In order to ensure consistency and fairness, all requests within the working unit should be compiled and submitted together for review as much as possible.

When is the end of the current fiscal year in which my staff needs to use their vacation time?

The end of the 2020 fiscal year for salaried employees is June 30. For hourly employees, it is June 20.

When and how will I know the outcome of my request?

You will be updated by your HR Consultant.

Where can I find the PTO policies?

The PTO policies for salaried and hourly staff are located in the Employment Policies and Procedures Manual on the HR Website.