



Benefits Eligibility and Cost for Employees on Leave

(Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should consult the contract for eligibility)

This document is intended to explain how company benefits and benefit costs are affected when an employee is on a leave of absence. If you have further questions after reviewing this document, please contact the Benefits Team at windstreambenefits@windstream.com.

Scenario 1 - Employee is on a leave paid through Windstream payroll (Reference for HR - "P" status in PeopleSoft; typically called Short-Term Disability Leave or Military Leave with pay.)

1. Windstream will continue to pay the established portion of medical and dental insurance and provide basic life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) and Long-Term Disability (LTD) policies. This means the employee's cost for selected benefits does not change.
2. Bi-weekly benefit deductions will continue to be taken from the employee's paycheck.
3. Going on leave does not meet the IRS' definition of a Qualified Life Event since there is no change in the cost of benefits, therefore benefit enrollment changes on medical, dental, vision, and Health Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) cannot be made. Should an employee experience an IRS defined Life Event such as a marriage, birth of a child, or spouse gain of coverage while on leave, they will need to contact the Windstream Benefit Center within 31 days of the event date to make changes. However, changes to supplemental life and AD&D products as well as Health Savings Accounts (H.S.A.s) can be made at any time.
4. Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) deductions will be stopped while the employee is on leave since working is a requirement to be eligible for pre-tax dependent care deductions. Deductions will resume when the employee returns to active status.
5. If an employee terminates employment and elects to purchase COBRA benefits, the employee will only be eligible for the same plans (medical, dental, vision) they were enrolled in prior to terminating employment. COBRA rates can be found on windstreambenefits.com > Resources > COBRA Rates.

Scenario 2 - Employee is on a leave not paid through Windstream payroll (Reference for HR - "L" status in PeopleSoft; typically called Personal Leave, Long-Term Disability Leave, or Military Leave without Pay.)

1. Windstream will continue to pay the established portion of medical and dental insurance and provide basic life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) and Long-Term Disability (LTD) policies. This means the employee's cost for selected benefits does not change.
2. Since the employee is not receiving a paycheck, the employee makes monthly payments for coverage directly to Windstream's Benefit Enrollment vendor. The employee will receive instructions from the vendor outlining the process to make payments and the total amount

due. Instructions are sent after the employee's status is changed to leave of absence without pay.

3. Going on leave does not meet the IRS' definition of a Qualified Life Event since there is no change in the cost of benefits, therefore benefit enrollment changes on medical, dental, vision, and Health Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) cannot be made. Should an employee experience an IRS defined Life Event such as a marriage, birth of a child, or spouse gain of coverage while on leave, they will need to contact the Windstream Benefit Center within 31 days of the event date to make changes. However, changes to supplemental life and AD&D products as well as Health Savings Accounts (H.S.A.s) can be made at any time.
4. Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) deductions will be stopped while the employee is on leave not paid through Windstream since working is a requirement to be eligible for pre-tax dependent care deductions. Deductions will resume when the employee returns to active status.
5. If an employee fails to make payments for their benefits by the date specified on the instructions provided by the Benefit Enrollment Vendor, benefit coverage will be canceled for non-payment. The effective date of cancellation will be the first of the month for which no payment was received.
6. If an employee terminates employment and elects to purchase COBRA benefits, the employee will be eligible for the same plans (medical, dental, vision) they were enrolled in prior to terminating employment. COBRA rates can be found on windstreambenefits.com > Resources > COBRA Rates.

NOTE: An employee can only carry Life and AD&D policies under Windstream's group contract for up to 12 months from the last day of active work. If an employee is employed but not actively working for longer than 12 months, it is up to the employee to contact the Life and AD&D carrier to request an application to turn their group policy coverage into an individual policy.