

Annual Leave Forfeiture and Restoration for 2025 Leave Year (as of Oct. 24, 2025)

This message provides information about the end of the 2025 leave year and the requirements for restoring forfeited annual leave.

Federal law and regulations limit the amount of unused accrued annual leave that civilian employees may carry over from one leave year to another -- generally 240 hours for CONUS employees and 360 hours for OCONUS employees. Any accrued annual leave that exceeds an employee's carryover limitation will be forfeited if not used before the end of the leave year. **The current 2025 leave year will end on 10 January 2026.** Supervisors and civilian employees are encouraged to schedule and approve annual leave in a manner that ensures employees can avoid annual leave forfeitures.

Forfeited annual leave may only be restored under 5 U.S.C. 6304(d) in the following instances:

- (1) When correcting an administrative error that caused the loss of annual leave.
- (2) An exigency of the public business created an urgent need for the employee to be at work.
- (3) Due to sickness of the employee when the leave was scheduled in advance.

Even when one of these requirements is met, **forfeited leave will only be eligible for restoration due to exigency of the business or sickness of the employee if it was scheduled and approved in writing before the start of the third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year.** This year, that date is **29 November 2025.** For purposes of scheduling and approving the leave, particularly given the current lapse in appropriations, the "in writing" requirement may be met in various ways, including electronic communications such as email, electronic calendar scheduling, submissions to a time and attendance system, etc. Once the current lapse in appropriations is over, employees in this situation should make every effort to reschedule any "use-or-lose" annual leave for use before the end of the current leave year.

The Office of Personnel Management and the Office of Management and Budget have determined that a lapse in appropriations qualifies as an exigency of the public business for purposes of annual leave restoration (reference attached). Employees who properly scheduled their "use-or-lose" leave before 29 November 2025 but are unable to use some or all of the scheduled leave because of the furlough are entitled to have that annual leave restored (i.e., any annual leave that was forfeited because of the lapse in appropriations must be restored— regardless of whether the affected employees were furloughed or excepted from the furlough).

****If a lapse-affected employee has previously restored annual leave that is due to expire at the end of the leave year (because it is the end of the 2-year restoration period), but that leave is canceled and forfeited due to the lapse in appropriations, Commands cannot restore that leave again—even if the forfeiture was due to the lapse in appropriations. There is nothing in existing law or regulation that allows restored annual leave to be restored a second time.****

The INSCOM Director of Support is the delegated authority to approve or deny leave restoration requests, including the authority to define what additional situations may qualify as "exigencies of the public business" (reference attached).

For any questions, please contact G1's point of contact at (571) 515-7325.