

Winter Recess 2018 - Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Winter Recess?

Winter Recess refers to closing the University's academic and administrative offices Dec. 26, 27 and 28, 2018. This is done in recognition of the season and dedication of Emory's faculty and staff. These three Winter Recess days are not holidays but are provided in addition to the scheduled University holidays of Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve Observed), 25 (Christmas Day Observed), 31 (New Year's Eve Observed), 2018, and Jan. 1, (New Year's Day), 2019.

2. Will all academic and administrative units be closed?

Certain areas of the University provide critical, essential services and therefore will not close during the Winter Recess. Those areas will maintain appropriate levels of staff for operations and continuity of service during this period. Staff members in those areas who are unable to be off during Winter Recess will be allowed to take the equivalent number of approved days off prior to August 31, 2019.

3. How should individuals at Emory notify the community of the Winter Recess?

Those who will be away during Winter Recess are encouraged to provide advanced notice of the Winter Recess to customers and collaborators and should consider indicating the Winter Recess period in their email auto-signatures well in advance of the Dec. 24 holiday. Before leaving for the holiday and Winter Recess, it is suggested that auto-reply messages on email and voicemail greetings be updated to indicate time away from work and identify a point of contact for emergencies. However, it is up to the discretion of the department to provide guidance on the use of and/or messages for auto-replies.

4. What faculty and staff are eligible for Winter Recess?

All Emory University, benefits-eligible and part-time, non-benefits eligible faculty and staff are entitled to participate in Winter Recess. Temporary staff should not be scheduled to work during the Winter Recess period. Employees of Emory Healthcare have separate leave policies and are not eligible for the University's Winter Recess.

5. What is meant by "essential staff?"

Essential staff members provide services that relate directly to the health, safety, and welfare of the Emory community and ensure continuity of key operations.

6. Are staff (other than essential staff) allowed to work between Christmas and New Year's Eve?

The goal of Winter Recess is to close non-essential functions and provide staff time off from work. Unit leadership determines individual department observance of Winter Recess and roles that are essential to maintain key operations. Staff members not designated as essential should not work during Winter Recess unless directed to do so by their supervisor.

7. How do staff members confirm if a position will or will not be designated essential during the Winter Recess?

Unit leadership determines the roles that are essential to maintaining key operations and is responsible for ensuring that its staff receive the necessary communication. If there are questions, staff should direct those to their respective supervisor.

8. Are Principal Investigators (PIs) able to identify essential roles within individual labs and/or research in order to maintain lab research/operations during the Winter Recess?

Yes. Staff members who are required to work one or more days during Winter Recess will receive their regular compensation for the time worked. An equivalent amount of time off will be granted to staff who work on the designated days during Winter Recess. Alternate Winter Recess days must be taken by August 31, 2019 and will not carry forward to the next fiscal year.

9. Will essential staff members be paid at a special rate for time worked during Winter Recess?

No. Essential staff members will be paid at the normal regular rate of pay.

10. Are Winter Recess days paid or unpaid?

Benefits-eligible faculty and staff members: Staff members must be in a benefits-eligible position in order to receive pay for time spent not working during Winter Recess.

Temporary staff and student workers: Temporary staff and student workers are not eligible to participate in Winter Recess. Temporary staff and student workers who work during Winter Recess will receive their regular pay and should enter time worked during the Winter Recess into Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) using the appropriate codes.

Part-time staff: Staff members in part-time, benefits eligible positions are paid on a prorated basis for days worked during Winter Recess.

11. Will Winter Recess time used during the fiscal year count toward the hours worked for overtime purposes?

No. Winter Recess days will not count toward hours worked for overtime purposes.

12. Will there be adjustments to the December/January pay dates?

No. Nonexempt staff can still expect to receive pay on December 21, 2018 and on January 4, 2019, and; exempt staff can still expect to receive pay on December 28, 2018.

13. Are Winter Recess eligible staff required to use vacation or personal floating holiday time during the Winter Recess?

No. Winter Recess is given in recognition of the season and the dedication of faculty and staff. Staff should not claim vacation or personal floating holiday time during the Winter Recess.

14. Does vacation/sick time accrue during Winter Recess?

Yes. Vacation/sick time continues to accrue while staff is in paid status.

15. Will Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) automatically populate with the Paid Not Worked Winter Recess Code on Dec. 26, 27 and 28, 2018?

Yes. Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) will automatically populate with the Paid Not Worked Winter Recess Code Dec. 26, 27 and 28, 2018. Staff members are responsible for ensuring their Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) records are accurate. If adjustments are necessary employees will need to work with their supervisor.

16. How should essential staff members enter time worked in Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) during the Winter Recess?

Essential staff members required to work one or more days during Winter Recess should follow the standard time reporting process. Staff members will receive regular compensation for the time worked during Winter Recess.

17. Can Winter Recess days be taken in half-day increments?

Yes. Essential staff members who must work during a portion of a day during Winter Recess may take Winter Recess in full or half-day increments. No less than half-day increments should be taken.

18. How should staff members enter time in Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) if there is a need for incidental sick time, bereavement, or jury duty during the Winter Recess?

Staff members should use the Paid Not Worked Winter Recess Code when completing the timesheet in Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS). Paid leave for incidental sick time, bereavement, or jury duty only occurs when scheduled to work. No alternative days are given in the event of illness, bereavement, or jury duty during Winter Recess because staff are compensated for the Winter Recess time.

19. How should nonexempt staff members enter time in Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) when required to be on-call during Winter Recess?

Nonexempt staff members should record all time spent responding to phone calls or engaged in work as hours worked in Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS) and should enter the Paid Not Worked Winter Recess Code for the remaining balance of the day.

20. If an essential staff member works during Winter Recess days, do they get to take another day off during the year?

An equivalent amount of time off will be granted to staff members who worked on the designated days during Winter Recess. Alternate Winter Recess days need to be taken by August 31, 2019, and it will not carry forward to the next fiscal year.

21. How do essential staff members who work during Winter Recess use the Winter Recess time at a later date?

Biweekly staff: staff members should use the Paid Not Worked Winter Recess Code when completing the timesheet in Timecard Adjustment System (ETAS). This time off should be approved by their respective supervisor and needs to be taken no later than August 31, 2019, and it will not carry forward to the next fiscal year.

Exempt staff: exempt staff can use the exempt leave tracking system to request vacation time. Vacation leave balances will be increased to include days worked from Winter Recess.

22. Do staff who plan to retire effective Dec. 30, 2018, still receive pay for the Winter Recess?

Yes.

23. If a staff member transfers to another department at the University, will they retain alternate Winter Recess days?

Yes. When transferring positions, alternate Winter Recess days also transfer with the staff member. While a staff member should make efforts to take the alternate days off before he or she transfers, if this is not possible, he or she should work with his or her new supervisor to schedule this time off for alternate Winter Recess days.

24. FMLA Leave is available to staff members who have worked at least 1,250 hours during the past 12 continuous months of service. Do Winter Recess days count toward the 1,250 hours FMLA eligibility requirement?

No. Only time worked counts toward the 1,250 hours FMLA eligibility requirement.

25. If a staff member is on paid continuous FMLA leave, does the holiday and Winter Recess period (Dec. 24, 2018 – Jan. 1, 2019) count against the staff member's 12-week FMLA allotment?

No, if an employer temporarily stops business activity and employees are not expected to report for work for one week or more, the period of time that the employer's business has stopped does not count against an employee's leave entitlement.

26. If a staff member is on paid FMLA leave, would the staff member be allowed to change the designation of paid leave time and substitute eligible Winter Recess time?

No. The staff member will remain in FMLA status.

27. How will vacation and floating holidays be handled that have already been requested for these days?

Vacation requests will be removed from the system for both exempt and nonexempt employees. For this year only, employees who had requested to use floating holidays during this time, will be able to use those days in 2019; these will need to be taken no later than August 31, 2019.

28. Will Blomeyer close for the Winter Recess?

Blomeyer will close early during the Winter Recess days. On Wednesday, Dec. 26 through Friday, Dec. 28, Blomeyer will be open from 5:30 am to 7:00 pm. Normally, the facility would close at 9:00 pm on Wednesday and Thursday and 8:00 pm on Friday.