

## Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) Procedure

### RVC Administrative Procedure (3:30.110)

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#### A. Purpose

Outline the steps Rock Valley College will follow to ensure compliance with the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) by providing eligible employees with up to 12 work weeks of unpaid leave (per calendar year) to address matters related to domestic, sexual, gender, or other crimes of violence. This procedure supports employees in securing their health, safety, and economic stability while maintaining their employment rights and protections against retaliation or discrimination.

#### B. Scope

The **Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA)**, **Title IX**, and the **Clery Act** intersect by offering a layered framework of protections for victims of sexual and domestic violence within employment contexts. They work together to ensure victim safety, provide rights and accommodations, and mandate institutional reporting and response procedures.

**VESSA** and **Title IX** overlap primarily in their mutual goal of protecting individuals from sexual violence and harassment, particularly within educational institutions, by providing mechanisms for safety, leave, and non-discrimination. While Title IX is a federal mandate focused on equal access to education, VESSA is a state law focused on job protection and economic security for victims of violence.

#### C. Department and Primary Points of Contact Involved

Department: HR (Human Resources) and RVC Police

Points of Contact: Benefits and Wellness Coordinator & Director of Employee Relations, and RVC Chief of Police.

## D. Definitions

**VESSA (Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act):** A state law (820 ILCS 180/1 et seq.) that provides eligible employees the right to take unpaid leave to address issues related to domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or other crimes of violence.

**Covered Family or Household Member:** Is a child, stepchild, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or stepparent.

**Crime of Violence:** Any act defined by VESSA as domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or other violent crimes that cause physical or psychological harm.

## E. Procedures

### **Employee Notification**

Employees who believe they may need to take unpaid leave under VESSA must notify their immediate supervisor as soon as practicable.

When the employee shares that the need for leave may relate to domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or a crime of violence involving themselves or a family/household member, the supervisor must treat this information confidentially. The supervisor must notify the Benefits and Wellness Coordinator of the possible need.

The notification should include:

- The employee's name and department
- A brief statement that the employee has indicated a need for possible VESSA leave (no personal details or sensitive information should be shared)
- The anticipated timeframe of the requested leave, if known

### **Coordination and Documentation**

The Benefits and Wellness Coordinator will contact the employee directly to:

- Explain the employee's rights and responsibilities under VESSA
- Provide the required VESSA Leave Request Form and a list of acceptable documentation (e.g., death certificate, obituary, written verification from a funeral home, etc.)
- Determine whether the leave request may overlap with other applicable leave laws, such as the Family Bereavement Leave Act (FBLA) or the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

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## **Leave Approval**

The Benefits and Wellness Coordinator will review the submitted documentation and determine eligibility for VESSA leave in consultation with Human Resources leadership.

Once the leave is approved, Human Resources will confirm the details in writing to both the employee and the supervisor, including the approved dates and total number of workweeks or days. The Benefits and Wellness Coordinator will provide a timesheet, which must be completed weekly during the leave and submitted through the appropriate approval process for time tracking purposes.

## **Confidentiality**

All information related to a VESSA leave request shall be maintained in strict confidence and stored separately from the employee's personnel file in accordance with legal requirements. In some cases, RVC Police will be notified to ensure safety and protection while on campus(s).

## **Return to Work**

Employees returning from VESSA leave will be restored to the same or an equivalent position consistent with College policy and Illinois law.

**Last Reviewed Date:** February 2, 2026

**Last Modified Date:** February 2, 2026

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## Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) Leave Request Form

Submit to: Coordinator of Benefits and Wellness  
[RVC-HRBenefits@rockvalleycollege.edu](mailto:RVC-HRBenefits@rockvalleycollege.edu)

### Employee Information

- **Employee Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Employee ID #:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Supervisor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Job Title:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Leave Request Details

- **Type of Leave Requested:**
  - Continuous Leave
  - Intermittent Leave
  - Reduced Schedule Leave
- **Requested Leave Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Requested Leave End Date:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Estimated Total Time Requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Reason for Leave

VESSA leave may be used if you or a covered family/household member is:

- A victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or another crime of violence; or
- Dealing with the death of a family or household member as a result of a crime of violence.

Please select the reason(s) for your leave request:

- Seeking medical attention for, or recovering from, physical or psychological injuries
- Obtaining services from a victim services organization

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- Obtaining psychological or other counseling
- Participating in safety planning, relocation, or taking other safety actions
- Attending court proceedings or obtaining legal assistance
- Grieving the death of a family/household member from a crime of violence

(You are **not required** to disclose specific personal details. Supporting documentation may be requested in accordance with the Act.)

## **Documentation**

Please indicate what documentation you will provide (if requested):

- Police report, court order, or documentation from an attorney, counselor, advocate, or medical professional
- Employee's written statement verifying the need for leave
- Physician's note may be required for absences of three or more consecutive days.

*Documentation, if required, will be kept confidential and maintained separately from personnel files.*

## **Employee Acknowledgment**

I certify that the information provided on this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that my request will be reviewed in accordance with the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (820 ILCS 180/1 et seq.) and Rock Valley College policy. False claims may be subject to disciplinary measures.

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **For HR/Benefits and Wellness Use Only**

- **Date Received:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Reviewed By:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Leave Approved:**  Yes  No
- **Approved Dates:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Payroll Notified:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Vice President of Human Resources:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_