# Scheduling and Using Annual Leave

## Please remember to schedule and use your annual leave throughout the year

The key date to use all your projected “use or lose” annual leave is by January 1, 2022. You may use annual leave for vacations, rest and relaxation, and personal business or emergencies. You have a right to take annual leave, subject to supervisory approval with regards to when it may be used.

Employees and supervisors are mutually responsible for planning and scheduling the use of annual leave throughout the leave year. Employees should request annual leave in a timely manner, and supervisors should provide timely responses to employees' requests.

To avoid forfeiture of “use or lose” annual leave, it must be requested and documented in writing and approved by the supervisor prior to the start of the third pay period preceding the end of the leave year. The date your leave must be scheduled by for your projected “use or lose” balance for this leave year is November 20, 2021. Follow your office procedures for requesting annual leave. Leave is considered to be scheduled on the date the supervisor approves the employee’s leave request.

## Fact Sheet

* Leave Year Beginning and Ending Dates: [Leave Year Beginning and Ending Dates](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/leave-year-beginning-and-ending-dates/).

Ultimately, supervisors are responsible for the overall planning, coordination, and approving of their employees’ annual leave throughout the leave year so that the organization’s mission and employees’ needs are met, and so that employees do not approach the end of the leave year with a significant amount of annual leave that must be used or forfeited.

While the final date to schedule leave applies only to situations involving the possible forfeiture and restoration of annual leave, employees should be sure to schedule and use annual leave throughout the leave year and not wait until the end of the leave year to schedule or take annual leave.

Employees who choose not to schedule or use annual leave in such a way as to avoid forfeiture are not entitled to have the forfeited leave restored for later use.

Employees with restored annual leave hours from previous leave years should keep in mind that there is a 2-year time limit on using restored annual leave. To use your restored annual leave hours, code 081 on your T&A. Restored annual leave may be used in 15-minute increments.

While the carryover leave validation and approval process has not yet been completed, please note that if you anticipate that you will have approved carryover leave from leave year 2020, it must be used during the 2021 leave year by December 31, 2021 or it will expire. Carryover leave cannot be donated and cannot be included or paid out in any lump-sum payment upon any employee separation. Since carryover leave must be used prior to any other annual leave, supervisors will be responsible for tracking any approved carryover leave, and amending timecards to meet this requirement, once the carryover leave has been restored.

As an additional note, the use of regular compensatory time and compensatory time for travel to avoid forfeiture­ is not an exigency of public service that later permits the restoration of “use or lose” annual leave not taken. Also, leave cancelled due to an exigency of public business is not determined by the individual employee. The supervisor MUST cancel an employee’s leave based on an exigency, document the events and the employee must still try to reschedule the cancelled leave prior to the end of the leave year.

If you find that you have “use or lose” annual leave that you will not be able to use this leave year and would like to donate to an employee that can use it, the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP) [Voluntary Leave Transfer Program](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/voluntary-leave-transfer-program/) assists individual employees experiencing a personal or family medical emergency that do not have any available leave. Please contact your benefits specialist to donate to a recipient in the VLTP.