How to identify and resolve cases of leave washing

What is leave washing?
Leave is used to keep a non-exempt employee’s base pay “whole.” It is not meant to provide additional pay. Leave washing is needed to balance a non-exempt employee who takes leave, but also works additional hours during the week beyond his/her regular schedule. If the leave taken plus time worked is greater than the base pay, the leave should be adjusted to total the base pay time, not exceed.

This is what leave washing can look like on a timecard:

- The employee has 41:45 total hours for the week, but only 37:45 hours physically worked.
- The additional 4 hours are from a sick leave request on Wednesday, June 5.

Why is the employee not paid for the additional hours worked?
The hours beyond the employee’s regular schedule represent excess leave taken during the week. This leave should be credited back to the employee through the process described below of cancelling the original leave request and submitting a new request that reduces the leave hours by the amount of additional hours worked.
- In the above example, the employee would cancel the original 4 hour leave request and submit a leave request for 2 hours and 15 minutes of sick leave.

What is the order of leave for leave washing?
Sometimes an employee may have several types of leave scheduled/taken for the week. Leave should be adjusted back in the reverse order in which it was taken. For example, if sick leave was taken on Monday and annual leave taken on Friday, the annual leave would be the first to be adjusted by the additional time worked. You continue to work backwards through the workweek until your leave and hours worked equal base pay for the workweek.

What about exempt employees? Do they have to deal with leave washing?
Since exempt employees do not clock their time and leave is taken in full-day increments (exempt) and full-day/half-day (teachers) increments, these employees do no not “wash” their
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leave for workweek. When appropriate, supervisors may grant flex time or cancel leave requests if additional work was performed.

How to fix cases of leave washing?
1. The employee should cancel the original leave request and have that cancellation approved by the supervisor.
2. Once the supervisor has approved the cancellation, the employee submits a new request that reduces the leave taken by the number of additional hours worked.

What happens if no one fixes the leave washing?
If the employee fails to follow this process, he/she uses leave unnecessarily. The employee does not receive additional pay for the leave, it is just taken.

How can the supervisor identify when leave washing has occurred?
1. Leave washing cannot be identified until the next work week begins, because the employee might not work all of their scheduled hours, which would be another way of resolving the issue. Once the next work week begins, you can identify the issue using the Leave Washing View as Log into the system.
2. On the Manage My Department page, click on the Quick Find dropdown and open the Total Hours genie.

Note: The Total Hours genie is a view that provides useful information regarding employee timed for the previous pay period, including the following:
- Leave usage (if any)
- Hours worked
- Straight time, overtime, and extra hours worked
For more information about the Total Hours genie, review Understanding the Total Hours genie.
In addition, once you are in this genie, you have access to the Hyperfind menu on the right side of the page. It defaults to the “All Home” filter, which shows all employees who report to you.
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3. Click on the dropdown arrow beside All Home and select Leave Washing View.

4. If any of your staff have a leave washing occurrence, they will show up on this view. Below is a sample result—it’s the same Total Hours view, but filtered to only show employees who have approved leave on their timecards and additional hours worked beyond their regular schedule.

5. To review the specifics of the employee’s timecard, double-click on the employee’s name to open the timecard.

6. When the timecard opens, you can see the specifics of the leave usage and determine how many hours of leave the employee actually needs.

7. From there, have the employee follow the Cancelling a leave request documentation to cancel the original request.

8. Approve the cancellation (see Approving leave requests documentation for more information).

9. Have the employee submit a new leave request for the correct number of hours.

10. Approve the new leave request.

11. Open the timecard and double-check that the employee’s hours for the previous pay period are now correct.