



# Determine How Work Hours, Leave Affect Productivity with FPI Data

By Laura Long

We know productivity is affected each time our facilities department or campus adopts policies and practices that reduce employee work time. But we don't know the extent to which time away from work affects productivity and operational costs.

Why? There are a range of factors that are at play.

Think about what can happen when your sluggish teenager wakes up 20 minutes late on a school day. Miracle of miracles, he pops into overdrive and proves that he, like Superman, is faster than a speeding bullet. But it isn't just the speed that's moving him faster. He may also be giving his teeth half the normal brush strokes and grabbing a bagel as rushes out the door—instead of his normal morning meal: orange juice, two bowls of cereal, and four pieces of toast.

The same could be happening with the facilities staff when holidays shorten a work week. Facilities staff may pick up their pace, but they may also cut down on the effort given to their tasks. So, the interest is in finding a discernible correlation between hours on the job, annual

leave taken, and its overall impact on productivity. APPA's annual Facilities Performance Indicators (FPI) Report provides this data for educational facilities departments.

Chart 1: Work Week Hours

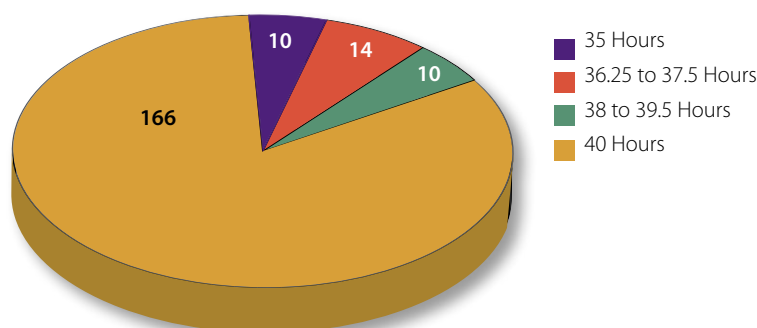
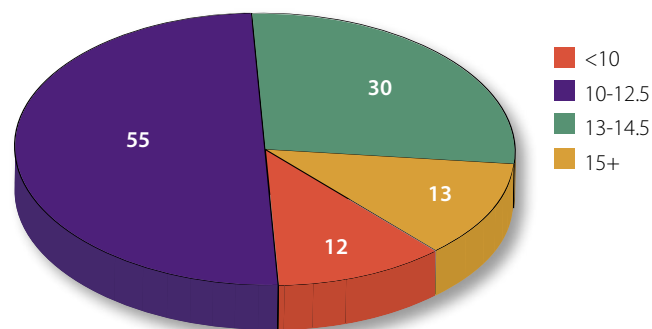


Chart 2: Number Annual Holidays



## THE WORK WEEK

The standard work week ranges from 35 to 40 hours per week. The work week hours registered in the 2006-07 FPI Report of 200 participants are illustrated

in Chart 1. Of these participants, 83 percent of campuses use the standard 40-hour work week.

## ALL TYPES OF LEAVE

The 2006-07 FPI Report captured holidays, vacation, sick leave, work-related injuries, and other leave statistics. There were 110 participating institutions that reported on annual holidays taken per person. The range is wide (minimum of 5 and maximum of 16 holidays recognized) with an average of 11.9 days (see Chart 2). The public institution average is 11.94 holidays and private institutions averaged slightly less at 11.64 holidays.

Workers in the United States, in comparison to workers in European countries, have a reputation for not using their allocated vacation time. We didn't find this to be typical, though of the facilities staff in the 2006-07 FPI study:

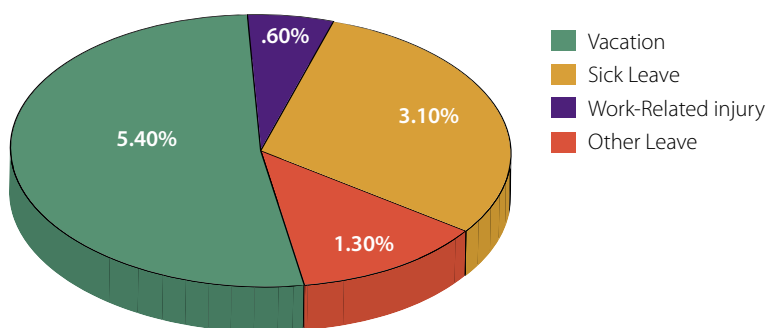
- The total average for vacation time is close to three weeks.
- The total average for sick leave is about 1.5 weeks.
- Other leave covers maternity, jury duty, military service, etc. The total average for this type of leave is about 3.5 days for those persons exercising these benefits.
- Those with work-related injuries average about 1.5 days of leave.

The FPI Report revealed several findings for the average of annual hours at work per FTE (full-time equivalents) for 111 participants who used the standard work week hours, holidays, and all types of leave entries. At the low

end, the average is about 1,000 hours and at the highest end, 1,975 hours. These extremes are possible and claimed to be correct by those reporting them, but implications suggest the range of average annual hours at work/FTE will narrow in future FPI reports. An average of 1,772.6 annual hours or 224 annual days at the work site were calculated. The count, minimum, maximum, and average number of days at the work site are shown in Table 1.

Now, going back to the implications of the standard work week hours, let's look at its relative impact on productivity. A 35-hour work week (the lowest number of hours in our pool of surveyed campuses) produces a loss of

Chart 3: Leave as % Total Compensation



5 hours per week or 12.5 percent of total potential work hours represented by a 40-hour work week. Holidays for most campuses represent 5 percent of total annual hours, vacations are almost 5.5 percent, sick leave about 3 percent, other leave 1.3 percent, and work-related injuries 0.6 percent.

Reducing the work week by 5 hours is about equal to doubling holidays and vacation allocations. Work week hours can reduce possible productive hours more than any other category of leave. Thus, an alternative such as flex time might be a better option than shorter work week hours.

The FPI Report shows one other implication in this area. There are important on-shift breaks at work, such as training, recognition events, and department meetings. Facility operations

increase productivity and the quality of services provided. ☎

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## The FPI Report

The 2006-07 *Facilities Performance Indicators Report* is on sale now at ([www.appa.org/research/fpi/index.cfm](http://www.appa.org/research/fpi/index.cfm)).

The new report is based on data collection from 200 colleges and universities. If you purchase the 2006-07 Web-based FPI report, you will also have access to data from the 2005-06 report and the new set of Dashboard Indicators (nearly 400 dashboard gauges for all performance indicators). In addition, each purchase allows your institution to identify up to five users who can access your report.

- APPA Member Participant/\$125
- APPA Member Non-Participant/\$225
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- Nonmember Non-Participant/\$750

A series of informative webinars were recently offered to present the features of the new FPI report and dashboards and walk you through the many reports, indicators, and results. You will also learn how to best utilize the report for your own budgeting, staffing, and planning purposes. [appa.org/research/fpi.cfm](http://appa.org/research/fpi.cfm).

Table 1

Count Days at Work	111
Minimum Days at Work	124.75
Maximum Days at Work	260.0
Average Days at Work	224.1

that maximize work week, holiday, and leave practices cannot afford to invest much production time in these activities. Therefore, policies and practices that respect an employee's need for breaks in service and to satisfy personal obligations—while protecting productive work hours—enable investments in important down, time activities that will ultimately

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