

513.342 Approval or Disapproval

The supervisor is responsible for approving or disapproving requests for sick leave by signing PS Form 3971, a copy of which is given to the employee. If a supervisor does not approve a request for leave as submitted, the Disapproved block on the PS Form 3971 is checked and the reason(s) given, in writing, in the space provided. When a request is disapproved, the granting of any alternate type of leave, if any, must be noted along with the reason for the disapproval. AWOL determinations must be similarly noted.

513.35 Postmaster Absences

There are special requirements for postmaster absences:

- a. *Leave Replacement.* A postmaster whose absence requires the hiring of a leave replacement must notify the appropriate official.
- b. *Absence Over 3 Days.* A postmaster who is absent in excess of 3 days must submit PS Form 3971 within 2 days of returning to duty or, for an extended illness, at the end of each accounting period.

513.36 Sick Leave Documentation Requirements**513.361 Three Days or Less**

For periods of absence of 3 days or less, supervisors may accept the employee's statement explaining the absence. Medical documentation or other acceptable evidence of incapacity for work or need to care for a family member is required only when the employee is on restricted sick leave (see [513.39](#)) or when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interests of the Postal Service. Substantiation of the family relationship must be provided if requested.

513.362 Over Three Days

For absences in excess of 3 days, employees are required to submit medical documentation or other acceptable evidence of incapacity for work or of need to care for a family member and, if requested, substantiation of the family relationship.

513.363 Extended Periods

Employees who are on sick leave for extended periods are required to submit at appropriate intervals, *but not more frequently than once every 30 days*, satisfactory evidence of continued incapacity for work or need to care for a family member unless some responsible supervisor has knowledge of the employee's continuing situation.

513.364 Medical Documentation or Other Acceptable Evidence

When employees are required to submit medical documentation, such documentation should be furnished by the employee's attending physician or other attending practitioner who is performing within the scope of his or her practice. The documentation should provide an explanation of the nature of the employee's illness or injury sufficient to indicate to management that the employee was (or will be) unable to perform his or her normal duties for the period of absence. Normally, medical statements such as "under my care" or "received treatment" are not acceptable evidence of incapacitation to perform duties.