

Sick Leave Pool

Section:	V: Human Resources
Chapter:	16
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16.1 Eligibility

In order to alleviate the hardship caused to an employee and the employee's family arising from a potential loss of compensation when a catastrophic illness or injury requires the employee to exhaust all accrued leave time, employees of the University are eligible to apply to use time from the Sick Leave Pool.

16.2 Definitions

16.2.1 A “catastrophic illness or injury” is a severe condition or combination of conditions affecting the mental or physical health of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family that requires the services of a licensed practitioner for a prolonged period of time, and requires the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee and therefore lose compensation from the University until the employee is able to return to work.

16.2.2 “Licensed practitioner” means a licensed physician or other licensed health care professional who is practicing within the scope of his or her license.

16.2.3 “Immediate family” is defined by the Texas Government Code, Chapter 661 and includes individuals related by kinship, adoption, marriage, or foster children who are so certified by the Texas Department of Human Services who are living in the same household or, if not in the same household, are totally dependent upon the employee for personal care or services on a continuing basis.

16.2.4 “Employee” is defined as employed for at least 20 hours per week for a period of at least four and one-half months, and not employed in a position for which student status is required as a condition of employment.

16.3 Administration

The Sick Leave Pool is administered by the Office of Human Resources.

16.4 Contribution of Time

Any University employee eligible to earn and accrue sick leave may contribute time to the Sick Leave Pool.

16.4.1 An employee may transfer/contribute unlimited hours to the pool, in units of eight (8) hours by submitting a transfer form to the Office of Human Resources. Retiring employees are also permitted to contribute to the sick leave pool and may do so in increments of less than eight (8) hours. The Office of Human Resources shall credit the pool with the sick leave contributed by an employee and shall deduct a corresponding amount from that employee's accrued sick leave balance.

16.4.2 Although contributions are voluntary, employees who leave State employment are encouraged to contribute to the pool, unless there is a possibility that they will be re-employed by the State within twelve (12) months and thereby eligible to have their sick leave balance restored.

16.5 Withdrawal of Time from the Pool

An eligible employee may apply through the Office of Human Resources for an allocation of time from the Sick Leave Pool for use arising from catastrophic illness or injury or for the illness or injury of a member of their immediate family, as defined by State law.

16.5.1 Applications to use pool leave will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

16.5.2 All requests to use leave from the pool shall be accompanied by a licensed practitioner's statement specifying the nature of the illness or injury and the approximate duration of the absence.

16.5.3 If the application is approved, the employee may use sick leave assigned from the pool in the same manner as sick leave earned and accrued by the employee pursuant to State law and shall be treated for all purposes in the same manner as if the employee were absent on earned sick leave.

16.5.4 Approval or disapproval of an application must occur within 10 working days of the date on the application by the Office of Human Resources. If approved, the Office of Human Resources will determine the exact amount of time that an eligible employee may draw from the pool, and that decision is final.

16.5.5 An employee is also eligible to receive sick leave from the pool if the Office of Human Resources finds that the employee has exhausted all accrued sick leave because of a previous donation of sick leave to the pool. In such cases, the donor employee is not required to exhaust vacation time before requesting withdrawal of sick leave from the pool. The Office of Human Resources will track and maintain these types of balances reporting back to the department the actual remaining balance of time due the employee.

16.5.6 When an employee using sick leave pool hours returns to duty, any unused hours revert to the pool.

16.6 Estate Entitlement

The estate of a deceased employee is not entitled to payment for unused sick leave acquired by that employee from the sick leave pool, and any such unused sick leave will revert to the sick leave pool.