

## **Sick Leave**

- 1.0 Purpose** To provide guidelines for accumulation and use of sick leave.
- 2.0 Applicability** To all Bladen County employees
- 3.0 Policy** Sick leave with pay is not a right which an employee may demand but a privilege granted by the Board of Commissioners for the benefit of an employee, an employee's spouse or an employee's dependents when sick or injured. Temporary employees are not eligible for sick leave.
- 3.1.0 Employees may be granted sick leave for absence due to the following:
    - 3.1.1 Sickness or bodily injury which may prevent an employee from performing regular duties.
    - 3.1.2 A reasonable amount of time for attending medical or dental appointments, whether for the employee, spouse, child (including step relationships) or parent.
    - 3.1.3 The actual period of temporary disability caused or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, and recovery there from.
    - 3.1.4 Exposure to a contagious disease when continuous work might jeopardize the health of others.
    - 3.1.5 Death in the employee's immediate family, not to exceed three (3) consecutive days for any one occurrence when Bereavement Leave is exhausted. If additional leave time, is needed due to exceptional circumstances, Annual Leave may be authorized by the department head. Immediate family is defined as wife, husband, mother, father, brother, sister, children, grandparents, grandchildren, and guardian.
    - 3.1.6 To care for sick members of the employee's family - a spouse, child (including step relationships) or parent.
    - 3.1.7 Sick leave may not be taken until it has been earned and credited to the employee's account.

### **4.0 Accumulation of Sick Leave**

Each regular salaried employee occupying a permanently established budgeted position shall earn sick leave on a bi-weekly basis at the rate of one (1) day/seven and one half (7.5) hours per calendar month. Sick leave will be cumulative for an unlimited number of days. At the time of separation any

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sick leave owed the County shall be deducted from the employee's final compensation.

Sick leave will be credited each pay period to each employee at the end of the pay period for which leave is earned. Sick leave may not be taken until it has been earned and credited to the employee's account, unless an advance on leave is specifically granted by the appointed authority. Part-time employees who qualify for retirement benefits shall accrue sick leave on the same percentage basis as their percentage of work is to full-time.

### **5.0 Requests for Sick Leave**

- 5.1 Employees must notify their immediate supervisor or the next level of management in his/her absence of all requests for sick leave before the leave is taken, or not later than two (2) hours after the beginning of a scheduled working day. Messages, texts, or emails are not acceptable. Notification by another employee, friend, or relative is not acceptable except in an emergency situation where the employee is physically unable to make the notification. Sick leave may be taken only with the approval of the immediate supervisor/department head. Leaving messages is not considered satisfactory notice.
- 5.2 The employee's department head or the HR Director may require a statement from a physician or other acceptable proof to verify personal illness or that of an immediate family member as a condition of approving sick leave. At the expiration of an authorized sick leave period, a physical and/or mental examination may be required at the county's expense and by a physician of its choice to determine if the employee is able to resume his or her normal duties. This requires approval from the HR Director. For sick leave extending beyond three (3) consecutive days, a doctor's statement is required and Family and Medical Leave Act procedures will be enacted.
- 5.3 The minimum amount of sick leave which may be taken at any given time is one (1) hour, after which leave may be taken in fifteen (15) minute increments.

### **6.0 Crediting of Sick Leave**

- 6.1 Sick leave earned bi-weekly is allowed as creditable service at the time of retirement to employees who are members of the North Carolina Local Government Employees Retirement System. One (1) month of credit is allowed for each twenty (20) days of unused sick leave when an employee retires, and one (1) additional month is credited for any part of twenty (20)

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days' unused sick leave left over. There is no maximum number of days which may be credited. See the Local Government System Retirement handbook for more information.

- 6.2 Unused sick leave earned from another North Carolina government agency and/or entity will be accepted and transferred to the county as follows:
  - 6.2.1 There is no maximum number of days that can be transferred.
  - 6.2.2 The total number of days accepted as transferred will be added to the record after completion of six (6) months.
  - 6.2.3 Verification of accumulated sick leave must be received in writing from the previous employer.
  - 6.2.4 The transfer must be completed within one (1) years of the employee's last working day with the previous employer.

### **7.0 Separation**

- 7.1 Termination/Resignation:  
Employees who separate and are not reinstated with the County within a period of two (2) years shall lose all sick leave credits. Sick leave may be transferred to another local government agency upon request. No employee shall be paid for any accrued sick leave if the employee is terminated.
- 7.2 Retirement:  
Retiring employees sick leave credits will be forwarded to the retirement system upon employee's retirement, including vacation credits in excess of 30 days.

*See Separation, Disciplinary Action and Reinstatement (Article VII, Section A 5.3 and 5.4) for separation from service related to sick leave.*

### **8.0 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

Employees not eligible for sick leave as specified above may qualify for annual leave or unpaid leave in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) as outlined in the Family and Medical Leave Policy of the Bladen County Policy Manual.

### **9.0 Workers' Compensation and Leave with Pay**

An employee on Workers' Compensation will not accrue sick leave, while employees on Leave with Pay shall continue to accrue sick leave.

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**10.0 Leave Pro-Rated**

Holiday, vacation, and sick leave earned by regular part-time employees with fewer hours than the basic work week shall be determined by calculation of 53% of the accrual time.