

8.06 SICK LEAVE

An employee with accrued sick leave may use that leave if the employee is absent from work due to:

Personal illness or physical or mental incapacity;

Medical, dental, optical examinations or treatments, or appointments with other qualified medical professionals;

Illness of a member of the employee's immediate family who requires the employee's personal care and attention. For this purpose, immediate family is defined in Section 3.05 EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES (NEPOTISM Charts) of the policy manual.

Accrual of Sick Leave Sick leave accrues at the rate of eight (8) hours per month for regular full-time employees on the first of the month after the completion of the 60 day introductory period. Regular full time employees scheduled to work 32 hours, receive sick leave in proportion to the number of hours worked. The appropriate number of hours of sick leave is credited to an employee's sick leave account on the first day of eligibility and on the first day of each month thereafter. Full time employees who work 30 hours a week, part time employees who work less than 30 hours a week, temporary employees, and seasonal employees do not accrue sick leave.

Notification Requirements Approval of sick leave for non-emergency medical, dental, or optical appointments must be secured at least one day in advance. In all other instances of use of sick leave, the employee must notify his or her supervisor or the supervising Elected Official or Department Head before leaving work or, if not already at work, no later than the time at which the employee is scheduled to begin work on the first day of absence (within 15 minutes of the scheduled time to begin work), unless emergency conditions exist, and must request that approval of sick leave be granted. Some departments may require earlier advance notification. The employee also must call the supervisor each subsequent day he or she will be out on sick leave unless other arrangements are made.

Employees must complete a request for approval of sick leave prior to non-emergency appointments, or must immediately request for approval of sick leave upon return to work in other instances, as applicable. Elected Official or Department Head will notify Human Resources to verify that sick leave will apply or will not apply to FMLA.

Failure to provide the required notice may result in the employee's being placed on leave-without-pay status, and could result in disciplinary action against the employee.

Employees must report to and remain at work until it is necessary to leave for an approved non-emergency appointment, and must return to work immediately following the appointment, unless extenuating circumstances exist. The unauthorized use of sick leave may result in disciplinary action against the employee. An employee may not use a sick day on the same day earned.

Medical Statement An Elected Official or Department Head shall request an employee in his or her department to furnish, and the employee must provide upon request, written verification by a physician of medical disability precluding availability for duty at any time that sick leave benefits are requested for more than three (3) consecutive work days. The Elected Official or Department Head is to send a copy of the medical statement to Human Resources within five (5) work days. Human Resources will verify if the leave is FMLA.

Maximum Accumulation of Sick Leave Sick leave not used by eligible full time regular employees during the year in which it accrues accumulates and is available for use in succeeding years.

Exhaustion of Sick Leave An employee who has exhausted earned sick leave benefits may use vacation leave, other time, holiday and comp time. No advance of unearned sick leave benefits will be made for any reason. The Elected Official or Department Head must approve a request leave of absence without pay.

Illness While on Vacation Leave or on a Holiday When an illness or physical incapacity occurs while an employee is on vacation, accrued sick leave may be granted to cover the period of illness or incapacity, and the charge against vacation leave reduced accordingly. The Elected Official or Department Head must approve the granting. If an employee is sick on a holiday, he or she may not use sick leave for these hours and will not get an alternative day off.

Donation Upon Termination An eligible employee may donate up to 80 hours (10 days) of his or her accrued sick leave to the Sick Leave Pool upon separation from county employment.

Cancellation Upon Termination Unused sick leave is canceled upon termination of employment without compensation to the employee.

3.05 EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES (NEPOTISM CHARTS)

Texas Government Code Chapter 573, a Public Official of Austin County is prohibited from hiring a relative related in the third degree of consanguinity (blood) or the second degree of affinity (marriage) to work in a department that he or she supervises or exercises control over.

A degree of relationship is determined under Texas Government Code Chapter 573. (See the charts that follow.)

