

FRIO COUNTY SICK LEAVE POOL POLICY

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide a Sick Leave Pool Policy which will enable County employees to voluntarily transfer sick leave time earned by the employee to a county sick leave pool and to permit employees to draw time in the event of a catastrophic injury or illness.

DEFINITIONS

2. Eligible employees will be any employee earning sick leave time that has completed six (6) months of employment. Elected officials will not be considered eligible employees.
3. Catastrophic injury or illness is one that prevents an employee from performing the functions of their job for an extended period of time.
4. Examples of illness/injuries generally considered severe enough to be catastrophic include but are not limited to:
 - a. Stroke with residual paralysis or weakness
 - b. Incapacitating heart attack
 - c. Major surgery (for example-hysterectomy, mastectomy, heart bypass, prostate surgery)
 - d. Hepatitis
 - e. Broken hip
 - f. Joint replacement
 - g. Amputation
 - h. Organ transplants
 - i. Cancer diagnosis
5. Examples of illness/injuries that generally would not be considered severe enough to be catastrophic include but would not be limited to:
 - a. Broken limb
 - b. Cold/allergy
 - c. Certain types of surgery with minor or not complications, including elective surgery
 - d. Pregnancy with minor or no complications

PROCEDURES

6. The Frio County Human Resources Director is designated the administrator of the Sick Leave Pool Policy and is responsible for the administration of the Pool in accordance with this policy. In addition to the Human Resources Director, four (4) other appointed/elected Frio County officials shall serve on the Sick Leave Pool Committee.

SICK LEAVE POOL POLICY (cont.)

The members of the committee shall be named biennially by Commissioners Court by February 10th. The administrator of the Sick Leave Pool Policy will approve, in writing, contributions to the Pool. A monthly report shall be made to Commissioners Court for any activity in the Pool by the administrator.

7. An eligible employee may contribute a maximum of 80 hours of earned, accrued sick leave (in increments of 8 hours) to the Pool each fiscal year. Contributions are strictly voluntary. Sick leave time will be deducted from the employee's sick leave as if he/she had used it and credited to the Sick Leave Pool Fund. An employee who is terminated or who resigns or retires may donate all or any portion of their accrued sick leave time.
8. An employee who is unable to work due to illness/injury and who has exhausted all paid leave may be eligible for leave under this policy.
9. An employee need not have contributed to the Sick Leave Pool to be eligible to receive time from the Pool.
10. To apply for use of time from the Sick Leave Pool, an eligible employee must complete a Sick Leave Pool Request form and submit it to the administrator along with a copy of Certificate of Illness/Injury. The Certificate of Illness/Injury must be completed by both employee and a licensed physician.
11. The Committee will review each request on an individual basis to determine whether the condition is appropriate to be considered catastrophic and eligible to receive a grant of sick leave from the Pool. Each committee member must sign the Request for Pool Leave form authorizing the use of Pool time.
12. An employee who contributes to the Pool and then exhausts his/her regular sick leave within the same fiscal year may retrieve the amount of time he/she contributed that fiscal year (if available) even if employee does not have a catastrophic illness/injury.
13. Eligible employees may be granted up to a maximum of one-third (1/3) of the total time in the Pool or 180 days, whichever is the lesser. Available Pool leave is to be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis. The committee shall determine the exact amount that an eligible employee may use.
14. Employee on Pool Leave will not accrue vacation, sick leave, and personal leave during the period of time on Pool Leave. Holidays that occur during Pool Leave are not counted as Pool Leave time.

SICK LEAVE POOL POLICY (cont.)

15. The Committee may require the requesting employee to provide additional information or documentation to determine whether to approve a request to Pool Leave. The Administrator will respond to each request as promptly as possible. Normally approval, denial, or additional requirements will take place within five (5) business days.
16. The estate of a deceased employee is not entitled to payments for unused sick leave acquired by the employee from the County Sick Leave Pool.
17. For the purposes of this policy, a day shall be defined as an eight-hour day.

CONFIDENTIALITY CLAUSE

18. Information on an employee's medical condition or history will be kept separate from other employee information and maintained confidentially. Access to this information will be limited to the Human Resources. Such exams are strictly regulated by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Health Information Privacy Protection Act (HIPPA) in accordance with the HIPPA regulations.

RETURN TO WORK

19. Employees who are out on leave and are using the Sick Leave Pool shall be required to provide to their department head/elected official and to the Human Resources office, a physician's release form before being allowed to return to work.
20. The department head/elected official, Human Resources office, and employee will review information received from the doctor and jointly determine if appropriate work is available if the employee is not given a full release.