

Sick Leave Pool

Each agency within Texas A&M AgriLife has established a sick leave pool for eligible employees who have suffered a "catastrophic" illness/injury or who must care for an immediate family member with a catastrophic illness/injury. Sick leave pool hours may not be used in conjunction with Workers' Compensation benefits. Sick leave pool hours will help to alleviate hardship to employees who have exhausted all available sick, vacation, and any other accumulated paid leave. Sick Leave Pool hours are donated by current employees, exiting employees or retirees.

Eligibility

An employee may apply for sick leave pool hours for their own illness/injury or to care for an immediate family member with a documented medical condition if:

- The employee is absent from work for a minimum of 80 hours due to a documented medical condition (missed work does not have to be in consecutive days and does not have to be missed in full-day increments).
- All available accumulated paid leave (i.e. sick, vacation, compensatory time, etc.) has been exhausted.

Guidelines

- Sick leave pool hours must be requested before the hours are needed or as soon as possible.
- The employee or department will need to submit the Sick Leave Pool Request to Withdraw Hours form. The Department Head (or designee) would need to sign the form acknowledging the employee will be eligible for sick leave pool hours once the employee has met the 80-hour requirement, exhausted all available paid leave, and provided a medical certification form to support the leave.
- A medical certification form (completed and signed by the licensed practitioner treating the employee or family member) will need to be provided to support the request for sick leave pool. It should state the general nature of the illness or injury, prognosis and expected recovery date.
- The amount of the hours granted will depend on the information provided on the medical certification from the physician. An updated medical certification form may be required periodically.
- For each catastrophic illness or injury an eligible employee, after fulfilling the 80-hour requirement and exhausting all other leave, may withdraw, if approved, up to one-third of the total amount of time in the pool or a maximum of 90 working days, whichever is less.
- An employee who is continuously on sick pool will not be able to use new monthly accrued vacation or sick leave hours until he or she returns to work.

Definitions

- **Catastrophic Illness or Injury**
This 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 treatment by a licensed practitioner for a prolonged period that would result in loss of compensation from the state.
- **80-Hour Waiting Period**
A prolonged period is 80-hours of missed work, which qualifies the employee for sick leave pool benefits. The missed work may be continuous or intermittent. For part-time employees, the requirement of 80 hours will be proportional to their percent effort (50% effort = 40 hours missed work).
- **Licensed Practitioner**
A practitioner, as defined in the Texas Insurance Code, who is practicing within the scope of his/her license in treating the employee or family member.
- **Immediate Family Member**
Individuals related by kinship, adoption, or marriage or Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services-certified foster children. Immediate family includes only individuals who are living in the same household as the employee or, if not in the same household, are totally dependent on the employee for personal care or services on

a continuing basis. Employees may use sick leave pool hours to care for an immediate family member only under circumstances for which an employee would be eligible to use regular sick leave, if available.

Sick Leave Pool Contribution

Employees may submit the Sick Leave Pool Contribution form to donate sick leave hours while they are employed or at the time of separation. Contributions are to be made in one-day (8 hours) increments. An employee may not donate sick leave to be used by a specific individual. All donations are voluntary.

Sick Leave Pool Forms

Sick Leave Pool Contribution

<http://agrilifeas.tamu.edu/documents/ag-433.pdf>

Sick Leave Pool Request to Withdraw Hours

<http://agrilifeas.tamu.edu/documents/ag-434.pdf>

Medical Certification Forms

For Employee's Condition

<http://agrilifeas.tamu.edu/documents/ag-521.pdf>

For Family Member's Condition

<http://agrilifeas.tamu.edu/documents/ag-522.pdf>

Additional Information

System Regulation 31.06.01 – Sick Leave Pool Administration

<http://policies.tamus.edu/31-06-01.pdf>

System Regulation 31.03.02 – Sick Leave

<http://policies.tamus.edu/31-03-02.pdf>

For additional questions, please contact: AgriLife Human Resource Office at 979-845-2423