

## LP-2: Sick Leave

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#### SECTION I - POLICY

##### 1. ENTITLEMENT.

a. Sick leave is accrued and may be used by employees who are:

- (1) Regular full-time, and regular part time (normally scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week).
- (2) Probationary employees.

Temporary employees may not accrue sick leave.

b. Employees are normally granted sick leave for:

- (1) Periods when he/she is unable to work due to illness or injury or for a qualifying event covered by FMLA (ELIGIBLE DEPENDENTS). An employee will be eligible to use up to 20 days of sick time for eligible dependents. For the purpose of this policy, any disability which is caused by pregnancy or other childbearing complications shall be treated the same as any other illness or injury.
- (2) Medical and dental appointments, optical examinations (including fitting for glasses), or other treatment by recognized practitioners. Treatment and counseling associated with emotional, mental illness, alcoholism and drug problems are also included.
- (3) Exposure to a contagious disease which can be transmitted to others.

##### 2. ACCRUAL RATE.

- a. Leave year. The leave year (begins on the first day of the first full pay period in January) runs from January 1st through December 31st.
- b. Sick leave is accrued at the rate of 1 day (a regular workday or a maximum of 8 hours, whichever is less) per month. Regular part-time employees will earn sick leave on a pro-rata basis. *Please see breakdown of accruals from the Vacation Leave Policy, Section I-Policy, 2. Accrual Rate.*
- c. Employees placed on the payroll before the 15th of the month will accrue one working day for that month. Employees placed on the payroll after the 15th of the month will not accrue a day for that month.

## LP-2: Sick Leave

### 3. ACCUMULATION.

- a. Elected officials and magistrates do not accumulate sick leave.
- b. Employees are authorized to carry over a maximum of 720 hours unused sick leave per calendar year.
- c. Upon separation from employment, all sick leave accrued by an employee shall be recorded in his personnel records. Sick leave is not paid when terminating employment.
- d. When a recognized holiday falls during a sick leave period, that day will not be counted as day of sick leave.
- e. Exempt employees must document all sick leave taken using an Absentee Report and after approval, submit it to the Human Resource Department. Exempt employees must report sick leave hours for absences of one day or more due to sickness or disability.
- f. Sick leave shall be charged in units no less than .25 of an hour.
- g. **Employees absent from work for any reason, without pay, for more than half of a particular month shall not accrue sick leave for that month.**

### 4. PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATION.

A physician's certificate verifying that an employee was incapacitated due to illness or injury is required if absence exceeds three consecutive working days. If such notification is not given, such absences may be charged as vacation leave or leave without pay. At the department head's discretion, employees may be required to submit physician's statements for other absences.

### 5. NOTIFICATION OF ILLNESS.

Employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor (or representative if the supervisor is not available) within thirty (30) minutes, before the start of the workday. In an emergency, notification should be made as soon as it is practical and may be made by someone other than the employee. Failure to provide notification within two hours after the start of work, without a reasonable excuse, is grounds to refuse approval of sick leave. Employees are required to keep their supervisor informed of their situation and anticipated date of return.

## LP-2: Sick Leave

### 6. PERSONAL LEAVE.

- a. All employees are entitled to 2 personal leave days (a regular workday or a maximum of 8 hours, whichever is less) per calendar year.
- b. Personal leave must be approved in advance and will be charged against the employee's sick leave balance.
- c. Personal leave days may be granted to care for sick children, family medical appointments, personal business, etc.
- d. Exempt employees must document personal leave taken using an Absentee Report and after approval, submit it to the Human Resource Department. All not-exempt employees shall report all personal leave taken on their time sheet.
- e. Personal leave days **WILL NOT** be carried forward into the new calendar year and **WILL NOT** be paid upon termination from employment.

### 7. WORKERS' COMPENSATION POLICY.

- a. All injuries that occur while an employee is on the job are handled through workers' compensation insurance. Any injury must be reported immediately to an employee's supervisor, even if it does not appear that an injury will result in a doctor's visit or hospitalization. If an injury is not reported, the employee may not be eligible to receive any benefits through either the workers' compensation insurance or the county's insurance program.
- b. Under normal circumstances, the reporting and treatment for an injury should occur the same day as the injury. Once the supervisor has decided on appropriate action to treat the injury, he must submit a Workers' Compensation Form (First Injury Report-Form 12-A) to the Human Resource Department as soon as possible.
- c. Employees and supervisors should inform all emergency medical service, personnel, doctors, hospitals, and pharmacies that the case is related to workers' compensation and is not to be charged to the individual's health insurance.
- d. The County Administrator shall designate a physician to be responsible for all the County's Workers' Compensation cases. Employees or supervisors may check with the Human Resource Office or 911 to determine which physician is to be used. If an employee elects to use a different physician, the employee will have to pay any charges unless prior permission is received from the County Administrator's office. In the event the county designated physician is not available, then the employee may use whichever doctor is most convenient and accessible.

## LP-2: Sick Leave

- e. If a County employee is disabled as a result of an injury incurred under the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Law, during the first seven (7) calendar days of disability, the employee will, upon request, be allowed such sick days of sick leave as may have been accrued by such employee. If the injury results in disability of more than fourteen (14) days so that compensation is allowed under the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Law from the date of disability, the accrued sick leave so charged to the employee during the first seven (7) calendar days of disability will be restored to the employee's credit upon assignment or payment to the County of the amount of compensation paid under the Workers' Compensation Law for each day of sick leave taken by the employee. **In no event will employees be allowed to use worker's comp pay and sick leave at the same time.**
- f. An employee absent from due to a Workers' Compensation injury, must present a doctor's certification of each absence. Employees will be allowed a reasonable length of time to attend a Workers' Compensation related doctor's appointment without charging this period of absence to his leave accrual. The employee must show documentation upon his return to work.
- g. An individual's position will be held, if possible. If necessary, the County may fill the position temporarily or fill the position permanently and attempt to locate a comparable position for the employee when he returns to work. The employee must present a doctor's certification that he is able to return to work.
- h. For the duration of an employee's absence, he will be kept on the County's benefits program until he is declared fit to return to work or is permanently disabled, provided that, after the initial fourteen (14) calendar day period (when the employee is no longer receiving a County paycheck) the employee must submit payment for any desired dependent insurance coverage.
- i. The employee has the option of charging any Workers' Compensation related prescriptions to Workers' Compensation or he may pay for the prescriptions and be reimbursed by the Workers' Compensation carrier. In either case, all bills must be submitted to the Human Resource Department, either by the pharmacy or the employee.
- j. No doctor or hospital bill will be paid directly by the County. All such bills must be submitted to the Human Resource Department and will be referred to the County's workers' compensation insurance carrier.

## LP-2: Sick Leave

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### **SECTION II - PROCEDURES**

#### **8. GRANTING OF LEAVE TO EMPLOYEES.**

- a. Upon return to work, a leave request form will be submitted through an employee's immediate supervisor to his/her department head. Sick leave must be taken in units of not less than .25 of an hour.
- b. Department heads are the approving authority but with final approval resting with the County Administrator for all members of their departments.
- c. The County Administrator or Deputy is the leave approving authority for department heads.
- d. Approved leave request forms will be forwarded with the appropriate time sheet.