

8.5 - CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE SICK LEAVE

Definitions

1. "Employee" is an employee of the District working 20 or more hours per week who is not required to have a teaching license as a condition of his employment.
2. "Sick Leave" is absence from work due to illness, whether by the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family, or due to a death in the family. The principal shall determine whether sick leave will be approved on the basis of a death outside the immediate family of the employee.
3. "Current Sick Leave" means those days of sick leave for the current contract year, which leave is granted at the rate of one day of sick leave per month worked, or major part thereof.¹
4. "Accumulated Sick Leave" is the total of unused sick leave, up to a maximum of ninety (90) days accrued from previous contract, but not used. Accumulated sick leave also includes the sick leave transferred from an employee's previous public school employment.²
5. "Immediate family" means an employee's spouse, child, parent, or any other relative provided the other relative lives in the same household as the employee.

Sick Leave

The principal has the discretion to approve sick leave for an employee to attend the funeral of a person who is not related to the employee, under circumstances deemed appropriate by the principal.

Employees who are adopting or seeking to adopt a minor child or minor children may use up to fifteen (15) sick leave days in any school year for absences relating to the adoption, including time needed for travel, time needed for home visits, time needed for document translation, submission or preparation, time spent with legal or adoption agency representatives, time spent in court and bonding time. See also, 8.23—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE, which also applies. Except for bonding time, documentation shall be provided by the employee upon request.³

Pay for sick leave shall be at the employee's daily rate of pay, which is that employee's hourly rate of pay times the number of hours normally worked per day. Absences for illness in excess of the employee's accumulated and current sick leave shall result in a deduction from the employee's pay at the daily rate as defined above. Any days in excess of 120 days will be paid to the employee at the end of the school year at the rate of one-fourth (¼) of the employees daily rate of pay.

At the discretion of the principal (or Superintendent), and, if FMLA is applicable, subject to the certification or recertification provisions contained in policy 8.23—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE the District may require a written statement from the employee's physician documenting the employee's illness. Failure to provide such documentation of illness may result in sick leave not being paid, or in discipline up to and including termination.

If the employee's absences are not subject to the FMLA or are in excess of what is protected under the FMLA, excessive absenteeism, to the extent that the employee is not carrying out his/her assigned duties to the degree that the education of students or the efficient operation of a school or the district is substantially adversely affected (at the determination of the principal or Superintendent) may result in termination.

A husband/wife may donate up to ten (10) days to their spouse for extenuating circumstances (this includes pregnancy). If a husband/wife donates or receives any days that were donated by their spouse in one school year, they may not participate in any way the next year. Both husband and wife must have taught in the Paris School District for three (3) years and both be classified employees to participate in this option. The Superintendent or his/her designee will determine conditions to be classified as extenuating. The decision of the Superintendent will be final. PSD

Sick Leave and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave

When an employee takes sick leave, the District shall determine if the employee is eligible for FMLA leave and if the leave qualifies for FMLA leave. The District may request additional information from the employee to help make the applicability⁴ determination. If the employee is eligible for FMLA leave and if the leave qualifies under the FMLA, the District will notify the employee in writing of the decision within five (5) workdays. If the circumstances for the leave as defined in policy 8.23—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE don't change, the District is only required to notify the employee once of the determination regarding the applicability of sick leave and/or FMLA leave within any applicable twelve (12) month period. To the extent the employee has accumulated sick leave, any sick leave taken that qualifies for FMLA leave shall be paid leave and charged against the employee's accrued leave including, once an employee exhausts his/her accumulated sick leave, vacation or personal leave. See 8.23—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE.

Sick Leave and Outside Employment

Sick leave related absence from work (e.g. sick leave for personal or family illness or accident, Workers Comp, and FMLA) inherently means the employee is also incapable of working at any source of outside employment. Except as provided in policy 8.36, if an employee who works a non-district job while taking district sick leave for personal or family illness or accident, Workers Comp, or FMLA shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Notes: This policy is similar to Policy 3.8A. If you change this policy, review 3.8A at the same time to ensure applicable consistency between the two.

¹ For classified employees your district has the choice of crediting sick leave days up front as is done for licensed employees, or of crediting sick leave at the rate of one day per month worked. Choose your method and delete the portion of this sentence that doesn't reflect your choice.

² A.C.A. § 6-17-1206(b)(2) requires that leave transferred from prior public school employment be used first. In addition, 1206(b)(3) requires that the leave, if any remains, be included in the total count of accumulated sick leave if the district pays out unused sick leave upon retirement. While the statute only applies to licensed employees, we have included the language here for consistency.

³ This paragraph is optional. Leave for adoption is protected by FMLA, but FMLA leave is unpaid unless otherwise provided for in policy. By including this paragraph, you would allow the employee to receive sick leave pay for the days missed during the adoption process. If you choose to include it, select the number of days of sick leave an employee may use annually for the adoption/bonding process (15 is not a required number of days).

⁴ As used in this policy, "applicable" is a very important word. Some leave taken under FMLA also applies to sick leave and therefore, the employee will get paid for the leave to the extent the employee has accumulated sick leave. Other leave taken under FMLA is not applicable to sick leave and therefore the FMLA leave is unpaid unless vacation or personal leave is available. For instance, "applicable leave" in terms of time taken under FMLA due to the birth of a child will vary depending on the language in your district's policy on sick leave. For instance, if sick leave may be taken "for reason of personal illness or illness in the immediate family" (based on the statutory definition in 6-17-1302, and an employee gives birth to a child, she may take sick leave for the amount of time that her personal physician deems it necessary for her to physically recover from childbirth. Once the medically necessary time has passed, sick leave is no longer appropriate and cannot be used. While under the FMLA, the employee could take additional time off work, she would need to take unpaid FMLA leave for this purpose, unless she had personal days or vacation days available. However, if your district has a much more liberal definition of sick leave in district policy, the results could be entirely different and all birth related leave might be applicable. Another example would be the potential for overlap between pregnancy complications that arise to the level of a "serious health condition." For instance, pregnancy complications that rose to the level of a "serious health condition" would qualify for both, while missing work for a dentist's appointment would qualify for sick leave, but would not qualify for FMLA leave. Consult policy 8.23— CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL FAMILY

MEDICAL LEAVE when making the determination of what sick leave qualifies under both policies. It may also be helpful to consult 29 CFR 825.113, 114, and 115 which are available by calling the ASBA office

Cross References: 8.12—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT
 8.23—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE
 8.36—CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL WORKPLACE INJURIES AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-17-1301 et seq.
 29 USC §§ 2601 et seq.
 29 CFR 825.100 et seq.

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