

## **Policy 20     Income Continuation Benefits**

### **20.01 Sick Leave and Sick Absences**

(a)     Accrual. Sick leave is now built into the accrual rate for PTO.

(b)     Use of PTO for sick absences. PTO may be used for absences from work due to personal illness or injury of the employee, an illness or injury for the employee's family member, for medical or dental appointments for the employee that cannot be reasonably scheduled outside of work hours, and for an employee's absence when they are exposed to a contagious disease during the contagious period.

Employees using PTO for sick absences must notify their supervisors in the manner directed by the department, which normally includes advance notification whenever possible and regular status reporting on a daily basis. Departments may by rule require employees to provide notice by a certain time prior to the start of their shift.

Absences of three consecutive work days or longer will require a health care provider's statement as to the nature of the illness or injury and its probable duration indicating the likely return to work date. In appropriate circumstances, medical certification may also be required for periods of absence of three work days or less. The employee may also be asked to provide a medical evaluation of any permanent or temporary physical limitations of the employee resulting from an illness or injury and the probable duration of any temporary physical restrictions.

Sick absences may generally be taken in quarter hour increments, but departments may adopt rules requiring longer increments, up to and including a full shift. Sick absences are paid at the employee's regular straight time rate.

If an employee reports to work but then needs to go home ill, even if at supervisory direction, paid time (PTO or ELB depending upon qualification) must be used if available.

An employee eligible for payment of workers' compensation benefits may not also use PTO for the same period. PTO for sick absences is not normally provided during a termination notice period unless supported by a health care provider's certification.

(c)     Separation Benefit. For purposes of this provision, the term "freeze date" means December 31, 2013, for those employees in positions which were included in a recognized collective bargaining unit as of 12/31/2012, and means December 31, 2005, for other employees, and means the date of transfer for a current represented employee to a non-represented position.

Employees who had an unused sick leave balance as of the employee's freeze date, and who terminate their county employment for any reason other than discharge for misconduct, are eligible upon termination to receive a payout of 35% of the lower of: (i) the unused sick leave balance as of the freeze date; or (ii) the unused sick leave balance

as of the termination date. The payout will be calculated at the employee's rate of pay as of the freeze date.

For employees retiring with twenty or more years of continuous County service and who are immediately eligible for an annuity under the Wisconsin Retirement System, and for those employees who die with twenty or more years of continuous County service, the payout will be at 65% instead of 35%.

Employees have the option to convert frozen sick leave separation benefits into post retirement payment of group health insurance premiums.

In the event of the death of an employee, the employee's estate will be provided a death benefit equivalent to the separation benefit indicated above.

Frozen sick time is eligible for payout as indicated above even if the balance is part of the Extended Leave Bank. All remaining Extended Leave Bank hours that are not frozen sick time are not eligible for payout.

## **20.02 Bereavement Leave**

(a) Funeral Leave. Funeral leave is now built into the accrual rate for PTO.

(b) Bereavement Leave. In the event of a death of an employee's human loved one, an employee may utilize two days of PTO and then up to five days from the Extended Leave Bank, if available, for a total of up to seven workdays.

(b) Conditions. Bereavement leave may be used only during the period starting on the day of death through the seventh calendar day after the day of the funeral, memorial service, burial, or celebration of life.

The purpose of bereavement leave is to allow an employee to attend the funeral, process their loss, and to attend to matters of the estate. The County may require verification of the need for the leave.

(d) Additional Leave. The County recognizes that death can have a deep impact on an individual or family. Additional time off (as unpaid) may therefore be granted if needed, subject to approval by the department head and the Director of Human Resources. Unpaid leave under this provision may be granted with or without the requirement that PTO or other paid time off be used first.

## **20.03 Long-Term Disability**

Regular full-time and part-time employees who work 600 or more hours in a year (excluding bridgetenders and seasonal employees) are eligible for long term disability insurance following six months of continuous employment. This program is designed to

provide employees with 66-2/3% of their gross salary when disabled due to a long-term illness or non-worked related accident.

Benefit eligibility begins after the employee has been unable to work continuously for a waiting period of 60 calendar days.

The County pays the full premium cost for the long-term disability benefit with the waiting period as stated above. Employees may reduce the waiting period to 30 days by paying the applicable difference in premium.

The long-term disability benefit is subject to the terms and conditions found in the plan document for the provider selected by the County. Benefits are offset by benefits provided through other disability programs which may be available.