

Compassionate Leave – Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is compassionate leave a bank of time?

A. No, compassionate leave is not a bank of time. No donations can be received in advance of requests. The employee must meet the eligibility requirements in order to receive donated leave up to a maximum of 12 weeks (60 days) per calendar year once all earned leave is exhausted. When an eligible employee is in need of time, the employee will complete the Request for Donation and submit to the Director of HR. An email will be sent out requesting donations. When donations are received, the forms are dated and stamped as first in and first used. Any donations above the amount needed will be returned to the employee who donated it. The employee would then re-submit donations if there are any requests.

Q. Who is receiving compassionate leave?

A. Due to the confidentiality of medical information, once an employee meets the eligibility FMLA leave requirements and completes the Request to Receive Compassionate Leave, HR/Payroll cannot communicate or discuss the name of the employee or the reason the employee is requesting compassionate leave.

Q. How is donated leave applied to an employee?

A. Employees complete a Compassionate Leave Donation Form and submit to Human Resources. The date and time is stamped when the donation forms are received in HR. The leave amounts are applied by first in, first used method.

Q. Which employees can donate leave?

A. All full time employees are eligible to donate earned unused vacation and/or sick leave.

Q. How many times can I donate time?

A. If available, employees can donate time up to a maximum of 5 days of vacation and/or sick time in a 12 month calendar period. If you donated 1 day this month, you can donate up to 4 more days by the end of December if there is a need for leave.

Q. If I requested compassionate leave and met the eligibility requirements, how much time can I receive?

A. An employee may receive donated leave up to a maximum of 12 weeks (60 days) per calendar year once all earned leave is exhausted.

Q. If I donate time now, can I receive donated time in the future if I need it?

A. If you donate time to someone now and in the future you apply for FMLA leave, meet the eligibility requirements by using all of your accrued leave due to a catastrophic illness, injury or event, you would be eligible to request to receive compassionate leave donations.

Q. What is the definition of catastrophic illness, injury or event?

A. A **catastrophic illness** is a severe illness requiring prolonged hospitalization or recovery (*Examples* would include coma, cancer, leukemia, heart attack or stroke); a **catastrophic injury** is a severe injury to the spine, spinal cord, or brain, and may also include skull or spinal fractures; a **momentous tragic event** ranging from extreme misfortune to utter overthrow or ruin.

Compassionate Leave Procedures

Limitations

Only accrued vacation and/or sick leave may be donated at the time of the request of an employee in need due to a catastrophic illness, injury or event. No donations can be received in advance of a request. The minimum donation an employee may make is seven (7) hours for operational staff or one (1) day for faculty/administrative staff. The maximum donation is forty (40) hours or five (5) days for a continuous leave period. The total amount of time an employee may remain off work on donated leave is twelve (12) weeks within a twelve (12) month period.

Transfer of Leave

For the purposes of simplicity and auditable recordkeeping, accrued vacation and sick leave shall be transferred hour for hour, or day for day regardless of differing pay scales.

The maximum donation credited to a recipient's leave account shall be the amount necessary to ensure continuation of the employee's regular salary during the employee's period of approved catastrophic leave. Donations will be voluntary, confidential, and irrevocable.

An employee needing leave will complete a Leave Donation Request Form and submit it to the Director of Human Resources.

Upon determination that an employee is eligible to receive leave donations, the Director of Human Resources may communicate the need to faculty and staff in an email. Employees wanting to make donations will submit a completed Compassionate Leave Donation Form.

Adjusted vacation or sick balances will be recorded in the University's time and attendance system for both the donor's and recipient's record.

Procedural Best Practice (Steps)

1. Employee identifies need for donated leave and completes the Leave Donation Request Form.
 - a) Form may be requested from Human Resources
2. Director of Human Resources reviews employee's eligibility.
3. Director of Human Resources communicates need to faculty and staff.
 - a) Need is communicated via email.
 - b) The email requesting leave donations must *maintain employee confidentiality*.
4. Employees willing to donate vacation and/or sick leave should complete a donation form and send to the Director of Human Resources.

Limitation: Donations may range 7 to 40 hours; 1 to 5 days.
5. Human Resources designee confirms that donor has sufficient leave available for donation.
6. Human Resources designee communicates leave donation amounts to Payroll.