

Purpose

Employees who are members of the sick leave bank and who suffer catastrophic illness will be provided additional sick leave days upon the exhaustion of all accrued leave.

Bank Administration

The Sick Leave Bank shall be administered by the Superintendent or a designee and a standing committee composed of representatives from each employee group. The committee shall be comprised of one administrator, one classroom teacher, counselor, or media specialist, one bus driver, one clerical representative, one food services worker, one custodian or maintenance employee, one member of the Board of Education, and Superintendent or designee.

The committee shall consider all applications to withdraw days from the bank.

The responsibilities of the administrator of the Sick Leave Bank shall be:

- A. Review all applications for enrollment and establish eligibility.
- B. Monitor and maintain accounting records on bank balances.
- C. Accept all applications for withdrawal of bank days and call committee meetings as needed to consider applications.
- D. Advise the committee on payroll procedures and acceptable business practices.
- E. Provide the committee with necessary background information on applicants.
- F. Report to the committee on the bank balances and transactions.

Bank Membership

All full-time certified or classified employees of the Lee County School System are eligible to become members of the sick Leave Bank. The employee must have earned at least one year of creditable experience with the Lee County School system and have earned no less than twenty (20) sick leave days at the time of membership application.

The open enrollment period for the Sick Leave Bank shall be from 9/1 to 9/30. Membership will be effective the first day of the payroll period following 9/30

No known pre-existing conditions will be eligible for bank withdrawal for a period of one year from the date of bank enrollment.

Membership Requirements

- A. A completed membership application.
- B. A contribution to the bank of one day of the applicant's accrued sick leave. This leave must be

- earned leave, not projected earning for the year.
- C. A commitment from the employee that one additional day of leave will be automatically transferred to the bank whenever the total bank balance falls below twenty-five percent of the total number of members in the bank. If earned leave is not available when the assessment is made, the day will be transferred as soon as it is earned. (An employee's request for membership shall indicate commitment to do so).
 - D. A waiver, signed upon application for membership, relieving the Board of Education and the Sick Leave Bank committee of any liability resulting from action taken by the committee.

Membership in the bank is completely voluntary. A person may resign from the bank by giving written notification to the administrator of the Sick Leave Bank. However, no contributions to the bank will be returned or transferred to another school system. A person who resigns from the bank or leaves the employ of the system while owing days to the bank will be assessed a penalty of 1/190 of their pay for each day owed. Except for those leaving the employ of the system, a person may resign from the bank only twice. After two resignations an employee is not eligible for membership.

No employee will be eligible to rejoin the bank for a period of three years after resigning from the bank. If an employee resigns from the school system, he/she will be eligible for reinstatement in the bank upon re-employment by the school system. A written application for reinstatement is required.

Withdrawal of Sick Leave Days

Application may be made to the committee to withdraw sick leave days from the bank under the following conditions:

- A. The employee must have been out of work for five continuous workdays with no leave pay, workman's compensation, or other disability payments. No bank days shall be awarded for days prior to the sixth day of continuous unpaid leave.
- B. All applications must include a physician's statement that should include anticipated length of disability.
- C. The maximum number of days which may be withdrawn from the bank in one fiscal year is 30.
- D. Days shall be withdrawn from the bank in increments of five days or less. The committee has the discretion of granting additional increments at the time of approval if medical evidence so warrants.
- E. Any bank days remaining in the employee's account at the end of the disability period shall be returned to the bank.
- F. Maternity leave will not qualify for bank withdrawal, unless there are physical complications resulting from the pregnancy.
- G. If the employee is incapacitated, a family member may make application to the committee.
- H. No employee receiving workman's compensation or other disability payments will be eligible to draw from the bank.
- I. The transfer of sick leave days from the bank to the individual's payroll records must be made before the 20th day of the month. Transfers received after the payroll department's deadline will be processed the following payroll period.

- J. Bank leave days can only be used for the employee's normal workdays.
- K. Application for withdrawals from the bank shall be based on the employee's personal illness or the illness of an immediate family member. Immediate family for the purpose of this policy is defined as spouse, parent, or children.
- L. If there is no reasonable expectation that the employee will be able to return to work and the employee qualifies for disability or service retirement, the employee must apply for retirement benefits. Sick Leave Bank days shall not be granted for periods of time for which the employee is eligible for retirement benefits.
- M. Withdrawals from the Sick Leave Bank will be denied if evidence of sick leave abuse can be determined.
- N. Abuse of the Sick Leave Bank will result in the employee reimbursing the bank, including the refund to the Board of Education of any payments from bank funds and shall be subject to other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Board of Education.
- O. Decisions of the committee are final and are excluded from appeal under existing grievance procedures.

General Provisions

- A. A committee quorum shall be five members of the eight-member committee. A quorum must be present for business to be conducted.
- B. A majority vote of committee members present is required for approval of a request for withdrawal.
- C. A copy of the Sick Leave Bank policy is available on the Lee County School System website (www.lee.k12.ga.us).
- D. This policy and all its provisions are contingent upon the sound financial condition of the Lee County Board of Education. If at any time the board must borrow funds to maintain its financial solvency or if continuation of the bank would lead to such financial instability, the operation of the bank shall cease and all days returned to its members.