

CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL

Catastrophic Leave Bank (Catastrophic Leave II)

- A. Catastrophic leave is available for the purpose of assisting participating employees to remain longer on paid status during periods of necessary separation from work after all other appropriate sick leave, family leave, industrial accident and illness leave, and Worker's Compensation benefits have been exhausted. This leave is limited to the terms, conditions and purposes specified herein.
- B. An employee may be eligible to receive Catastrophic Leave benefits for the following reasons:
 - 1. To recover from an accident or illness to the employee, whether or not it is work related, with certification from a physician that the employee cannot return to work.
 - 2. To care for a member of the immediate family who is suffering with a life threatening illness when such care cannot reasonably be provided by someone else. (A physician's statement is required to verify patient's condition and a reasonable explanation of the need to provide care may be requested before leave is granted.)
- C. Each certificated employee may voluntarily contribute to the Catastrophic Leave bank. Only those who have contributed to the bank are eligible to draw from the bank. Contributions must be renewed annually in order to maintain eligibility except:
 - 1. If an individual's sick leave is exhausted and he/she is drawing from the bank, he/she shall not be required to contribute in that year in order to continue to receive benefits.
 - 2. If an employee, who donated to the bank in the preceding year and was thus eligible to participate in its benefits, cannot report to work at the beginning of any new school year due to approved medical reasons, the employee shall not be required to donate a day from the new allocation of sick leave in order to be eligible to apply for catastrophic leave benefits after exhaustion of that new sick leave allocation.
- D. The annual rate of contribution by each participating employee for each school year shall be one (1) day of sick leave.
- E. Contributions to the leave bank become the property of the pool, even if not utilized, and can only be withdrawn under the terms and conditions of this policy. A donation to the bank shall not be considered a donation to a specific employee for his/her specific use.
- F. The Personnel Office shall notify new probationary employees of the opportunity to donate at the time of hire. New employees will have 30 days after starting employment to donate in order to be eligible to participate in that year. Regular, continuing personnel will have thirty days from the start of each academic year to indicate their participation for that current year.

- G. An individual may qualify for a withdrawal from the bank for a maximum of 40 days.
- H. The leave bank shall be considered self-contained and limited by the employee contributions received and accrued over time. There shall be no catastrophic leave awarded, nor any obligation to provide such leave, when all days in the bank have been exhausted.
- I. In October of each year, participating employees shall receive notice of how many days have been contributed and accrued to the bank and how many days have been used since the last reporting. No confidential personal information will be disclosed, however, in this report to the participants.
- J. In the event the leave bank accrues 160 days, no further annual contributions from ongoing participants will be required in order to sustain their eligibility to draw from the bank. Voluntary deposits to the bank shall not be requested again until a draw from the bank is made and the total days accrued falls below 160. In such event, employees will be requested to re-enroll during the next regular 30-day window period for participation as described above.
 - 1. New members may continue to join even if the accrued amount of days in the bank reaches 160.
 - 2. Continuing regular employees may initiate (or restart) their bank eligibility during the next window period for contributions regardless of the number of days accrued in the bank.
- K. If the Catastrophic Leave bank is terminated for any reason, the days remaining in the bank shall be returned to the then current participant pool proportionately.
- L. Days contributed toward the bank shall be the same whether or not the employee is full or part time. Withdrawals from the bank shall be pro-rated only if the employee serves part time on a daily basis; otherwise, withdrawals shall be in full day increments as they were contributed.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE
44043.5 Catastrophic leave

Policy

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HUMBOLDT COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Eureka, California