



Sick Leave Bank for Teachers

August 9, 2011

Teachers, who are unable to work because of a catastrophic illness or injury, may exhaust their available leave and face serious financial hardship. Sick Leave Banks were designed to ease this burden by providing alternative compensation.

Although not an exclusive list, catastrophic illnesses are typically illness such as heart attacks, cancer, serious automobile accident or major surgery, or any condition that results in an absence of at least twenty consecutive days.

The SCEA supports state legislation and local school district policies that provide teachers with the ability to donate to and access a sick leave bank for extenuating circumstances. A Sick Leave Bank procedure should provide the following:

For purposes of this section: “Catastrophic illnesses” or “accidents” will generally include illnesses or accidents that require absences in excess of twenty (20) consecutive days.

(A) Establishment. Each school district shall establish a sick leave bank for full-time employees who experience catastrophic illnesses or accidents that require absences that exceed accrued leave.

The sick leave bank shall be established by the donation of one day of current sick leave to the bank by employees in the district, thereby establishing employees’ eligibility to participate in the bank. Leave days that have been contributed may not be reclaimed by the donor. An employee may elect to not participate in the sick leave bank by completing and submitting the appropriate withdrawal form, promulgated by the District, by September 1st.

(B) Eligibility. To be eligible to request leave days from the sick leave bank, a teacher must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Be a contributing member of the sick leave bank.
- 2) Suffer from a catastrophic illness or accident, or find it necessary to be absent from work due to the catastrophic illness of a member of the immediate family.
- 3) Present a statement from a physician validating the catastrophic illness and the necessity for the teacher to be out of work.

(C) Committee. The employees at each work site shall elect a representative to serve on the sick leave bank committee. The purpose of this committee is to determine whether the illness or accident is catastrophic based on the information presented, the extent of impairment to an employee's ability to function and the employee's particular circumstances. The committee is not authorized to grant leaves in excess of the number of days accumulated in the sick leave bank. All decisions of the committee shall be final.

(D) Further Donations. Teachers may, at any time, donate their unused sick days to the sick leave bank, by completing the appropriate form promulgated by the District. When most days in the sick leave bank have been depleted, the committee may call for an additional contribution of one day's leave by employees.

For additional information, contact Jackie Hicks, The SCEA President, jhicks@thescea.org