



COUNTY OF DANE

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GREG BROCKMEYER
Director of Administration

Date: December 5, 2023

To: All Employees

From: Greg Brockmeyer
Director of Administration

Subject: Temporary Exception to the Employee Benefit Handbook for Sick Leave

Since 2020, Dane County has implemented Emergency COVID-19 Leave in order to provide additional leave time to limit the spread of COVID-19 and allow for employees to deal with the challenges create by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the four years since Emergency COVID-19 Leave was implemented, there have been many changes in the provision of this leave. Many health experts have shared that COVID-19 is a disease that will continue to infect the population for a significant period of time. In fact, scientists expect that the virus will eventually become endemic—causing seasonal illnesses each year.

Rather than proposing another extension of COVID Leave for payroll year 2024, the Administration is proposing to modify its Sick Leave accrual rate in order to account for COVID's continued existence.

Dane Co. Ord. §18.24(5)(a) authorizes the Director of Administration to make temporary exceptions to the Employee Benefit Handbook after reasonable notice to interested stakeholders. If concerns regarding the implementation of the proposed exception are raised, I will schedule a meeting with the parties. Interested stakeholders have until the end of business on (date) to raise their concerns.

2024 Sick Leave Changes

1. Employee Benefit Handbook, All Employee Groups, is modified as follows. The topic "Subject: Sick Leave" is modified to add the following section below. The addition is in red and the revised section will now read:

SUBJECT: SICK LEAVE

Section 1:

....

- c. Sick Leave with Pay Credits. All full-time employees covered by this policy shall be granted sick leave with pay credit at the rate of ~~four (4)~~ **five and a half (5.5)** hours of sick leave for each bi-weekly pay period during which an employee receives compensation for forty (40) or more hours of work or the equivalent compensation. Part-time employees shall earn sick leave credits on pro-rata basis.

e. Use of Sick Leave Credits. Employees shall inform their supervisor or department head as is appropriate of their need to be absent prior to their regularly scheduled starting time the first day and each day thereafter when return to work is doubtful; when their absence can be anticipated because of an appointment, such notice shall precede the absence by five (5) days when possible. The time off on sick leave for such appointments as are necessary shall be the minimum time required by the employee; but where it is possible for the employee to do so and in the interests of departmental efficiency, such appointments will be scheduled as near as possible to the end of the work day.

1. Employees may use sick leave credits for temporary emergency care of ill or injured members of their immediate family (defined above), not to exceed five (5) days for any one (1) illness or injury; however, the five (5) days may be extended in unusual circumstances with prior County approval.
 2. If an employee is absent from work for any of the reasons set forth under the sick leave definition above, and at such time has accumulated insufficient sick leave credits to cover the time lost, the amount of time lost shall be deducted from current earnings of said employee, provided, however, that for each month worked during such calendar year by said employee during which no sick leave is taken, said employee shall be reimbursed for the time they had lost as a consequence of the insufficient accumulation of sick leave credits.
 3. Employees may at their option use vacation credits, holiday credits, or compensatory time due, to extend sick leave.
 4. Employees may use vacation or holiday time in lieu of sick leave. Substituting other leave time for sick leave does not relieve the employee of any obligation to follow call in procedures. Absences may be used in evaluating general attendance, absenteeism, and specific violations of attendance policies regardless of the type of leave time that is used unless such leave time was previously approved by an employee's supervisor.
 5. **Notwithstanding subsection two (2) above, for 2024, Employees will be able to use the sick leave that they will earn in payroll year 2024 immediately without incurring a deduction in their earnings for unaccumulated sick leave credits. Employees who began the 2024 payroll year with a negative balance in sick leave credits, may not use sick leave without incurring a deduction in their earnings for unaccumulated sick leave credits until their sick leave credits balance returns to zero. If an employee's employment with the County terminates with a negative sick leave balance, the County shall recover these funds through a deduction in the employee's final pay or other legal process.**
2. This temporary exception set forth above shall remain in effect until the end of the 2024 payroll year.