

6.13 Catastrophic Leave Pool (10/01/24) - DRAFT

(a) Purpose. The City of Burlison recognizes that employees may have a personal or family medical emergency, resulting in a need for additional time off more than their available paid leave. To address this need, all eligible employees may donate accrued vacation and/or sick time hours from their unused balance to the City's Catastrophic Leave Pool ("the Pool"), which helps their co-workers in need of additional sick time off, in accordance with the policy outlined below. This policy is strictly voluntary.

(b) Eligibility. Employees must be employed with the City of Burlison in a regular, full-time position for a minimum of one year to be eligible to donate and/or receive donated paid time to use leave from the Pool. The employee must be a "member" of the Catastrophic Leave Pool to receive donated time from the Pool. Membership is defined as having enrolled in Catastrophic Leave Pool by contributing 8, 16, 24, 32, or 40 hours of vacation and/or sick time off to the pool. Employees must re-enroll annually to remain a member of the Pool for the calendar year. To be eligible to receive donated time off, a Pool member must exhaust all accrued paid leave and not be receiving paid disability benefits.

(c) Guidelines. An employee who would like to make a request to receive time off from the Pool must have a situation that meets the following criteria:

- (1) **Medical emergency**, defined as a medical condition of the employee or an immediate family member that will require the prolonged/extended absence of the employee from duty and will result in a substantial loss of income to the employee due to the exhaustion of all paid leave including disability benefits or while in a waiting period for disability benefits. Immediate family for this section includes children or any person who is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability, and for whom the employee has actual day- to-day responsibility for care, including a biological, adopted, foster or stepchild. Immediate family also includes the employee's spouse, parent, in-laws, or siblings residing within the employee's household.

(d) Contribution of Hours and Membership Terms. Each annual contribution provides employee with one year of membership in the Pool (calendar year). An employee who resigns or retires from employment with the city may donate a portion of their vacation and/or sick time to the Pool at the time of resignation or retirement. What is an acceptable number of hours will be determined by the city and the employee at time of resignation/retirement.

(e) Donation of Paid Time Off. Employees may donate accrued vacation and/or sick paid time off hours to the Pool during designated timeframes established by Pool Administrator. Eligible members may donate vacation and/or sick paid time off hours with different benefit amounts, as shown below:

Donation Increment	Maximum Pool Hours Member May Receive per Year (or one-third of pool balance, whichever is less)
8 hours	80
16 hours	160
24 hours	240
32 hours	320
40 hours	400

- (1) The donation of vacation and/or sick paid time to the Pool is strictly voluntary.
- (2) Members cannot stipulate who will receive donated hours.
- (3) Donated hours become the property of the Pool. Donated vacation and/or sick paid time off will go into the Pool for use by eligible recipients and may not be withdrawn once submitted. Any balance of vacation and/or sick paid time off in the Pool will automatically carry forward to the following year.
- (4) If the Pool is dissolved by the city in the future, no additional hours will be donated and the remaining paid time hours will continue to be used by employees until the hours are depleted. In this scenario, eligible employees would include any employee who has donated paid time into the

Pool.

- (5) Recipient identity will not be disclosed to members.
- (6) The donation of sick paid time off is on an hourly basis, without regard to the dollar value of the donated or used leave.
- (7) Employees must have the desired donation amount available in their balance to donate. Employees cannot borrow against future vacation and/or sick paid time off to donate. Employees at their maximum accrual of hours, cannot donate future accruals that they are not eligible to receive by being at the maximum accrual limit.
- (8) The hours that a Pool member may be eligible to receive is on a calendar year basis and is not cumulative.
- (9) Employees may donate vacation and/or sick paid time off annually during benefits open enrollment, which is October or November each year. The donated vacation/sick paid time off will be transferred from the donor to the leave Pool on the following January 1st to begin the new calendar year's membership.
 - Employees who are on an approved leave of absence during the donation period cannot donate vacation and/or sick paid time off. Employees will be eligible to donate for two weeks after their return from a Family Medical Leave of Absence if they were on leave during the donation period.
- (10) Newly hired eligible employees may donate at the completion of 6 months of eligible continuous employment or during annual benefits enrollment, whichever comes first after reaching their 6-month anniversary.

(f) Requesting Sick Paid Time Off from the Pool.

- (1) Members who would like to request sick paid time off from the Pool must complete a Request Form and submit to Human Resources.
- (2) Members seeking donated time for a medical emergency must provide medical documentation as necessary to determine whether the employee's situation meets the criteria for donated sick paid time off.
- (3) Requests for donations of Pool sick paid time must be approved by Human Resources.
- (4) If the recipient employee has available paid leave in their leave balance, this time must be used prior to any donated sick paid time off. Donated sick paid time off may only be used for time off related to the approved request.
- (5) Nothing in this policy will be construed to limit or extend the maximum allowable absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or other City of Burleson policies.

(g) Administration of the Catastrophic Leave Pool. The Pool shall be administered by the "Pool Administrator," who shall be a member of the Human Resources Department.

(h) Appeal Procedure. A member who disagrees with a decision to deny a request for donated sick leave or with the amount of donated sick leave granted in response to a request may file an appeal with the City Manager or designee. The appeal must be in writing and must be filed within five business days from the disputed decision. The appeal should avoid any personal health/medical information to protect the employee's privacy. The decision of the City Manager or designee is considered final and will be submitted to the employee within ten business days of receiving an appeal request.