

	Sick Leave Policy	
	Section No: 4.03	
	Category: Benefits and Leave Policies	
	Resolution Number: 257-2026	
	Effective Date: September 1, 2026	
	<i>Supersedes:</i> former Section 13, Resolution 2019-278 – August 6, 2019	
	Next Review Date: September 1, 2028	
Responsible Office: Human Resources		
Policy Applies to:	☐ All City employees (Full-time, Part-time, LSEs, temps, etc.) ☐ All City and School Employees	☒ Full-Time employees only ☐ Other: _____

Relevant Definitions

Immediate Family Member – for the purpose of this policy means:

- Spouse / domestic partner
- Children (including stepchildren, foster children, or legal wards)
- Parents (in-laws excluded)

Policy

In order to help prevent the loss of earnings that may be caused by illness or injury, an employee may receive pay, within defined guidelines, when the employee is unable to work due to personal illness or injury or to care for an immediate family member due to illness or injury. Sick leave is subject to approval by the department head or designee and may be denied based on operational needs.

Eligibility

All board-approved, regular full-time employees may request and use sick leave once it has accrued. If the request is approved, sick leave is defined as approved, paid leave.

Part-time and temporary employees are not eligible for sick leave benefits.

Use of Sick Leave

Sick leave is intended for use for illness or injury only and is not an entitlement.

Sick leave is a benefit provided to eligible employees and accrues in accordance with this policy. Accrued sick leave may be used, subject to approval by the department head or designee, for qualifying absences as outlined in this policy. Accrued sick leave is not considered authorized for use until the employee's request has been approved. Any absence without approved sick leave (or other approved leave) will be recorded as leave without pay status.

Sick leave may be approved for an absence due to personal or immediate family illness, injury or medical appointments. Approval of sick leave is subject to department head review, with the concurrence of the Human Resources Director, retains the right to refuse such leave. Additionally, the department head or designee may request verification from a licensed medical

practitioner to support the reason for any absence during the time for which sick leave is requested.

Employees who are absent for more than three (3) consecutive workdays due to their own illness or non-work-related injury, or that of an immediate family member, must provide written documentation from a licensed medical practitioner confirming the medical need for leave and the expected return-to-work date. If leave greater than three days is needed, employees are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Department to determine whether the absence qualifies for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) coverage.

The city, through the Human Resources Director, retains the right to reject any medical excuse or diagnosis/recommendation offered and to request verification from a licensed medical practitioner designated by the city for any absence due to illness or injury. Such verification will be paid for by the city. Sick leave pay may be withheld if a satisfactory verification is not received. Sick leave use in compliance with FMLA, ADA, or other legally protected leave will not be subject to disciplinary action.

Accrual

Eligible employees accrue sick leave at the end of each month **as long as they are in a paid status for at least 50% of the month**: Accrual rate is as follows:

- **Employees working 40 hours per week:** Eight (8) hours per month
- **Employees working 24-hour shifts:** Twelve (12) hours per month.

Monthly Accrual Rule: For sick leave purposes,

- employees hired on or before the **15th day** of the month receive full accrual for that month.
- employees hired on or after the **16th day** of the month do not receive sick leave accrual for that month.
- **Any employee who is not in a paid status for at least 50% of the month will not receive accruals for the month.**

Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) Applicability

Upon retirement, accumulated unused sick leave can be used toward creditable service at retirement. Each 160 hours (240 hours for 24-hour shift employees) shall equal one month of retirement credit and can be used to meet the minimum service requirements for retirement **or additional service if minimum is already met**.

Recordkeeping

The City Payroll Office maintains the official records of sick leave accrual and use. If a reporting error is identified, corrections will only be made for the **90 calendar days** immediately preceding notification to the Human Resources Director, unless otherwise required by law.

Additional Provisions

- Employees are not entitled to payment for unused sick leave.

- Sick leave cannot be used before it is accrued.
- Sick leave does not accrue on overtime hours.
- Sick leave does not accrue and may not be used during periods of suspension under the City's Corrective Action Policy.

Consequences of Policy Violation

Corrective action for improper use of sick leave or a pattern of use of sick leave, even if sick - unless qualified for other leave such as FMLA or ADA, may be taken for, but not limited to, the following:

- use of sick leave for a purpose not permitted by this policy;
- use of more sick leave than is necessary for permitted purposes;
- giving a false explanation for any sick leave used;
- work or engagement in any other activity incompatible with the illness or injury during sick leave taken for the employee's own illness or injury, or for the illness or injury of an immediate family member.

Related Information or Procedures:

Call-in Procedures:

Departments may establish department-specific call-in procedures to address operational needs. Employees are expected to follow the call-in procedures established by their department, including any requirements regarding the method and timing of notification.

Other Provisions:

Nothing in this policy should be construed to conflict with or supersede state or federal law, or as interfering with the constitutional rights of employees.

While the city is committed to the principles embodied in this policy, the policy itself is not intended to state contractual terms and does not constitute a contract between the city and its employees. This policy supersedes all policies that conflict with the terms of this policy. Furthermore, this statement constitutes only the policy of the city. A finding of a violation of this policy does not mean that the conduct violates state and/or federal laws.

Contacts

The Human Resources Office can address questions regarding this Policy: Phone: (423) 229-9401, HROffice@kingsporttn.gov