

# Instructional Sick Leave Bank

A Sick Leave Bank was established beginning with the 1979 - 1980 school year for the purpose of providing sick leave with pay to participating employees during periods of personal illness or injury not otherwise compensated by the Board or Workers' Compensation. Instructional Master Contract Article VIII, Section B-7

## Questions and Answers



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### **What is the Sick Leave Bank?**

The Sick Leave Bank (SLB) is basically a "pool" of days which has been contributed by employees for the use of enrolled employees who are suffering from personal illness or injury and who have no remaining earned sick leave. The intent of the SLB is to provide temporary income protection for participating members.

### **What groups of employees are covered?**

The Instructional Sick Leave Bank includes all of the employees who are classified as "instructional" under the collective bargaining agreement, that is, the Instructional Master Contract.

### **What reason would I have to join?**

If you are a member of the SLB and find yourself with an illness or injury that prevents you from working, you may be eligible to receive pay for up to 50 days for non catastrophic illness or injury, and up to 100 days for catastrophic illness or injury. In addition, all of your insurance provided by the Board would continue to be paid, and you will continue to accrue Sick Leave.

### **How do I become eligible to join the SLB?**

You must be employed in a position in which you earn Sick Leave. If so, you are eligible to join once you have:

- 1) completed one year of employment in the District, and,
- 2) accrued at least one (1) day of unused Sick Leave.

### **If I'm eligible, what must I do to join?**

Enrollment for the SLB will be open from the first work day in October through the last work day in October of each year. Applications to join the SLB will be available at each worksite.

Once your application has been submitted and it has been determined that you meet the eligibility requirements, one day of Sick Leave will be deducted from your accumulated earned Sick Leave in the first month of eligibility to be deposited in the SLB.

### **Once I become a member, what would qualify me to receive days from the SLB?**

- 1) The need must arise from your own personal illness or injury;
- 2) All of your accumulated personal Sick Leave must be exhausted; and,
- 3) You must be absent in either a paid or unpaid leave status for at least ten (10) consecutive days or for ten (10) nonconsecutive days occurring within a ninety (90) day period. To qualify through nonconsecutive absences, the absences must be related to the same illness or injury and must be substantiated by proper medical documentation.

### **If I do have an illness or injury and qualify to receive days, how do I go about applying for days from the SLB?**

- 1) You must submit a request for unpaid leave at your worksite (MIS 101). This is because SLB days can be approved only if an employee has been approved for unpaid leave. The SLB Committee does not approve leave, the committee only approves the granting of paid sick days for those employees who have already been approved for unpaid leave.
- 2) You must submit both an application form (MIS 360) and the statement(s) completed by a licensed physician (MIS 361) and/or a licensed mental health professional which fully describe the illness or injury. Please insure both forms are completely filled out with as much detail as possible. Both forms are available at each worksite and online.

The application and the physician's statement can be submitted at the worksite or sent directly to the Leaves Section, Department of Human Resources, District Office.

### **What happens to my application?**

The application and related documents will be processed and then submitted to the SLB Committee for review.

### **How many days am I entitled to?**

This really depends on the nature of the illness or injury, and what period of recovery may be necessary. The awarding of days is subject to the following conditions:

If the personal illness or injury is determined to be less than catastrophic, you may be eligible to receive up to 50 days.

If the personal illness or injury is determined by the committee to be catastrophic, you may be eligible to receive up to 100 days.

In either case, no SLB member will receive more than 100 days within a twelve (12) month period.

### **What do you mean by a "twelve (12) month period?"**

The twelve (12) month period will start on the first date that a member receives days from the SLB. You will be eligible to receive up to 100 additional days, if deemed catastrophic, starting on the anniversary date of first receiving days from the SLB.

For example, if you apply for and receive days from the SLB from December 3 through January 9, your twelve (12) month period in which you can receive up to 100 days begins on December 3, and ends on December 2 of the next year. Beginning on December 3, of the next year you will be eligible to receive up to 100 additional days if you qualify for SLB benefits.

### **If I do get approved for days, will those approved days cover the ten day eligibility period?**

No. The intent of the SLB is to provide income protection, but was never intended to cover every unpaid absence. Therefore, you cannot receive reimbursement from the SLB for any unpaid days that fall within the ten (10) day eligibility period.

**What if I have a preexisting medical condition?**

In the event you have a preexisting medical condition on the date of enrollment, there shall be a ninety (90) day waiting period before becoming eligible for paid days based upon that illness. Days in the ninety (90) day waiting period are defined as workdays.

**Is absence due to pregnancy covered?**

Absences due to normal pregnancy will not be covered. However, absence during pregnancy that is medically necessary will be treated as any other illness or injury.

**Is absence following childbirth covered?**

The recovery period from childbirth is considered to exist for six (6) weeks, regardless of method of delivery. Therefore, any conditions during this period of time that may or may not be directly related to the delivery of the child will typically not be covered.

**How does the SLB coordinate with the leave provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?**

Since days granted from the SLB substitute for unpaid leave days, and since qualifying illnesses or injuries qualify as "serious health conditions" under the FMLA, any days granted from the SLB will be counted toward your annual twelve (12) week FMLA entitlement.

**What happens if the SLB runs out of days?**

If the number of days in the SLB drops below 200, each participating member shall contribute one (1) additional day, but not more than once per year.

**What if I decide to quit the SLB?**

If you decide to withdraw from membership you may do so, but if you decide to rejoin at a later date you must wait until open enrollment and you must meet all of the initial membership requirements.

**Who decides if my application for days from the SLB is approved?**

The SLB Committee makes that decision, not a single individual.

**Who is on that committee?**

The SLB Committee is made up of fellow employees; some of whom are selected by the Superintendent and others mutually agreed upon by the Union (USEP), and the District.

**Which of the SLB Committee are selected?**

Four (4) instructional bargaining unit members who are participating members of the SLB are mutually selected by both the Superintendent and by the Union President.

**Which of the SLB Committee members are appointed by the Superintendent?**

- 1) The Assistant Superintendent for Administration or his/her designee.
- 2) The Supervisor of Student Services who is responsible for School Nurses.
- 3) The Director of Employee Relations or his/her designee, who serves as the chairperson.

In addition to the elected and appointed members, the president of the Union (USEP) or his/her designee also serves.

**Can any employee be on the SLB Committee?**

With the exception of the three administrators and the president of the Union, only participating members are eligible to serve on the committee to administer the SLB.

**What are the functions of the SLB Committee?**

- 1) To consider each application for the withdrawal of days based on established criteria, and to vote to approve or to deny the request.

- 2) To define "catastrophic" and to develop other definitions, guidelines, and rules for the purpose of administering the SLB.
- 3) To work fairly, ethically and in the best interest of all members of the SLB.

**How often does the SLB Committee meet?**

The committee typically meets every three to four weeks, usually on a Tuesday.