

305 Sick Leave*Effective Date: 07/17/2023*

We provide paid sick leave benefits to all full-time and part-time employees for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries. Elected officials, temporary, per diem, and emergency employees are not eligible.

If you are eligible and full-time, you will accrue sick leave benefits at the rate of 8 hours per month, 12 days per year. We pro-rate sick leave benefits if you are part-time. Accruals cease after 30 calendar days of continuous unpaid leave.

You may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to your own illness or injury, or for medical and dental appointments. You can also use sick leave to care for certain family members who are ill or need assistance obtaining medical or health services. For the purposes of this policy, eligible family members include your spouse, parent, child (natural, adoptive, foster, or step), and any other family member financially or legally dependent upon you or who resides with you for the purpose of you providing care to the family member. You can use up to 160 hours of your accrued sick leave per year for the purpose of caring for family members under this policy except as provided below.

If you need to use more than 160 hours to care for a family member, you will need advance approval from the County Administrator and your Department Head. The 160-hour cap on the amount of sick leave you can use to care for a family member does not apply to leave taken for the birth of a child, the adoption of a child, or the placement of a child with you for foster care. In those instances, you may use any available accrued sick leave up to 12 weeks (480 hours).

If you are unable to report to work due to illness or injury, you should notify your direct supervisor before the scheduled start of the workday if possible. Your direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. In general, calls from friends or family members are not acceptable. If you are absent for three (3) or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, or at our discretion, a physician's statement may be required to verify the disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. Such verification may be requested for other sick leave absences as well and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits. Sick leave benefits will be calculated based on your base pay rate at the time of absence.

Unused sick leave benefits will be allowed to accumulate until you have accrued a total of 960 hours' worth of sick leave benefits. If your benefits reach this maximum, you will receive monetary compensation for 50% of all hours accumulated over 960 at your hourly rate of pay. This compensation will occur annually in December or upon termination. Human Service Zone employees, pursuant to the North Dakota Merit System, are not subject to this cap or payout.

Sick leave benefits are intended solely to provide income protection in the event of illness or injury, and may not be used for any other absence, except where specifically provided for in this handbook. Please use your sick leave only for legitimate illnesses and injuries, and keep in mind that if you are out of sick leave and/or annual leave, then any other absences will be

unpaid, may be considered unexcused, and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. In rare circumstances, unpaid time off may be permitted if approved in advance. Note that unpaid time off will not count against you if it is approved under another leave policy within this handbook.

Sick leave is transferable from one department to another. However, Human Service Zone employees may only transfer up to 960 hours of sick leave to another department, unless they move to another Human Service Agency, in which case they may transfer their entire sick leave balance. Human Service Zone employees transferring in from another State Merit System Agency will be allowed to transfer unused sick leave to Cass County. For all other Cass County employees, leave is not transferable to Cass County from any other agency or employer.

Years of service credit will be for continuous years of employment with a break of less than one year. If you are laid off, and return within 12 months of layoff, you will receive years of service credit for continuous years of employment.