

WICHITA FALLS ISD CATASTROPHIC SICK LEAVE BANK HANDBOOK

SECTION I PURPOSE AND DEFINITION

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank (CSLB) is to provide additional paid sick leave days to members of the Bank in the event of catastrophic illness or injury that renders the member unable to perform the duties of his or her position. Days may be requested from the Bank only after the member has exhausted all accumulated state sick and personal leave, local sick leave days, comp time and vacation.

B. Definition of Catastrophic Sick Leave Days for Members

Catastrophic Sick Leave Days from the Bank are days granted to a member who, has or whose family member has a catastrophic illness or injury, and is unable to perform the duties of his/her position. The illness or injury must be a FMLA qualifying condition for either themselves or a member of their family as defined by the FMLA Code of Regulations.

SECTION II MEMBERSHIP

A. Eligibility

- Eligibility requirements must be met by donating two (2) days of accrued or anticipated local sick leave.

And

- Eligible employees shall be those who are eligible for family and medical leave and have met the FML eligibility requirements. Employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for their employer at least 12 months, at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months.

B. Procedure for Joining the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank

1. Any employee who is eligible to join the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank may do so by contributing two (2) days of accrued or anticipated local sick leave. An employee desiring to join during the current school year must be able to earn at least two days from the time of his/her employment until the completion of his/her total number of days of work at the end of the school year.

2. The enrollment period for eligible employees will be a 30 day enrollment period beginning September 1 of each school year.

3. Employees desiring to join the Bank shall complete the membership application form and submit it to the Leave Specialist in Human Resources. The Leave Specialist will verify the employee's eligibility and deduct two local sick leave days from the employee's leave account.

SECTION III REGULATIONS CONCERNING CONTRIBUTIONS OF DAYS

A. To become a member of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank, an employee must contribute two (2) days from his/her accrued, or to be earned this year, local sick leave.

B. These days will be subtracted from the member's local sick leave record.

C. The two (2) days donated become the property of the WFISD Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank. All donations will remain in force and cannot be returned even upon cancellation of membership or resignation.

D. For Bank purposes, CSLB will run concurrently with FML during a 12-month period as defined in policy DEC (LOCAL). If a member uses two or more days from the Bank during this period, he/she will be required to donate two days the following school year in order to have continuing membership in the Bank. If the member uses fewer than two (2) days, he/she will donate the number of days actually used.

E. If a member chooses not to pay back the required number of days he/she will lose his/her membership permanently.

F. If the Bank falls below 800 days, continuing participants must contribute one day. If it falls below 500 days, each participant must contribute two days. New members who join in September will donate a maximum of 2 days for the current school term.

G. If a member decides to cancel his/her membership in the Bank, the two days contributed for membership remain the property of the Bank. If, at a later date, the individual wishes to rejoin the Bank, he or she may do so only during the next enrollment period the following school year by again donating two (2) days.

SECTION IV REGULATIONS CONCERNING GRANTING OF CATASTROPHIC SICK LEAVE DAYS FROM THE BANK

A. Granting days from the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank

1. Catastrophic Sick leave days from the Bank are available only in the event of catastrophic illness or injury that renders the member unable to perform the duties of his or her position. Days may be requested from the Bank only after the member has exhausted all accumulated state sick and personal leave, local sick leave days, and vacation.

2. A member may apply for days from the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank in advance (prior to the absence), however, days will not be given until the absence has occurred and all other requirements have been met.

3. Days from the Bank shall be granted only for catastrophic illness or injury as determined by the CSLB Committee.

4. Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank days shall be granted only for absences from working days and will not be granted for holidays. Other such days for which the member is not paid.
5. All requests for days from the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank must be submitted to the CSLB Committee within 10 days of all accumulated leave being exhausted.
6. The maximum number of Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank days that may be granted to an employee during one year will be forty (40) days. The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Year is September 1 through August 31.
7. If a member who has received less than 40 days from the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank returns to work then is ill again with the same or different illness, he/she may apply to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank for additional days, the total not to exceed forty (40) days per year. Each separate application submitted must meet the initial criteria of just cause if not connected to an ongoing illness with intermittent absences for the same condition (example: cancer).
8. The maximum number of days that may be granted during the employee's service for the District will be set at 60 days. This lifetime cap will include the days received by the employee from the commencement of the Bank and will continue through any breaks in service.
9. A member shall only be reimbursed for the amount actually docked. Reimbursement will be made only in the member's regular payroll check after the Committee's approval of requested days.
10. The Bank may be used by the individual member for his or her catastrophic illness or injury.
11. The Bank may also be used by the contributor to be absent from his or her position in order to assist a member of their family, as defined by the FMLA Code of Regulations, who has a catastrophic illness or injury.
12. All unused sick leave days in the Bank at the end of the school year (August 31) shall be carried over to the next school year (September 1 - August 31).
13. Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank days will run concurrently with FMLA leave, temporary disability, and assault leave when appropriate.
14. A contributor will lose the right to utilize the benefits of the Bank only by:
 - a. Termination or suspension of employment in the Wichita Falls Independent School District.
 - b. Cancellation of participation by the member at any time.
 - c. Being on approved sabbatical.
 - d. Choosing not to pay back required number of days.

e. Reaching the lifetime cap of 60 days while employed by the District including any breaks in service.

SECTION V. PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING FOR CATASTOPHIC SICK LEAVE DAYS

A. Should the member have a catastrophic illness or injury necessitating the need for additional days after all accumulated state sick and personal leave, local sick leave days, and vacation have been used, the member may submit a request for days from the Bank.

B. All requests for days from the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank must be submitted to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee within 10 days of all accumulated leave being exhausted.

C. The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Request Form can be found on the Novell Launcher or may be obtained through the Leave Specialist in Human Resources.

D. The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee may refuse to consider an application that does not contain the required information.

E. If a member is critically ill and unable to file a Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Request Form applying for days from the Bank, the school principal, immediate supervisor, or department head may initiate the request form at the request of the member or someone in the member's family.

F. Requests for days from the CSLB must be received by the Leave Specialist no less than one week prior to the scheduled monthly meetings in order to be reviewed by the CSLB Committee. Requests not received in time to be presented to the CSLB Committee will be reviewed the following month and employees will incur a dock for that payroll.

G. Employees are responsible for reporting FML related absences to the Leave Specialist via email within two (2) business days of the absences in order to be eligible to receive days from the Catastrophic Sick leave Bank.

H. Absences must be coded as Personal or Family Illness and qualify for FML to be eligible for SLB days.

SECTION VI GOVERNING COMMITTEE

A. Name

1. The governing committee, which will approve or disapprove all requests for the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank days shall be called The WFISD Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee.

B. Composition of Membership of Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee

1. Members of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee shall be appointed by the Superintendent or designee.

2. Membership of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee shall be composed of:

- (1) One representative from elementary schools
- (2) One representative from Junior High Schools
- (3) One representative from High Schools
- (4) One representative from paraprofessional personnel (secretarial, clerical, aide)
- (5) One representative from Maintenance/ Operations/Warehouse/Food Service personnel
- (6) One representative from administration (central office or campus level)
- (7) Coordinator of Health Services
- (8) Representatives from Human Resources

3. Term of Office

a. A member of the CSLB Committee shall serve for either a rotating term of one or two years beginning September 1 and ending August 31.

b. Vacancies on the CSLB Committee that may arise during the school year will be filled by appointment by the Superintendent or designee.

A member, if re-appointed, may serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms as appointed.

b. Term expiring odd number years

- (1) Elementary school
- (2) Senior high school
- (3) Maintenance/ Operations/Warehouse/Food Service

c. Terms expiring even numbered years

- (1) Middle school
- (2) Administrative
- (3) Paraprofessional

C. CSLB Committee Member Requirements

1. Members eligible to serve on the CSLB Committee are those that are have donated days to the CSLB and whose membership with the Bank is in good standing.

2. Failure to attend three consecutive meetings disqualifies the CSLB Committee Member.

D. Duties and Responsibilities of the Committee

1. The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee shall meet the last working Thursday of each month.

2. All applications for Sick Leave Bank days shall be reviewed individually by the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee in a called meeting when possible.
3. Each request shall be assigned and identified by a case number. Personal information related to the request for days will be redacted and reviewed by the Committee without bias.
4. The CSLB Committee shall determine the number of days approved up to forty (40) days for and reserves the right to approve, disapprove, or modify the days requested.
5. The Leave Specialist shall process all approved catastrophic sick leave days for members to the payroll department.

SECTION VII APPEALS

- A. A member may appeal a decision of the CSLB Committee by writing a letter to the Leave Specialist providing additional information pertaining to the request. This information will be presented to the CSLB Committee and reviewed.
- B. Any subsequent need for an appeal may be appealed according to the procedures at DGBA (LOCAL), beginning at Level Two.

SECTION VIII FINAL DECISION

- A. Procedures for deciding any questions not covered herein.
- B. Any question concerning membership, regulations, or application for catastrophic sick leave days that may arise not specifically covered herein, shall be submitted to the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Committee who will make a recommendation to the Superintendent for a final decision.