

EEA/Bethel Sick Leave Bank

~ Guidelines ~

The Sick Leave Bank Committee is directed by the Eugene Education Association to apply guidelines established in the Bethel/EEA Collective Bargaining Agreement on matters related to the Bank. (See CBA.) The Eugene Education Association manages the Sick Leave Bank for Bethel licensed bargaining unit members.

The Sick Leave Bank is a voluntary program. All paid sick leave hours contributed to the Sick Leave Bank shall be deducted by the District from the contributor's sick leave account at the time of the contribution. Such contributions are irrevocable and shall remain in the Bank.

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Bank is to grant hours to eligible members in cases of long-term absence necessitated by the member's illness or injury.

Hours granted provide a bridge to either long-term disability or to a return to work. They may not be used as a bridge to an unpaid personal or professional leave of absence, retirement, resignation or termination of employment.

B. Membership

1. Sick Leave Bank participation is voluntary for members of the bargaining unit. Only members participating in the Sick Leave Bank may benefit from the program.
2. To become a participating member of the Sick Leave Bank, a bargaining unit member must donate eight (8) sick leave hours based on 1.0 FTE, or prorated for part-time members.
3. To maintain active membership, a minimum donation of one day (prorated for part-time members) must be made every year. It is the member's responsibility to monitor his/her membership status. A reminder of both this responsibility and the minimum donation policy will be made during the announcement of each open enrollment period.
4. Initial applications for membership will be submitted in writing using the Sick Leave Bank Transmittal Agreement Form.
5. Two open enrollment periods will be strictly enforced. The first open enrollment period will begin the first day that teachers report at the start of the school year and end October 31 or the next business day, if October 31 is on a weekend. The second open enrollment period will commence February 1 and end the Friday following spring break.
6. Licensed bargaining unit members hired after the first day teachers/specialists report will have 60 days from date of employment to enroll in the Sick Leave Bank or in a subsequent open enrollment period.

7. Licensed bargaining unit members may, at retirement or separation, donate up to the maximum hours allowed to the Sick Leave Bank.
8. Bargaining unit members who decline to participate in the Sick Leave Bank forfeit their right to be part of the Sick Leave Bank.
9. Individuals returning to bargaining unit status by transfer from administrative positions or reemployment shall satisfy the same membership requirements as described in (10) below.
10. If the Sick Leave Bank drops below 50%, bargaining unit members who did not elect to join the Sick Leave Bank at their first enrollment period or upon initial employment, may be asked to donate all sick leave hours they would have otherwise contributed to the Sick Leave Bank from their initial date of employment or at the next open enrollment.
11. In the event contributed days become depleted during the operation of the Sick Leave Bank, the Sick Leave Bank Committee, at its discretion, may open the enrollment and/or request further contributions against its members, or suspend operation of the Sick Leave Bank until the next school year.
12. Members may be asked to donate up to sixteen (16) sick leave hours annually.
13. All paid sick leave hours contributed to the Sick Leave Bank shall be deducted by the District, from the contributor's sick leave account, at the time of the contribution. Such contributions are irrevocable and shall remain in the Sick Leave Bank.

C. Qualifications and Process for Use of Sick Leave Bank

Sick Leave Bank hours shall be granted only in cases of member long-term absence necessitated by the member's illness or injury. Hours granted provide a bridge to either long-term disability or to a return to work.

1. Before Sick Leave Bank members can be eligible to use Sick Leave Bank hours, the member must have:
 - a. used all individual accumulated paid sick leave hours, including anticipated but not yet earned sick leave hours.
 - b. used all individual paid personal leave hours for that year.
 - c. used all accumulated paid personal leave hours.
 - d. been on unpaid leave for five (5) consecutive days. If Sick Leave Bank hours are granted, the five (5) unpaid days may be retroactively reimbursed.
2. Process for Requesting Use of Bank Hours
 - a. The member must submit an Initial Request Form to the Sick Leave Bank Committee within fifteen (15) work days of the first anticipated date of absence requiring hours from the Sick Leave Bank.
 - b. The member must submit a personal statement to the Sick Leave Bank Committee describing the circumstances for which additional sick hours are needed.
 - c. The member must submit a qualified health care provider's statement indicating an inability to perform assigned responsibilities due to the member's long-term illness or injury and the **anticipated date of return. There are no exceptions – the qualified health care professional's statement must include a tentative return to work date.**

d. The member must submit a Repayment Agreement Form.

3. Long Term Disability (LTD) Application

a. It may be required by the Sick Leave Bank Committee that a member apply for Long Term Disability (LTD) before the awarding of Sick Leave Bank hours.

D. Review of Cases

1. Final Decision

a. All requests shall be reviewed and a final decision made by the Sick Leave Bank Committee. All decisions made by the Sick Leave Bank Committee are non-precedent setting.

2. Abuses of Sick Leave

a. The Sick Leave Bank Committee has no standing authority to make a determination of abuse of sick leave.

b. Allegations of prior sick leave abuse shall not influence decisions of the Sick Leave Bank Committee. Only documented cases of abuse (i. e. disciplinary action applied, admission of abuse, etc.) shall be considered by the Committee in its decision.

3. Confidentiality

a. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall take all necessary steps to insure confidentiality.

4. Certification by Qualified Health Care Provider

a. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall require a qualified health care provider's certification to verify the need for Sick Leave Bank hours.

b. The Sick Leave Bank Committee may require the applicant to secure a second certification from a qualified health care provider of the Committee's choice.

c. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall apply these guidelines equitably and uniformly for all applicants.

E. Limitation and Distribution of Hours

1. Initial requests will be addressed by the Sick Leave Bank Committee after receiving and reviewing the completed Initial Request Form and accompanying personal and qualified health care provider statements, and the Repayment Agreement Form. The Sick Leave Bank Committee will, at its discretion, determine the granting of hours.

2. Initial days, prorated according to the member's current FTE, will not be granted until the member's own accumulated paid sick leave, including anticipated but not yet earned sick leave and all paid individual personal leave are exhausted.

3. Extending of granted hours may be requested, if needed, by submitting a Request for Extension Form to the Committee. Additional hours granted are subject to Committee review.

4. The maximum number of consecutive sick leave days a unit member can use is fifty (50).
 - a. An initial request is limited to twenty-five (25) days or 200 hours, prorated for part-time members.
 - b. If additional time is needed beyond twenty-five (25) days, a Request for Extension Form and updated medical paperwork are required.
 - c. Requests that total more than forty (40) days must be accompanied by a long-term disability application. Requests that total fifty (50) days or fewer do not require a long-term disability application.
 - d. If the initial request is accompanied by a long-term disability leave application, the twenty-five (25) day initial limitation may be waived.
5. Over any five-year period, the maximum number of Sick Leave Bank days granted is 75 days.
 - a. At the discretion of the Sick Leave Bank Committee, appeals will be considered to accommodate extraordinary circumstances.
6. It is not the intent of the Sick Leave Bank to provide retroactive awards except in extraordinary circumstances.
7. Any unused sick leave hours will be returned to the Sick Leave Bank.
8. If a time overlap of Sick Leave Bank hours used and other benefits payments received occurs, (e. g. Workers' Compensation, Paid Leave Oregon, Long Term Disability, PERS Disability), members shall reimburse the Sick Leave Bank an amount equal to the cost of salary paid out for that time period (e. g. back payment for LTD benefits) that exceeds one hundred percent (100%) of the compensation they would have received had they been actively working. A unit member is not eligible for Sick Leave Bank hours while the member is receiving compensation under Long Term Disability, or PERS Disability.
9. Members who are receiving benefits through Paid Leave Oregon (PLO) or Workers' Compensation and who apply for and are found eligible for Sick Leave Bank benefits shall receive those benefits as a supplement to PLO benefits up to being made whole relative to their regular earned salary. In no case will benefits received from the Sick Leave Bank result in a member receiving higher compensation than their regular scheduled earnings. In all such cases, the affected member must release documentation to the Sick Leave Bank Committee that confirms the amount and duration of the awarded PLO benefit or Workers' Compensation benefits whichever is applicable.
10. The Sick Leave Bank Committee, at its discretion, may disqualify a member from receiving benefits for illness or disability if the member previously qualified for compensation for Long Term Disability for the same illness or disability, and voluntarily terminated said compensation.
11. The maximum number of sick leave hours in the Sick Leave Bank shall be 2,000 and can only be increased by mutual agreement of the District and the Association.
12. Suspension of review procedures listed above is subject to the discretion of the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

F. Forms and Guidelines

1. Available at the EEA Office and on the EEA website: <http://www.eugeneteachers.org/>.
2. Forms include: Transmittal Agreement Form, Initial Request Form, Request for Extension Form, Repayment Agreement Form.

G. Reporting/Reviewing Procedures

1. The Committee shall provide Association members with an annual report of Sick Leave Bank activity.
2. The Committee will be responsible for informing the members, Bethel Human Resources, and Bethel Financial Services of the Committee's decisions.
3. The Committee shall provide the District with a list of Sick Leave Bank contributors and users and a copy of the established rules. The District will honor withdrawals from the Sick Leave Bank upon proper certification by the Association.

H. Retirees

1. Bargaining unit members who have retired from Bethel and rehired into a position are not eligible to access the Sick Leave Bank.

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J. The Association will establish and manage a paid sick leave bank for unit members. The purpose of the sick leave bank shall be to extend to those members additional paid sick leave days should a long-term illness or injury exhaust the member's accumulated sick leave. The Association shall establish rules and regulations to govern the sick leave bank, which meet the following conditions:

1. PARTICIPATORY REQUIREMENTS

Unit member's participation in the sick leave bank shall be voluntary.

Participating unit members shall be eligible for sick leave bank days after they have exhausted all their available individual sick leave and personal leave days and have been on unpaid leave for five (5) days.

2. MAXIMUM HOURS / DAYS

The annual contribution of paid sick leave hours to the bank by a unit member shall be a maximum of sixteen (16). If the sick leave bank is at its maximum number of hours of 2000

hours, unit members can join and their contributions will be deducted from their individual sick leave account and credited to the sick leave bank when the bank total drops below the maximum.

The maximum number of consecutive sick leave bank days a unit member can use is fifty (50). A unit member is not eligible for sick leave bank days if the member is receiving compensation under Workers Compensation, long term disability, or PERS disability.

3. USE AND DEDUCTIONS

Sick leave bank days shall only be used by unit members who provide to the committee a health care provider's opinion stating they are unable to perform their assigned responsibilities due to a long-term illness or injury.

All sick leave hours contributed to the sick leave bank shall be deducted by the District from the contributor's sick leave account at the time of contribution. Sick leave contributions are irrevocable and shall remain in the bank.