

HR0380 – SICK LEAVE

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Objective:

To protect eligible regular staff, 9-month faculty, and 12-month faculty against loss of earnings due to personal or family (spouse, child, or parent) illness, injury, and/or due to childbirth or adoption.

Policy:

General Guidelines

1. The following information applies to regular employees, 9-month faculty, and 12-month faculty:
 - a. Employees must be in an active status to accrue sick leave. **Active status** does not include any period of unpaid leave of absence or any non-working period for a flex-year employee.
 - b. 9-month faculty members are eligible to accrue sick leave only if they are working 75% time or greater.
 - c. Employees accrue sick leave on a monthly basis on the first day of each month.

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- d. The amount of sick leave accrued is based on both the work schedule (planned working time) as recorded in IRIS and the number of workdays in the month the employee is eligible to accrue leave.
- e. Employees are not permitted to take sick leave until accruing it, and the university is not permitted to advance sick leave. When possible, e.g., medical appointments, use of sick leave must be approved in advance by the supervisor.
- f. The university may require a physician's statement of illness or injury before granting sick leave. The university may require a fitness for duty certificate in accordance with [HR0338 - Family and Medical Leave](#), Family and Medical Leave. Non-compliance with the sick leave policy may result in denial of sick leave, the withholding of payment for the sick leave, and/or disciplinary action.

Sick Leave Accrual Rates

- 2. Eligible regular full-time employees accrue sick leave at the rate of eight hours per month.
- 3. Eligible regular part-time employees who began part-time employment status on or before January 31, 2014, accrue sick leave at a rate pro rata to their planned working time in IRIS. Eligible regular part-time employees who began employment on or after February 1, 2014, accrue sick leave if their planned working time in IRIS is 75 percent effort or more. Sick leave is accrued at a rate pro rata to their planned working time in IRIS at 75 percent or more. Regular part-time employees with a sick leave balance who cease to accrue sick leave may use existing sick leave in accordance with this policy.
- 4. Eligible full-time 9-month faculty may accrue no more than 72.0 hours of sick leave per year. Eligible part-time 9-month faculty may accrue no more than the nine times the number of sick leave hours they accrue each month. Eligible 9-month faculty who work during the summer and receive extra-services pay may accrue sick leave during the summer, in excess of the limits set forth in this Section, as set forth in Sections 2 and 3 if they are working 75% time or greater.
- 5. The accrual rate in effect on the day the employee accrues leave determines the accrual for the month.

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Leaves of Absence

6. During employment, if an absence without pay exceeds ten business days, the department is required to place the employee on leave of absence without pay.

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Any sick leave earned in the month in which the employee returns to work will be accrued on the first day of the month the employee returns to an active pay status and prorated according to this policy. If an employee fails to return from a leave of absence with or without pay, any unused sick leave will be held in an inactive status.

Leave Adjustments

7. Within the IRIS retroactivity period, adjustments can be entered in IRIS. Time evaluation will automatically re-evaluate the time for the prior pay periods. Adjustments for pay periods older than the retroactivity period are made by the campus human resources office.

Transfers From a Leave Accruing Position

8. When an employee who has been accumulating sick leave transfers to a position that does not accrue leave, the employee may use sick leave in accordance with this policy. If the employee retires or later returns to a position with the university or another state agency, including another state college or university, for which sick leave accrues, the sick leave balance will be restored to the employee in accordance with applicable statutes and the policies of the hiring organization.

Transfer to Another State Agency

9. If an employee terminates employment with the University of Tennessee without a break in service to accept employment with another state agency, including another state college or university, all accumulated sick leave will be transferred to the employing agency.

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Reemployment by a State Agency

10. If a former employee is reemployed by another state agency, including another state college or university, in an eligible status and the sick leave balance is verifiable, it is restored to the employee in accordance with applicable statutes and the policies of the hiring organization.

Termination of Employment

11. At termination, any unused sick leave is held in an inactive status. **Unused sick leave is not paid at termination.**

Retirement

12. For the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS), Joint Contributory Retirement System (JCRS), Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) members, all unused sick leave is credited toward retirement. However, unused sick leave is not included as creditable service for disability retirement. Subject to changes in the plans, all university retirement plans add unused sick leave to an employee's total years of service to determine the state's portion, if any, of retiree insurance premiums.

Death of Employee in Active Pay Status

13. See [HR0307 - Benefit in the Event of an Employee Death](#), regarding payment for accrued sick leave.

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PROCEDURES:

To view links to campus policies and procedures, click here:

<https://policy.tennessee.edu/campus-policies-procedures>

Related Policies: [HR0160 - Termination of Employment](#), [HR0307 - Benefit in the Event of an Employee Death](#), [HR0338 - Family and Medical Leave](#), [HR0355 - Leave of Absence](#), [HR0375 - Retirement Plans](#), [HR0382 - Sick Leave Bank](#), [HR0383 - Sick Leave Transfer Between University Employees](#)