

**SICK LEAVE 312***Effective Date: 02/01/2016*

Cass County provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries. Employee classifications eligible for sick leave include full time and part time employees. Elected officials, temporary, per diem, and emergency employees are not eligible.

Eligible full-time employees will accrue sick leave benefits at the rate of 8 hours per month, 12 days per year. Sick leave benefits are prorated for part-time employees.

An eligible employee may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to his or her own illness or injury, or for medical and dental appointments. Employees will cease accruing benefits, including sick, vacation, and holiday pay, after 30 calendar days of continuous unpaid leave.

Eligible employees may 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 the employee's spouse, parent, child (natural, adoptive, foster, or step), and any other family member financially or legally dependent upon the employee or who resides with the employee for the purpose of the employee providing care to the family member. Employees can use up to 160 hours per year for Family Sick Leave. Advance approval will be required by the County Administrator and the employee's Department Head to use more than 160 hours for Family Sick Leave.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should notify their direct supervisors before the scheduled start of their workdays if possible. The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. In general, calls from friends or family members are not acceptable. If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, or at the employer's 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 the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence.

Unused sick leave benefits will be allowed to accumulate until the employee has accrued a total of 960 hours' worth of sick leave benefits. If the employee's benefits reach this maximum, employees will receive monetary compensation for 50% of all hours accumulated over 960 at the employee's hourly rate of pay. This compensation will occur annually in December or upon termination. Social Service employees, pursuant to North Dakota state policy, are not subject to this cap or to 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. Employees should use their sick leave only for legitimate illnesses and injuries, and employees should keep in mind that if they are out of sick leave and/or annual leave, then any other absences will be unpaid, may be considered unexcused, and may subject the employee to

disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. In rare circumstances unpaid time off may be permitted if approved in advance by the employer. Note that unpaid time off will not count against an employee if it is approved under another leave policy within this handbook.

Sick leave is transferable from one department to another. However, Social Service employees may only transfer up to 960 hours of sick leave to a Cass County Government department. If a Social Services employee is going from one Human Service Agency to another, they may transfer their entire sick leave balance.

Years of service credit will be for continuous years of employment with a break of less than one year. Employees subjected to a layoff, who return within 12 months of layoff, will receive years of service credit for continuous years of employment.