



San Diego Education Association

Catastrophic Leave Bank Information

- ***What is the Catastrophic Leave Bank?***

The Catastrophic Leave Bank is a “bank” of donated sick leave or vacation days which may be requested for use by employees who are suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury, once they have exhausted all full-paid leaves.

- ***What is a catastrophic illness or injury?***

A catastrophic illness or injury is defined as a severe or incapacitating illness or injury that is expected to continue for an extended period of time and prevents the employee from performing his/her duties.

Employees receiving compensation while ill or injured under Worker’s Compensation provisions are not eligible to withdraw days from the bank until exhausting such benefit.

- ***What is the history of the Catastrophic Leave Bank?***

As a result of agreements with the San Diego Education Association (SDEA), the San Diego Schools Police Officers (POA), and the Administrators Association of San Diego (AASD) and Non-Represented and Confidentials Group, the initial open enrollment period for donations to the bank was held in October 1999. Over 13,304 employees have now donated close to 143,061 hours of sick or vacation leave to the bank. Since the program began, approximately 744 employees have been recipients of donated leave; enabling them to remain in a fully paid status while absent from work for various serious medical situations.

Donations to the Catastrophic Leave Bank

- ***How do employees make a donation to the Catastrophic Leave Bank?***

Initial Donation Period. Any existing unit member who wishes to participate or continue membership in the Catastrophic Leave Bank shall donate one (1) full salary sick leave or one (1) full salary vacation day to the bank during the month of February 2016. After the Initial Donation Period, the first three (3)-year donation cycle shall commence in February 2016 and end on December 31, 2018. Existing or new unit members may donate to the Bank at any time during the cycle.

Three Year Cycle. Following the Initial Donation Period and first donation cycle, additional donations shall be made on a three (3)-year cycle (January 1, 2019; January 1, 2022, etc.). The unit member’s donation shall be automatically renewed every three (3) years in order to maintain membership in the Bank. The participant may opt out of the automatic renewal during the District’s Health and Welfare Benefits Open Enrollment period prior to the automatic renewal. Withdrawal from the program will be effective on January 1 of the new cycle.

- ***Is there a minimum or maximum donation?***

For membership in the bank, an employee must donate at least one full-salary sick leave day or one full-salary vacation day (eight hours). For employees who are working less than full-time, the hours donated will be prorated accordingly. While there is no maximum number of days that can be donated, employees are encouraged to be cautious in making large donations of sick leave that they may need for their own use in the future or wish to convert to service credit to improve their monthly pension benefit under the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) or the Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS).

- ***Is this an annual donation?***

The unit member who wishes to participate in the Bank must donate one (1) full salary sick leave day or one (1) full salary vacation day to the bank during the designated donation period(s) which shall occur on a three (3) year cycle. However, nothing herein shall preclude any eligible unit member from donating to the bank at any time.

- ***If an employee chooses to make a donation of sick or vacation leave to the bank, May the donation be designated to assist a specific employee?***

All donations of sick or vacation leave are general donations, and may not be designated for any specific recipient.

- ***Will district employees other than those on the management team, confidentials, certificated and school police services bargaining units, be permitted to donate or request a credit of sick leave from the bank?***

The Office-Technical and Business Services (OTBS), Operations-Support Services (OSS), and Paraeducators (PARA) bargaining units have negotiated a separate catastrophic leave bank to which they may donate.

- ***What does an employee need to do to donate to the Catastrophic Leave Bank?***

The employee must complete the form authorizing the district to debit the employee's sick leave or vacation account and credit the Catastrophic Leave Bank with the number of days specified on the enrollment/donation form which is online at [www.k12ca.gov](#). Please complete your form by February 29, 2016.

Withdrawals from the Catastrophic Leave Bank

- ***If an employee is suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury, what benefits are available from the bank?***

Once an employee who is suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury has exhausted all full paid leaves (including all full-salary sick leave), the employee may apply to withdraw up to 20 days of full-salary sick leave from the bank. At the end of the 20-day period, an additional 20 days of full-salary sick leave may be requested. Employees may request a maximum of 40 days of sick leave from the bank per catastrophic illness or injury; however, no more than 40 days of sick leave credit may be granted in any school year.

Withdrawals from the Catastrophic Leave Bank Continued

- ***Does an employee have to be a member of the bank to request a credit of full-salary sick leave from the bank?***

Yes. An employee will not be eligible to receive sick leave credit from the bank unless he/she has donated at least one (1) full salary sick leave or one (1) full salary vacation day to the Bank either during the Initial Donation Period or during any subsequent donation period. In order to be eligible, a member must have made the donation during the current three (3) year cycle in which withdrawal is being requested.

New participants must be a member of the Bank for at least ninety (90) days prior to being approved to withdraw from the Bank. Exception: participants who are current members of the Bank and who choose to make a donation in February 2016 during the Initial Donation period will have the ninety (90)-day waiting period waived.

- ***What is the procedure for an employee who is suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury to request a sick leave credit from the bank?***

The employee should request an application for withdrawal of days from the bank. If the employee is not able to request/complete the form due to the seriousness of his/her illness or injury, then a family member with the legal authority to act on behalf of the employee may request/complete the application. All completed applications must be accompanied by written verification (prepared and signed by a licensed physician of the State of California) stating the nature of the catastrophic illness or injury and the anticipated number of days the employee will be absent from work. Requests for an application for withdrawal of sick leave days are to be directed to Gloria Rangel, Human Resource Services Division, Room 1241, Phone: (619) 725-8172, or by e-mail to grangel@sandi.net. All applications must be approved by the Executive Director, Human Resources.

- ***What happens when an employee receives a credit of sick leave days from the bank, but does not use all of the days?***

The unused days are returned to the bank.

- ***Can an employee request a donation from the bank to care for a family member who is suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury?***

No. Credits of sick leave may be used only for the catastrophic illness or injury of the employee.