



ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Office of Human Resources

SHARED LEAVE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Overview:

The purpose of the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Shared Leave Program is to provide a means for college employees to donate sick leave to a leave pool to be used by fellow employees who have exhausted all leave available, and because of a medical emergency are in need of additional sick leave.

Employees will be given the opportunity to donate a specified number of hours of sick leave from their sick leave accounts to an institutional leave pool. Participation enrollment will occur during the annual benefits open enrollment period.

Employees who have completed the Board program provisional period, and are current members of the Shared Leave Program, and have a serious, life-threatening, or emergency medical condition and have exhausted, or will exhaust their personal leave time, will be eligible to receive donated shared leave. In addition, life threatening and extraordinary serious medical situations for immediate family members may also be considered for shared leave.

General Provisions:

- Only regular benefits eligible employees who have been employed in a benefits eligible position and have completed the BOR provisional period upon enrollment shall be eligible to participate as either a contributor or recipient.
- To contribute or receive leave under this program, employees shall be required to enroll in the pool during the annual open enrollment period established by the Board of Regents.
- Any unused shared sick leave not used by recipients for approved Shared Leave Donations will be forfeited to the Shared Leave pool.

- The Human Resources Director will serve as the Shared Leave Administrator. The Shared Leave Administrator will appoint a committee to review and respond to requests for use of leave from the pool. The pool will be made up of two (2) faculty members and two (2) staff members. The Shared Leave Administrator will only vote in the event of a tie. The committee's decision to approve or disapprove a request for Shared Leave will be by simple majority vote.
- A recipient cannot receive shared sick leave with other benefits. (SSI, Disability, Workers Compensation, etc.)
- Eligibility for participation shall end upon termination of employment.
- Funding limitations may impact eligibility and participation.
- Participation in shared leave is voluntary

Donation of Leave:

Employees will be given the opportunity to donate a specified number of hours of sick leave or annual (in eight (8) hour increments) from their respective sick or annual leave accounts to the Shared Leave pool during the annual open enrollment period for other benefits by completing a Donor Transfer Form. Shared Leave will be transferred to the Shared Leave pool at the same time other benefit elections are effective (normally January 1).

To become a member, a one-time donation of eight (8) hours must be donated to the leave pool. Following the initial first year membership requirement, subsequent yearly donations will be eight (8) hours per year on January 1. In the event that the leave pool falls below forty days (320 hours), an additional donation may be requested of all members to maintain a reasonable balance. This additional request cannot exceed eight (8) hours per year.

Enrollment in the shared leave program shall only be allowed during the benefits open enrollment periods conducted during the fall of each year.

No employee shall be denied membership in the shared leave program if the membership criteria are met.

Members are allowed to donate additional amounts of sick leave beyond the membership requirement up to one hundred (100) hours per year. However, a participating employee shall not be allowed to donate to the pool any unused or unpaid sick leave from the employee's personal account at the time of separation from the University System of Georgia including

retirement (may become a member and transfer up to one hundred (100) hours prior to notice of separation).

The employee will continue to accrue sick leave during their absence as long as they are paid at least one half of a monthly salary.

Termination of Membership:

Employees may withdraw from the pool at any time by sending a written request for withdrawal to the Human Resources Director. Any leave contributed to the pool prior to withdrawal shall be forfeited.

When a participating employee withdraws the maximum number of hours for which he/she is eligible, his/her membership in the pool will automatically terminate. The maximum withdrawal amount during a calendar year is 480 hours (12 weeks – USG Policy Max). To re-enroll, the employee will be subject to the initial enrollment requirements for membership. When a sick leave pool member is eligible for workers' compensation, unemployment, disability or retirement benefits, etc., he/she shall *not* be granted sick leave pool credits.

Application of Benefits:

An eligible employee may request donated leave by completing the Donated Leave Request Form, obtaining a completed Physician's Certification Form and submitting these documents to the Shared Leave Committee in care of Human Resources. If the employee is not capable of making application on his or her own behalf, a personal representative, having documented power of attorney for the employee, may make written application on behalf of the employee by completing the Donated Leave Request Form, obtaining a Physician's Certification Form, and submitting these documents to the Shared Leave Committee in care of Human Resources.

A potential leave recipient may request up to 160 hours of Shared Leave at one time, and may make up to two additional requests for Shared Leave within a calendar year, for a maximum of 480 hours per year within a five (5) year period. The requests may be consecutive.

Confidentiality:

Any medical information provided to the Shared Leave Certification Committee will remain confidential **and** will not be shared, except with employees in Human Resources on a need-to-know basis. *Potential leave recipients, their representatives, and Shared leave committee*

members must refrain from using institutional e-mail to solicit leave by revealing a medical condition, as e-mailing of medical information may violate HIPAA privacy guidelines.

Approval Process:

Each request will be reviewed by the Shared Leave Certification Committee. The Director of Human Resources, or his or her designee, will appoint these committee members for a renewable term of one (1) year. The committee member from Human Resources or his or her designee will carry out the administrative functions of the committee.

If any committee member(s) is unavailable to perform the functions of the committee for any reason, or is unable provide a timely decision for any given applicant, the Director of Human Resources, or his or her designee(s), will serve as substitute ad hoc member(s) of the committee.

If the request is approved, the Director of Human Resources on behalf of the Shared Leave Committee will notify the employee requesting donated Shared Leave. The Director of Human Resources will notify the applicant (or the personal representative who applied on behalf of the employee) within five (5) working days after the date the completed request for Shared Leave is received by the committee (or the date that the institution makes changes to these policies or procedures, if that date is later) that:

- the request has been approved; and
- the employee may begin drawing leave from the pool, and
- if the employee has entered the status of leave without pay, the approved Shared Leave may be substituted retroactively to cover the period of leave without pay.
- Or the request has been denied; and the reason for the denial

Appeal:

Requests which have been denied may be appealed in writing to the institution's President.