

**GRAND FORKS COUNTY
POLICY MANUAL**

POLICY NO. 104-05

Eff. 2/21/12

Rev. 5/7/13

SICK LEAVE

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Sick leave is available to all eligible employees and is not a benefit considered to be earned by the employee such as annual leave. It is an insurance that allows employees to build a reserve of days they can use in cases of necessity for actual sickness or disability of the employee, the employee's spouse, parent (natural, adoptive, foster and stepparent), child (natural, adoptive, foster and stepchild) or any other family member who is 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 who wish to attend to the needs of the employee's eligible family members who are ill or to assist them in obtaining other services related to their health or well-being may not use more than eighty (80) hours per calendar year for such purposes.

- **Paternity Leave** – A spouse is eligible to use family sick leave to assist with the care and well-being of a mother and newborn, when a serious medical condition does not exist.

Upon approval of the Department Manager, employees may, per calendar year, take up to an additional ten (10) percent of the employee's accrued sick leave to care for the employee's child, spouse, or parent if the child, spouse or parent has a serious health condition. Grand Forks County may require the employee to provide written verification of the serious health care condition by a health care provider.

Eligible employees will accrue sick leave at the rate of ninety-six (96) hours per year (eight hours per month). New employees whose hire date occurs in the first half of the month (1-15th) shall earn eight hours sick leave for the month. New employees whose hire date occurs in the last half of the month (16th-31st) shall earn four hours of sick leave. Pay for sick leave will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include special forms of compensation, such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or shift differentials for overtime purposes. Sick leave does not count towards hours worked. Eligible part-time employees will accrue sick leave on a prorated basis.

For a pregnancy and delivery, sick leave is allowed until a doctor's release to return to work is issued.

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Accrued sick leave may be granted for treatment of alcoholism or substance abuse for the duration of inpatient hospitalization or institutional inpatient treatment at a recognized alcohol or drug treatment facility, provided the employee completes the treatment as certified by the attending physician or an official of the institution.

Employees will request sick leave based on departmental policies. Requests for sick leave may be subject to inquiry or investigation as the Department Manager or County Commission deem necessary. Absences may require medical verification if documented use of sick leave is excessive or may indicate an abuse of sick leave policies. When an absence is for more than three (3) working days or twenty-four (24) working hours, the employee may be required to provide a physician's return to work statement. Based upon the nature of the illness, a return to work statement provided by the physician may be required. As an additional condition of eligibility for sick leave, an employee must apply for any other eligible compensation and benefits. This does not apply to private disability insurance policies.

For nonexempt employees, sick leave will be charged in increments of fifteen (15) minutes. Exempt employees will be charged in increments of one (1) hour. Sick leave hours used will be credited back instead of receiving straight time pay when hours worked exceed the normal work schedule.

Sick leave will be used to supplement any worker's compensation benefits that an employee is eligible to receive. The combination of any such disability payments and sick leave benefits cannot exceed the employee's normal earnings.

Sick leave may accumulate on an unlimited basis. Employees who have five (5) or more years of service with Grand Forks County may sell back to Grand Forks County twenty-five percent (25%) of the first 900 hours, at their current base pay rate, upon their departure from Grand Forks County.

Terminating employees whose leaving date occurs in the first half of the month (1-15th) shall earn four hours sick leave for the month. Terminating employees whose leaving date occurs in the last half of the month (16th-31st) shall earn eight hours of sick leave.