

FAQ | SHARED LEAVE



I want to donate hours, how many hours can I donate?

Employees who wish to donate Vacation Leave can donate a maximum of 40 hours per calendar year and must have a balance of at least 80 hours of their VACATION Leave after donation is made.

Employees who wish to donate Sick Leave can donate a maximum of 20 hours per calendar year and must have a balance of least (480) hours of their SICK LEAVE after the donation is made.

Employees who are separating from Grand Forks County, may donate 20 hours of Sick Leave to the Shared Leave Program. The leave balance requirements are not applicable for separating employees.

Can donate hours to a specific person?

No. All donated hour are placed in a Donated Leave Bank.

How can I donate leave to the Shared Leave Bank?

Grand Forks County employees may voluntarily donate Vacation and/or Sick Leave to the Leave Sharing Program by completing the *Shared Leave Donation Form*. Donation of leave are in full-hour increments. Employees may donate twice a year, in the months of June and December.

Who manages the Donated Shared Leave Bank?

Human Resources and Payroll.

Who qualifies for Shared Leave?

Employees who regularly work an average of at least 20 or more hours per week and earn paid time off, such as vacation leave and sick leave and have been continuously employed by the County for six (6) months are eligible to request shared leave:

- You have, or are caring for a family member who has, a serious, extreme, or life-threatening illness, injury which makes you unable to work.
- Have not received more than 160 hours of donated leave in the past 12 months.

Where should I send my completed Shared Leave forms?

Human Resources

Who is the contact person and phone number for the person who handles Shared Leave?

Human Resources at (701) 780-8414 or (701) 780-8415 or human.resources@gfcounty.org

What is the difference between FMLA and Shared Leave?

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a United States labor law which allows an employee a specific period of leave due to medical leave for their own condition or that of a family member, military exigency leave, or care for a covered military service member. FMLA is a designation of leave and in and of itself is not a paid leave.

Shared Leave is a Grand Forks County program that allows an eligible employee who is approved for Shared Leave, to receive donated Shared Leave hours to maintain them in a paid leave status.

Will my medical condition qualify for Shared Leave?

There is not a specific list of medical conditions that qualify for Shared Leave. To determine if the condition is serious, extreme, or life threatening, the Shared Leave committee relies on the information received from the Health Care Provider on the Shared Leave request form.

When should I apply?

Employees should apply if they are experiencing a serious, extreme, or life threatening medical condition that is causing them to miss work and when they have exhausted or are close to exhausting their own available leave balances. Please be aware, that if an employee applies for Shared Leave, additional medical information may be requested.

Why do I have to use up all of my own leave balance before receiving Shared Leave?

Exhausting all leave balances prior to receiving Shared Leave is a policy requirement.

Is there a waiting period before I can receive Shared Leave?

Yes. An employee must be in an unpaid status for five (5) working days prior to receiving Shared Leave.

What if I am denied Shared Leave?

If you are denied Shared Leave you will remain in an inactive pay status until you are able to return to work.

How much Shared Leave is available to me?

The maximum Shared Leave is up to 160 hours per 12-month rolling calendar.

Am I guaranteed up to 160 hours of donated leave?

No. It depends if you qualify and the availability of hours in the Shared Leave Bank.

Once I return to work, will I need to repay the hours that I used while on Shared Leave?

No. Upon your return to work, you are not expected to repay any donated hours.

I have people who want to donate hours to me, can they do so?

No. Donated hours are deposited into a bank.

What happens if I return to early and do not need the amount of Shared Leave requested?

If approved to receive Shared Leave, Payroll pays what is required each pay period. Donated leave is paid at recipient's normal compensation rate and recipient's cannot receive cash pay-out in lieu of paid time off. Donated leave is considered gross income and wages for purposes of FICA, FUTA and income tax withholding.

I have more questions, who can I contact?

Please feel free to contact Human Resources at (701) 780-8414 or (701) 780-8515 or human.resources@gfcounty.org