

# A Citywide message about using Sick Leave...

## Introduction

What should I, as an employee, know about sick leave? As we all know, City employees are expected to report to work each day, on time, as scheduled. However, employees sometimes become ill or hurt and are not able to work, resulting in the acceptable use of sick leave.

## General Information

Sick leave is a benefit you receive as an employee with the City of Saint Paul. It is not a right or entitlement, however. Most employees are eligible for up to 14 days of sick leave within one year. Better yet, all of that time can be carried over from year to year – provided excellent protection against an unexpected or prolonged illness. Your available leave balances are shown in TASS. Sick leave cannot be used before it has been accrued.

## When can I use sick leave?

First, stay home if you are sick; that's what sick leave is for. Second, sick leave is generally granted when:

- You or a family member are too ill or injured for you to work
- You or a family member have a medical or dental appointment
- You have a family medical emergency; or
- You have a death in your family

Employees may use up to 160 hours in any 12-month period for the care of family members. Family members are defined as dependent minor or adult child, spouse, sibling, parent, stepparent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild or grandparent. This limit does not apply to absences due to the sickness or injury of the employee or the employee's minor child. Employees absent for a period longer than three consecutive days due to their own illness, or the illness of a spouse, parent or child should contact their department Human Resources liaison to inquire about leave under the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#).

Sick leave may be used for the purpose of providing or receiving assistance because of sexual assault, domestic abuse or stalking. Sick leave is not to be used to conduct personal business, e.g., court appearances, car repairs, veterinary appointments, etc. Sick leave details can vary by collective bargaining agreement so please review the agreement that applies to you.

## Notifying your supervisor of sick leave usage

Generally, employees must report to their supervisor no later than one-half hour past their regularly scheduled starting time to be eligible for sick leave. Employees who are on scheduled vacation and become sick do not have an automatic right to use sick leave instead of vacation. In most situations, a supervisor can require a physician's certificate or additional certificates to document an employee's use of sick leave at any time.

## The bigger Picture

Sick leave is a benefit and the City wants you to use sick leave to take care of yourself when you are ill or injured. While the majority of employees use sick leave properly, improper use of sick leave can present a serious organizational problem. It causes reassignment or delay of work and general deterioration of the services provided. In addition, inappropriate use of sick leave can create morale problems for co-workers who often must cover for the absent employee. Improper use of sick leave also harms the individual employee, eroding protection against loss of income in the event of an accident or extended illness and depriving the employee of possible severance upon retirement. We hope this document helps you understand the importance of using sick leave only for the purposes for which it is intended. Thank you for doing your part to make this happen!

This is a general message about the proper use of sick leave in the City of Saint Paul. Your department or office may have guidelines or policies on this subject. Check your individual collective bargaining agreements for specifics.

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