

GRINNELL COLLEGE

Sick Leave, Short-term Disability Leave, & a Catastrophic Leave Program

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I. Introduction

At Grinnell College, regular and term staff are eligible for sick leave and receive it in the following ways:

- 1) Non-exempt staff accrue sick leave based on hours worked for a maximum of 12 days or 96 hours per year. Sick leave usage is tracked in ADP E-time.
- 2) Exempt staff do not earn sick leave but may take sick time as needed for personal illnesses throughout the year. Sick leave usage should be tracked in ADP E-time but it is not tracked against a leave bank.

Two main issues exist with the current structure of sick leave at Grinnell College which is inconsistent with our benefits philosophy:

- 1) On occasion, non-exempt staff have exhausted all of their accrued sick leave during a serious illness and have gone unpaid, sometimes borrowing money in the form of payroll advances or short-term loans.
- 2) Exempt staff have found it necessary to take time off to care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition. The College's Family and Medical Leave Act policy does not allow for pay in this situation, thereby forcing the exempt employee to use vacation time or to go unpaid. Non-exempt staff, however, may use accrued sick time to cover unpaid family leave.

II. The Current Plans

A. Non-exempt Staff

Plan Details

- *Accrual:* Employees accrue .0462 hours (12 days per year) for every hour paid. Employees may carry over unused sick days from year to year up to a maximum of 1,040 hours (6 months).
- *Maximum accrual:* It takes a regular, full-time employee a minimum of 11 years to accumulate the maximum accrual (assuming he or she does not use *any* sick time during those 11 years).
- *Care for self & family:* Employees may use accrued time to care for their own illness, ill children, spouse, domestic partner, parent and spouse or partner's parent.
- *Conversion to personal time:* On July 1, if an employee has 48 hours (6 days) of sick leave remaining in his or her bank, 24 hours (3 days) will be converted to personal time.
- *Retirement bonus:* At the time of their retirement, Employees who have at least 10 years of service, are at least 60 years of age, (or meet the rule of 80) and have a minimum of 780 hours in accrued sick time receive a bonus payment equivalent to 10% of accumulated sick leave.

B. Exempt Staff

Plan Details

- *Accrual:* None. However, an exempt employee is entitled to six months of sick leave after completing one year of employment (covers LTD elimination period).
- *Care for self & family:* Sick time is for employee's own health condition. Non-FMLA family illnesses, such as sick children with the flu, have traditionally been paid for short periods of use. FMLA family illnesses require the use of vacation.
- *Personal time:* None
- *Retirement bonus:* None

III. New Plan Design

The new plan is intended to provide uniform benefits for exempt and non-exempt staff employees. The plan has three components: sick leave; short-term disability leave; and personal time.

A. Sick Leave

The Grinnell College Sick Leave Plan is intended to address short-term absences from work due to illness or injury of an employee or a family member (spouse, domestic partner, child, parent or spouse or partner's parent.)

Plan Details

- *Amount:* Full-time, 12-month employees (exempt and non-exempt) will receive ten days (80 hours) of sick leave on July 1. Part-time or less than 12 month employees will receive a pro-rated amount.
- *Maximum Amount:* 75 days (600 hours) of accrued leave.
- *Compensation Rate:* 100% of regular base pay.
- *Usage Increments:* Non-exempt staff may record sick leave in 15 minute increments. Exempt staff may record sick leave in one hour or more increments.
- *Care for self & family:* Sick leave may be used to care for self or a family member.
- *Upon Termination or Retirement:* There will be no pay out of sick leave.

B. Short Term Disability Leave

The Grinnell College Short Term Disability Leave Plan is intended to address temporary, longer term absences from work due to an employee's illness or injury.

Plan Details

- *Elimination Period:* Short-term disability benefits will commence after 10 consecutive work days of employee illness or injury. The employee may use accrued sick leave to cover the 10 day elimination period.

- *Compensation Rate:* 70% of regular base pay. The employee may supplement the remaining 30% with accrued sick leave.
- *Coverage:* Short-term disability benefits will be paid for hours that the employee normally works. For example, if the employee is not scheduled over winter break, he or she will not receive short-term disability pay for that time period.
- *Care for self & family:* Short-term disability benefits only cover employee illness or injury.
- *Maximum benefit:* 24 weeks for any one continuous period of disability within 12 months.
- *Lifetime maximum:* 52 weeks.
- *Exclusions:* Short-term disability benefits will be offset by income received through other programs such as Worker's Compensation, Social Security, and unemployment.

D. Personal Time

The Grinnell College Personal Time Plan is intended to provide flexibility to non-exempt employees to take care of personal business during regular working hours when businesses are open. Exempt employees are not covered under the personal time plan, because their exempt status already affords them this flexibility.

Plan Details

- *Amount:* Full-time, 12-month non-exempt employees will receive two days of personal time on July 1. Part-time or less than 12-month employees will receive a pro-rated amount.
- *Maximum Amount:* Personal time must be used within the fiscal year. It is not carried over to the next fiscal year.
- *Compensation Rate:* 100% of regular base pay.
- *Usage Increments:* Non-exempt staff may record personal time in 15 minute increments.
- *Exclusions:* Personal time may not be used as a vacation day or to extend holiday time off. Its purpose is to take care of personal business in short durations away from the workplace.
- *Upon Termination or Retirement:* There will be no pay out of personal time.

IV. Transition Considerations

In order to ease the transition from the old plans to the new plans, the following conversion rates have been established:

Non-exempt Employees:

Non-exempt employee sick leave balances will be transferred to the new plan up to a maximum of 75 days (600 hours). Employees who have balances larger than 75 days (600 hours) will receive a bonus of 10% of their total balance multiplied by their regular wage.

Exempt Employees:

Exempt employees who have completed one year of service will be credited with 4 days (32 hours) of sick leave for each year of service they

have completed, subject to a maximum credit of 75 days (600 hours). Employees with less than one year of service (or who work part-time or less than 12 months), will receive a pro-rated portion.

V. Catastrophic Leave Program

The Catastrophic Leave Program is intended to provide paid leave allowances to employees in times of extended family illness or catastrophic family events such as a house fire. The program structure will be determined through consultation with the President, the Benefits Committee and the Staff Council. It is assumed that the program will contain the following structures and program guidelines:

- A committee to help manage the program, review requests and allocate paid leave to the approved recipients.
- A process for requesting donations of vacation days at the end of the calendar year for the Catastrophic Leave Program.
- Consideration of requests only after sick leave has been exhausted or has otherwise been determined unavailable to the employee, and a portion of vacation has been used.
- Limits to the number of vacation days an employee may donate, and the number of days an employee may receive.