

Policy Number	Subject	Effective Date	Revised Date
4.0130P	Sick Leave Pool	02/01/06	06/02/2008
Responsible Division / Department: Administration & Finance / Human Resources			
<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Major Revision of Existing Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor/Technical Revision of Existing Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Reaffirmation of Existing Policy			

I. OBJECTIVE & PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to allow eligible regular employees to voluntarily donate sick and vacation leave hours to the Sick Leave Pool. A participating member, upon depletion of the employees' sick, annual and compensatory leave credits and after approval of the Sick Leave Pool Committee, may draw hours from the Pool for their personal major illness, accident or injury.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy of the University of North Florida to establish and maintain a Sick Leave Pool for full-time and part-time salaried employees which will allow employees to voluntarily pool a portion of their accumulated sick leave, and upon depletion of their own sick, annual and compensatory leave, to draw sick leave credits from the Pool for their personal catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with established University procedures.

A. General Administration

- 1) The University President shall appoint a Sick Leave Pool Committee ("committee") of six (6) voting employees, comprised of an employee from each division of the University, with representation from each Classification and Pay Plan (Faculty, Administrative and Support), one from the Office of the President, and a representative from the Office of Human Resources. In addition, two alternates will be appointed by the University President to serve in the absence of a committee member. Committee members shall serve a two-year term and shall rotate off in such a manner as to maintain continuity.
- 2) The Director of Human Resources, or designee, shall serve as administrator of the sick leave pool and shall vote only in the event of a tie. Both the administrator and the committee shall be jointly responsible for the administration and operation of the Sick Leave Pool.
- 3) The administrator shall conduct open enrollment on an annual basis and at such other times as prescribed by the committee. The administrator shall also

process applications for membership in the pool pursuant to the eligibility criteria established under this policy.

- 4) All records regarding membership applications, usage and other transactions based on decisions of the committee and operation of the pool shall be maintained by the administrator.
- 5) The committee shall meet at designated intervals to review, approve, or disapprove, by majority vote of those present, requests for membership, requests for pool usage, or the non-continuation of members. In addition, the committee shall authorize the administrator to deduct sick leave hours from the members' sick leave accounts.
- 6) The committee alternates shall serve in the absence of a regular member and perform the same functions as the regular member. In addition, the alternates may serve in instances where a possible conflict of interest precludes another member from voting; or serve for the remainder of the term when a vacancy arises due to the resignation of a committee member or the termination of a committee member's employment.
- 7) The administrator (or designee) and a quorum of four (4) committee members must be present for the committee to take action. Committee alternates must attend all meetings and will vote in the absence of a committee member.

B. Membership Terms and Conditions

- 1) Membership and participation in the pool shall be voluntary at all times by the employee.
- 2) Membership criteria. An employee shall meet the criteria as set forth herein for membership in the pool.
 - a. The employee must be employed in a full-time or part-time leave-earning position with the University.
 - b. The employee must have been continuously employed for one year without a break in service with the University in a position which earned sick leave credits (see exception as noted in 3 b. below); and
 - c. The employee must have an accumulated sick leave balance of sixty-four (64) hours (proportionate for part-time employees) at the time of application and approval for membership in the pool or at the close of the open enrollment period.
- 3) Application for membership. Application for membership in the pool shall be made in writing to the administrator during open enrollment or during the appropriate periods indicated below:
 - a. An employee who is eligible for membership on the effective date of the pool policy must apply within thirty (30) days of the effective date of the policy or during a subsequent open enrollment period. Upon approval of membership, the employee shall be required to make an initial contribution of eight (8) hours of sick leave if employed on a full-time basis, proportionate for part-time employees.

- b. A new employee whose immediate previous employer is a State of Florida governmental agency, community college, political subdivision or other State university with whom the University has a reciprocal leave transfer agreement may transfer membership from the previous employer's sick leave pool to the pool within thirty (30) days of the beginning date of employment with the University in accordance with the reciprocal agreement. Such employee will not be required to contribute eight (8) hours upon transferring membership into the pool as long as the employee has at least sixty four (64) hours of sick leave accrued that will be transferring into the University with him/her.
- 4) An employee may withdraw from the pool at any time by written notice to the administrator. Withdrawal from the pool terminates the employee's entitlement to use sick leave credits from the pool and the employee automatically forfeits any prior contributions. A member who withdraws from the pool will not be eligible for reinstatement until the next open enrollment. A pattern of more than two withdrawals from the pool by any one member may result in cancellation of membership.
- 5) Any sick leave contributed to the pool by a participating employee shall be forfeited upon the employee's separation from employment for any reason.
- 6) An employee who separates employment from the University may elect to donate a maximum of sixteen (16) hours of unused, accrued sick leave to the pool. Such donation forfeits the sick leave and it shall not be reinstated should the employee elect to return to the University as an employee at a later date.

C. Use of Sick Leave from the Pool

- 1) Participants in the pool may draw upon the pool for their personal catastrophic injury or illness upon approval of the committee. A catastrophic illness or injury shall be defined as a *severe* condition or combination of conditions affecting the mental or physical health of the employee that requires treatment by a licensed medical practitioner for a prolonged period of time. A prolonged period is 120 hours of missed work.
- 2) All requests for sick leave pool benefits shall be made on the application to use sick leave pool credits and shall be accompanied by medical verification, which includes the nature and expected duration of the injury or illness. Pool benefits may be approved retroactive to the first day of the absence for the personal illness, accident, or injury that requires the member to be absent from work fifteen (15) or more consecutive workdays. If less than fifteen (15) workdays are required, sick leave pool hours shall not be approved.
- 3) A member may apply for pool benefits up to a maximum of 240 hours in a consecutive twelve (12) month period, with a lifetime maximum of 480 hours. Pool benefits shall be limited to no more than 120 hours per request.
- 4) A member must deplete or will have depleted all accrued compensatory time, special compensatory time, sick leave, annual leave, and personal leave prior to being granted the use of pool hours.
- 5) Participation in the pool does not guarantee that hours may be withdrawn from the pool. The University reserves the right to deny a request for sick leave

pool benefits when the application for benefits or medical verification is incomplete or the request does not conform to this policy. Pool benefits shall not be approved or used for non-catastrophic illness or injury such as the occurrences or situations described below (listing is not all inclusive):

- a. Cosmetic surgery except due to illness, accident or injury covered by the member's health insurance plan
 - b. Normal childbirth and recovery from such Complications arising from childbirth that require hospitalization and/or a period of limited activity (e.g., complete bed rest) necessary for the safety of the mother and/or unborn child shall be an eligible illness
 - c. An intentional self-inflicted injury
 - d. War or acts of war
 - e. Marital, recreational, educational or speech therapy, except where the speech therapy is obtained as a result of illness, accident, or injury and is or would be covered by the member's health insurance plan.
 - f. Illness, accident or injury due to a member's commission of a felony and/or the member's illegal involvement in, connection with, or association with the same.
- 6) If an employee meets the criteria to receive disability benefits under an applicable University or private insurance policy or government program, he/she is no longer eligible to use pool hours.
 - 7) If an employee returns from leave before the agreed upon date, the difference in hours shall be returned to the pool. The employee's department shall notify the administrator by memorandum of the leave to be returned.
 - 8) An employee on leave, using hours from the pool, will continue to accrue sick leave and annual leave at his/her established rate. However, as leave is earned, it will be deducted from the awarded leave balance.
 - 9) Abuse of pool benefits may result in the cancellation of membership in the pool, forfeiture of prior contributions, disciplinary action and the member may be required to repay all or part of the sick leave credits withdrawn from the pool. Abuse of pool benefits shall include, but not be limited to: misrepresentation of an illness, accident, or injury, or the circumstances surrounding it, and/or submission of a medical certification which is from other than a licensed medical practitioner, or which misrepresents the nature of a member's illness and/or duration, all for the purpose of receiving sick leave benefits to which the member is not entitled under this policy.
 - 10) If an employee is out of work as a result of a University job-related injury covered by Workers' Compensation benefits, he/she is only entitled to receive donated sick hours in an amount that would provide the employee his regular earnings while off work.

D. Maintenance of the Sick Leave Pool.

- 1) Each full-time participating employee will contribute eight (8) hours (proportionate for part-time employees) of sick leave when the pool depletes.

Upon 480 hours being donated, the pool will be activated for use by eligible participating employees. No more than sixteen (16) hours of sick leave (proportionate amount for part-time employees) shall be contributed during a twelve (12) month period, except by approval of the committee. Contributions beyond sixteen (16) hours per twelve (12) month period shall not entitle the donor to any additional benefits beyond the provisions of this policy.

- 2) If a member's sick leave balance is insufficient to deduct eight (8) hours (proportionate for part-time employees) at the time the pool is depleted, the member shall be required to contribute the total sick leave hours accumulated and shall contribute the remainder as soon as additional sick leave hours are accrued. The member shall not be allowed to use sick leave credits from the pool until the required number of hours has been contributed to the pool.
- 3) Hours contributed to the pool shall be placed in a single account. Contributions for the benefit of a specific individual, position or illness shall not be accepted.
- 4) The pool shall be considered to be depleted when the total hours in the pool equal 120 hours or less. Upon depletion of the hours in the pool, the administrator shall notify each pool member that an additional eight (8) hours of sick leave will be deducted from his or her sick leave account and deposited in the pool.
- 5) The University President may change the terms and conditions of this policy at any time as deemed appropriate.
- 6) The University President may, at any time repeal this policy for the purpose of discontinuing the pool.
- 7) All hours remaining in the pool at the time of the repeal of this policy shall be prorated equally among the membership, provided at least one hour can be returned to each full-time employed member and prorated for each part-time employed member. Otherwise, remaining hours shall be forfeited.

E. Appeal Rights

Within five (5) calendar days after the committee issues a decision denying an application for membership or a request for pool benefits or canceling membership in the pool, an employee may appeal such decision in writing to the University President. The decision of the University President shall be final.

Adopted by the University of North Florida Board of Trustees as part of the University's Personnel Program on January 26, 2006, Revised June 2, 2008.