

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY # 53	MENDOCINO COUNTY COVID-19 TEMPORARY POLICY: COVID-19 ADVANCED SICK LEAVE PROGRAM
ADOPTED: April 7, 2020	ADOPTED BY: Minute Order

This temporary voluntary program, available to regular employees is above and beyond the County's current sick leave provisions and the provisions of HR6201 Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) - Emergency Paid Sick Leave.

Purpose:

The purpose of this program is to provide regular (full and part-time) employees with the opportunity to voluntarily request a one-time advance of sick leave when all available sick leave has been exhausted. The use of these advanced sick leave hours is specifically for use when needed because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Except as modified through this program, all County policies, procedures, regulations and Memoranda of Understanding remain in full force and effect. This is an emergency temporary program of the County due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and is not intended to be a binding practice. This program is subject to change at any time, based on changing circumstances and information known about the COVID-19 virus. The County will notify employees of any changes to this program, should they occur, and will comply with all applicable laws regarding notice to bargaining units, as required.

Term:

This program is effective April 1, 2020 and will remain in effect until the end of the County declared COVID-19 Emergency.

Request and Approval:

Under this voluntary program regular employees may submit a request form to Human Resources requesting an advance of 80 sick leave hours (prorated for part-time employees) to address COVID-19 related issues when all available sick leave accruals have been exhausted.

If the request for the one-time advance of sick leave is approved, the employee shall be granted the advanced hours for sick leave use in accordance with sick leave provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), and/or various bargaining unit MOU's for COVID-19 related issues, including to augment the provisions of Emergency Paid Sick Leave under FFCRA.

Curtailment of Accrual:

Because this is a one-time advance of sick leave accrual amounting to approximately 18 pay periods of accruals (or as prorated for part-time); if granted, the employee will not receive their regular sick leave accrual in the pay period in which the leave is granted, or during the pay period/s in which the advanced sick leave hours are used. Additionally, the employee will "pay back" the advanced hours by NOT accruing biweekly sick leave until the number of pay periods necessary to repay the full 80 hours have passed. Typically for a full-time employee in full pay status this will be 18 pay periods.

Any hours advanced but not used during period of this Coronavirus emergency will be removed from the employee's bank and the employee will begin accruing sick leave each pay period, thereafter.

The employee will begin accruing regular sick leave hours again after the advanced 80 hours have been repaid.

If the employee is voluntarily or involuntarily separated from County employment after being granted the advance of 80 hours, but prior to the passage of adequate pay periods to repay the advanced hours, the employee's final pay check will be charged with any remaining hours used but not "paid back". In the alternative, the terminating employee may request an equivalent number of vacation bank hours be moved to sick leave bank to pay back the remaining sick leave hours; in this case, if the employee's vacation accruals do not fully satisfy the remaining sick leave hours, any hours not paid back by the vacation accrual will be charged to the employee's final pay check.

Time Frame:

Request period for this program will run from April 1, 2020 through the end of the County declared COVID-19 emergency.

Hours advanced but not used by the end of the declared COVID-19 emergency will be returned to the County and the employee will resume accruing at the regular rate each pay period after the pay back of any used hours has been satisfied.

Eligibility:

1. Employee must have exhausted all available sick leave hours.
2. Employee must request the advance by submitting the request form to Human Resources.
3. Request must be approved by the Human Resources Director or designee.

Implementation:

- Once the request is approved, the advanced 80 hours (or as pro-rated by part-time status) will be placed in the employee's sick leave bank.
- The employee may use the hours in the same pay period in which they are approved and placed in their sick leave accrual bank.
- The employee may not use the advanced sick leave hours prior to receiving the advanced hours (no retroactive accrual adjustment of other accrued hours shall be made to facilitate the use of the advanced sick leave hours retroactive to approval of request for the advanced hours.)
- Advanced sick leave hours may only be used to address Covid-19 related issues.