

Somerset Education Association

Sick Leave Bank

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide sick leave to contributors to the Bank in cases of incapacitating personal illness after the member's accumulated sick leave has been exhausted.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Eligibility

All members of the bargaining unit on active duty in Somerset County are eligible to contribute to the Sick Leave Bank.

Eligibility for Drawing Leave

Contributors will be permitted to apply for leave from the Bank to cover:

1. Regularly scheduled duty days for periods of personal illness or injury
2. Quarantine which is not only prolonged but is also catastrophic and incapacitating and which is not likely to permanently disable the member

The Bank may not be used by the contributor to remain away from his/her position in order to assist a family member who is ill or to cover any absence from work due to or related to pregnancy and/or childbirth.

Procedures for Joining and Withdrawing

The contribution on the appropriate form will be authorized by the member and continued from year to year until canceled in writing by the member.

Cancellation, in writing, may be elected at any time and the member shall not be eligible to use the Bank as of the effective cancellation date. Sick leave properly authorized *for* contribution to the Bank will not be returned if the member effects cancellation.

Contribution Procedures

Regular annual enrollment period for contributions shall be from September 1 through October 15 of each school year.

During the enrollment period, employees will contribute the current assessment of earned sick leave. The current assessment for those who were not members of the Bank in the previous year (s) shall be determined by the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

Employees returning from extended sick leave and new employees may contribute to the Bank within the first thirty (30) calendar days after reassignment or employment. Any former Sick Leave Bank member returning from extended leave of absence will be permitted to rejoin the Bank upon contribution of an assessment determined by the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

DRAWING SICK LEAVE

Procedures to Draw Upon the Bank

The employee must have contributed the current year assessment to the Sick Leave Bank.

All requests to draw upon the Bank must be made on a SEA Sick Leave Bank Request Form and submitted to the SEA Sick Leave Bank Committee within thirty (30) calendar days of the first date Bank usage is requested. (Note: In extreme and unusual cases, exceptions may be approved.) Forms can be given to the Human Resources department or to the President of SEA.

All request forms must be completed in full, including signed statements by a licensed medical doctor, confirming the incapacitating personal illness.

In the event that the contributor is incapacitated, the application for use of the Bank may be submitted to the Sick Leave Bank Committee by his/her agent or family member, on the contributor's behalf.

The Sick Leave Bank Committee will review all requests to draw upon the Bank within fifteen (15) working days after receiving the request. The Committee will:

1. Approve leave grants from the Bank in units of no more than twenty (20) consecutive duty days upon each request of the individual applicant provided the applicant has exhausted all accumulated personal sick leave and has satisfied a waiting period of three (3) consecutive duty days without pay; and/or
2. Require the applicant to undergo a medical review by a licensed medical doctor of the Committee's choice at the member's expense, and always if more than sixty (60) days are requested for the same illness, with said licensed medical doctor's report to be sent directly to the Committee; and/or
3. Request an interview for clarification; and/or
4. Request/require the applicant to apply for disability coverage, disability retirement or Workmen's Compensation under appropriate state and/or board benefit plans; and/or
5. Disapprove the application for use of the Sick Leave Bank. The decision may be appealed to the SEA Board of Directors, in writing, within fifteen (15) calendar days after notification of the Sick Leave Bank Committee's decision.
6. The Committee shall communicate its decision to the applicant, the SEA Board of Directors and the Board of Education office for processing.

The maximum number of days granted to any member per year for the same illness will be determined by the Committee based on Bank assets.

In cases *where* a member is eligible for Workmen's Compensation benefits, leave from the Sick Leave Bank may be adjusted to equal, but not to exceed, the member's regular salary.

Any abuse of the Sick Leave Bank will result in forfeiture of the days granted. The person will be informed in writing of the suspected abuse of the Sick Leave Bank and informed of the right to appeal.

ACCOUNTING

Accounting Procedures

The Somerset Education Association shall maintain the records of contributions, applications for use of the Sick Leave Bank and forward appropriate copies to the Board of Education.