

HILL COUNTY  
LEAVE POOL POLICY

- PURPOSE** The purpose of the Hill County Leave Pool Policy is to provide additional paid time off to County employees in the event of a catastrophic illness or injury, surgery, or disability that prevents an employee from active employment. Days may be applied from the Pool only after the employee has exhausted all PTO (paid time off) hours.
- DEFINITIONS** A catastrophic illness or injury is defined as:
- \*A terminal, life-threatening, and/or severe condition or combination of conditions affecting the mental or physical health of the employee that requires the services of a licensed health practitioner for a prolonged period of time and that forces the employee to exhaust all accrued leave time and to lose compensation from the County.
- A licensed practitioner is:
- \* A practitioner, as defined by the Texas Insurance Code, who practices within the scope of his/her license.
- ADMINISTRATION OF THE POOL**
1. At the direction of the Commissioners' Court, the Human Resources Director shall serve as the Pool Administrator. The Pool Administrator shall be responsible for developing mechanisms to transfer accrued annual leave into and out of the Pool; developing rules and procedures for the operation of the Pool; and developing forms for contributing leave to, or using leave from, the Pool.
  2. The Pool Administrative Committee shall be composed of the following members appointed by the Commissioners' Court: an elected official, the County Auditor or a staff member, the County Treasurer or a staff member, a County Commissioner or a staff member, and a non-supervisory employee. This committee shall be responsible for approving all valid applications for use of the leave from the Pool.
  3. Vacancies that arise during the year shall be filled by appointment of the Commissioners' Court. The appointment shall be made from the group represented by the vacating member.
- POOL MEMBERSHIP**
1. All regular-full-time employees are eligible to join the Leave Pool by contributing a minimum of one day or a maximum of five days of PTO per County fiscal year.
  2. New employees may join the pool after 6 months of continuous employment. Days donated will be subtracted from their PTO balance.

3. After the Pool is established, employees will only be able to join October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. In the case of new employees, they are eligible to join for a thirty day period starting on their 6 month anniversary.
4. Membership enrollment forms must be submitted to the County Treasurers' Office. Days donated will be subtracted from each member's PTO.
5. Days donated become the property of the Hill County Leave Pool and will not be returned.
6. Employees on approved leave of absence on October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year will retain membership in the Pool and will not be required to donate additional days.
7. To maintain the Leave Pool, all members must donate a minimum of 1 day or a maximum of 5 days of annual leave each October 1<sup>st</sup>. The Leave Pool Committee may open enrollment during the course of the fiscal year to current members who wish to donate additional time. Members must join in October of each year to be eligible to donate additional time during the course of the fiscal year. Only one donation during the fiscal year is required to maintain membership in the Pool.

#### DAYS GRANTED

1. Days will be granted only for catastrophic illness or surgery or other disability, which necessitates an absence from work for five consecutive days or longer. In case of chemotherapy for cancer treatment, days can be granted for 1-4 days absence for each treatment.
2. Pregnancy will not be covered by the Annual Leave Pool, but complications due to pregnancy will be considered by the Committee on a case by case basis.
3. The Leave Pool is only for a catastrophic illness/injury or surgery for the Pool member.
4. The maximum number of days granted to an employee each year shall not exceed one-third of the total amount of time in the Pool at the time of the request or 45 days, whichever is less.
5. Days will not be granted when an employee is receiving Workers' Compensation or long-term disability benefits.

#### PROCEDURE

1. An eligible employee must apply to the Pool Administrator for permission to use time from the Pool.
2. The Pool Administrator shall present valid applications to the Leave Pool Administrative Committee, who shall determine eligibility.
3. If the employee is determined to be eligible, the Pool Administrator shall approve the transfer of time from the Pool to the employee. The time shall be credited to the employee and shall be used in the same manner as PTO.

4. An employee absent on leave assigned from the Pool is treated for as if the employee were absent on PTO.
5. If a member is critically ill and unable to file an application for leave from the Pool, his/her department head or family member may submit an application.
6. Requests for leave pool shall be confidentially and individually reviewed by the committee in a called meeting. A member may be requested to appear before the committee to substantiate a request. HIPPA guidelines will be followed with the "need to know" procedure.
7. The decision of the committee shall be based on a majority vote of the Quorum. A Quorum shall be based on at least four committee representatives.

FINAL AUTHORITY The Leave Pool Administrative Committee shall have the final approval/disapproval of employee applications

APPLICATION FORMS Applications for donation of accrued leave time to the Hill County Leave Pool are available in the Treasurers' Office and on the County website.

Applications for withdrawal from the Hill County Leave Pool are available in the Treasurers' Office and on the County website.