

CHAPTER IV (BENEFITS)

PR-417 Extended Illness Leave

A. General: To establish guidelines and procedures by which Yuma County employees may donate accumulated leave to employees with serious medical conditions.

1. Employees with serious medical conditions may seek limited financial relief through the donation of vacation leave and sick time (as defined in PR-404.G.) from fellow employees. This will enable employees to remain on paid status after annual (vacation); compensatory time and sick leave have been exhausted. Such a policy is based on compassion and generosity and may promote a spirit of cohesiveness and mutual support among employees.
2. Donation of vacation leave and sick time may be made among all levels of County employment and is based on the dollar value of the leave donated.

The Extended Illness Bank (EIB) shall be funded by accrued annual vacation and sick leave that is donated by fellow employees, and by donations of separation sick leave pursuant to PR-417E (2) of this policy. In all cases, all donations shall be strictly voluntary.

The dollar ratio of donated leave will be adjusted proportionately to the salaries of the donor and recipient. The Yuma County Human Resources Department is responsible for making such determination. The recipient and the County are under no obligation to repay the donated hours of monies once they have been donated.

B. Policy: Yuma County recognizes the existence of circumstances under which non-job-related illnesses or injuries and other emergencies may occur that causes employees to exhaust all leave balances. It is the objective of Yuma County to provide eligible employees with the opportunity to recuperate from extended illness or injuries without undue hardship. This opportunity in the form of paid leave from the EIB is a privilege, not a right. The County has established the following process through which employees may donate to or seek the use of donated hours from the Extended Illness Bank (EIB).

C. Eligibility: An employee may receive payment under this EIB program if the employee, as defined under the FMLA, suffers from an illness, non-job related injury, or impairment which has caused, or will cause the employee to go on leave without pay or if an employee's family member, as defined under the FMLA, suffers injury or illness which requires the employee's care, or qualifies under the service member or caregiver leave (as defined under military statutes). Employees must follow the appropriate procedures for obtaining a leave of absence before making the application to receive donated leave.

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1. The recipient must follow the Yuma County policies concerning use of sick leave and leave of absence, and FMLA. (PR-404 D & PR 411).
2. The recipient must be in regular status as a Yuma County employee, with at least twelve months of employment and have worked a minimum of 1250 hours within the last 12 months; and have completed original probation in order to draw from the EIB. (Refer to FMLA section 411)
3. The recipient must have exhausted all leave: compensatory, sick, and annual (vacation), to be eligible to receive credit from the EIB program.
4. The employee or immediate family member (as defined under the FMLA) must qualify for leave under the provisions of the FMLA.
5. The recipient must not be receiving funds from workers' compensation, or long-term disability.
6. The employee is not eligible to receive payments from the retirement system to which they are contributing.
7. The employee is not eligible to receive social security disability benefits.
8. The employee is not eligible for any publicly funded financial assistance program for disability.

The maximum donated leave that may be given to a recipient will be 160 hours within a 12-month period. The 12-month period will commence on the date of the first day of extended illness leave.

A potential recipient may apply before paid leave balances are exhausted, and if accepted, payment will be made when eligibility begins.

D. PROCEDURES TO REQUEST EXTENDED ILLNESS LEAVE:

Requesting Extended Illness Bank (EIB): An employee wishing to receive Extended Illness Leave shall submit a completed EIB form to the Human Resources Department. In the event that the employee is unable to do so, a personal representative may submit the request on behalf of the employee.

1. The Human Resources representative will process the request, reviewing it for eligibility and assigning a numeric code no later than three (3) working days after receipt of all required FMLA documentation.

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2. The approved request will be forwarded to the Financial Services department and solicitation (if applicable) will be announced via intranet (via email). In compliance with HIPAA the medical condition will remain confidential.
3. Once the request is approved, the Human Resources Department shall notify the recipient or personal representative.
4. Payment for approved EIB hours will be depending upon actual need and the dollars available in the bank. There will be no retroactive applications of EIB funds, except to correct administrative errors.
5. In the event that the EIB application is denied, the Human Resources representative shall notify the applicant or personal representative of the specific reasons for denial.
6. If the employee is on FMLA leave, the period of time paid by the EIB of up to 160 hours shall also run concurrently with unpaid leave under the Family & Medical Leave Policy.
7. The usage of EIB does not allow for the accrual of any other paid leave or for the payment of holiday pay.

E. PROCEDURE TO DONATE HOURS TO THE EXTENDED ILLNESS BANK:

Donations to EIB: An employee wishing to donate vacation or sick leave may do so by completing a leave donation authorization form and forwarding it to Finance, Attention: Payroll.

1. An employee may donate up to 160 vacation hours per calendar year. An employee who donates vacation leave must maintain a minimum balance of 40 vacation hours.
2. An employee may donate up to 80 sick hours per calendar year. An employee who donates sick leave must maintain a minimum balance of 160 sick hours.
3. Pursuant to PR-404 (G) eligible employees may donate any unused portion of sick leave credits to the EIB upon separation from county service.
4. Any accumulated vacation in excess of 240 hours may voluntarily be donated to the EIB, instead of forfeiting it. (PR-403(D) (1))

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5. Any unused portion of the donation will be transferred to the EIB general pool unless the donor requests, upon making the donation, that any unused portion of the donation be transferred back to their accrued time. This will not apply to those making donations pursuant to PR-417(E) (3) and (4).
6. Donors will remain anonymous unless indicating otherwise on the form upon making a donation.
7. If the donation request is not approved, the Payroll Office will notify the donor of the reason for disallowance.
8. The value of a donation is determined by the value of the time before donated and transferred to EIB general or specified pool and the same will retain this value, forever. To illustrate:
 - a. John Doe earns \$20.00 an hour. He donates 10 hours of time to the EIB general pool. The value of this donation is \$200.00.
 - b. Jane Doe earns \$20.00 an hour. She donates 10 hours to John Roe, who earns \$15.00 an hour. The value of the donation to John Roe is \$200.00.
 - c. John Roe uses only \$150.00 of the donation. Jane Doe requested that any unused portion be returned to her accrued time. 2.5 hours of leave time will be transferred back into her accrued vacation time.
 - d. John Roe uses only \$150.00 of the donation. Jane Doe did not request that any unused portion be returned to her accrued time. \$50.00 will be transferred into the EIB general pool.
 - e. John Roe is retiring and donates all of accrued separation sick time, 100 hours, to be used by Jane Doe. The value of the donation is \$300.00 (\$3.00 x 100). If Jane Doe does not use the entire \$300.00, the unused portion must be transferred into the EIB general pool. (See PR-417) (e) (3)

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