

SICK LEAVE POLICY LANGUAGE

7.136

Hidalgo County provides employees with sick leave to be granted when they are unable to perform their duties for (1) non-job related health illness; injury; pregnancy; childbirth or related medical conditions; or (2) when absent for the purpose of obtaining health-related services not available outside of regular working hours, such as medical, dental or optical appointments. An employee may use sick leave for illnesses, injuries or health appointments of family members when the employee's presence is required. Office and departments may require employees to request sick leave in advance for prearranged doctor's appointments, whenever possible.

For purposes of taking regular sick leave with pay, the following persons are considered family members:

- An individual who resides in the same household as the employee and is the employee's child (including stepchild or foster child legally placed by a State agency), spouse, father, mother, grandfather, or grandmother, or grandchild; and
- A minor child of the employee, and the employee's father or mother, regardless of whether the child, father or mother lives in the same household.

Sick leave accrued prior to _____ 2007 (insert date of policy amendment) may be used prospectively for the care of family members as defined above. However, any vacation time, compensatory time or other form of time which may have been used by an employee for the care of a family member, prior to _____ 2007 (insert date of policy amendment), may not be converted to sick leave in order to recoup other forms of leave already used.

7.139

All employees must furnish their Elected Official/Department Head with a written physician's statement indicating the onset and duration of the illness prior to returning to work when the employee has used sick for a period of three (3) or more consecutive days. A physician's statement is also required for any physical injury, regardless of length, which prevents the employee from performing his/her assigned duties. Employees who do not submit a physician's statement in a timely manner may not be granted sick leave for that period.

When a pattern of sick leave abuse is suspected, an Elected Official/Department head may require, on a case-by-case basis, a written doctor's statement for any illness, regardless of duration, as well as for medical and dental appointments. Abuse of sick leave includes any employee's use of sick leave for any purpose other than those set out in these rules.

7.145

In the event that a legitimate need for the use of sick leave cannot be established to the satisfaction of the office or department, any unauthorized leave time taken shall be deducted from another available leave account or the employee's salary should be adjusted for the time taken if no other leave is available. Abuse of sick leave may also result in disciplinary action or termination.

7.217

A County and/or District employee, who retires, resigns or is terminated from County and/or District employment, whether or not such employee is a member of the Sick Leave Pool, may contribute up to eighty (80) hours of such employee's accrued, but unused sick leave to the Sick Leave Pool.

All departing employees shall be informed both verbally and in writing about their right to donate unused sick leave hours to the Sick Leave Pool prior to separation. Departing employees shall be given the necessary paperwork to make a donation to the Sick Leave Pool if they so choose. Donations of sick leave to the Sick Leave Pool are strictly voluntary and are at the sole discretion of the departing employee.