

CATASTROPHIC LEAVE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of the Catastrophic Leave Program?

The Catastrophic Leave Program provides a method for employees to assist fellow employees who have exhausted their paid leave time due to a catastrophic illness or injury of the employee or the employee's family member.

What is the definition of a catastrophic illness or injury?

Catastrophic illness or injury is an illness or injury which is expected to incapacitate the employee for an extended period of time and which creates a financial hardship because the employee has exhausted all of his/her accumulated leave. Catastrophic illness or injury is further defined as a debilitating illness or injury of an immediate family member or a qualified domestic partner, that results in the employee being required to take time off from work for an extended period to care for the family member, when this creates a financial hardship because the employee has exhausted all of his/her accumulated leave. Immediate family shall mean son or daughter including variation of step or foster, child of domestic partnership, spouse, parents, grandparents, brother or sister of the employee, or corresponding relative by affinity.

Who is eligible for Catastrophic Leave?

To be eligible, the employee must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Have successfully completed first probationary period, with the exception of Deputy Sheriff's, who must have completed six months of employment in a paid status.
2. Must be on an approved leave of absence.
3. Must have exhausted all paid leave balances.
4. Must not be receiving compensation from Workers' Compensation, Disability Insurance, or Social Security.
5. Must be disabled, or have family member disabled due to a verifiable, catastrophic injury or illness.

How do I apply for Catastrophic Leave?

You can request an application from the Benefits Manager in Human Resources, or you can obtain the form from this website. Submit the completed application form to the Benefits Manager.

What happens once I am approved for Catastrophic Leave?

With your permission, the Benefits Manager will send notices for posting in your department to your Payroll Clerk. The notice will say that you have been approved for Catastrophic Leave and employees who would like to donate vacation hours should contact the Benefits Manger in Human Resources.

How are the donated vacation hours given to the person of Catastrophic Leave?

The donated vacation hours are converted to a cash value based on the donor's rate of pay. The cash value is then divided by the recipients' hourly rate, to arrive at the number of hours donated. The hours donated are then given to the recipient as sick leave hours. In other words, if the donor's salary were double the recipient's salary, a 10-hour donation would result in 20 hours of sick leave for the person on Catastrophic Leave.

Can employees donate any accrued time in addition to, or instead of vacation hours?

No. Only vacation hours may be donated.

Is there a minimum or maximum donation amount?

The minimum donation is 8 vacation hours. There is no maximum donation. However, in all cases the donor must have a minimum balance of 80 vacation hours following the donation.

Does the County maintain a bank of donated hours that can be used by anyone on Catastrophic Leave?

No. Donations can only be made to specific employee on approved Catastrophic Leave. The County does maintain a list of employees who have asked to be contacted when there is an employee in need of catastrophic leave donations. We refer to that list as the Catastrophic Leave Donor Pool.

How do I make a donation?

You can obtain the "Leave Transfer Form" from the Benefits Manger in Human Resources, or from this website.

Whom should I contact if I need information about Catastrophic Leave?

Contact the Benefits Manager by calling Human Resources at 781-5959.