

# City of San Marcos Sick Leave Pool

This brochure was designed to help you understand the Sick Leave Pool and decide if you want to become a member. You will also need to read the Policy in order to understand the rules and responsibilities of members, and complete the membership application to become a member who may be eligible to use leave from the Sick Leave Pool.

## What would you do?

What would you do if you became catastrophically injured or ill and had to use all of your sick, vacation and other paid leave? If you participate in the City of San Marcos Sick Leave Pool, you may have access to paid leave! The City of San Marcos Sick Leave Pool allows participating employees to combine a portion of their individually accrued sick leave for collective use. As a member of the Sick Leave Pool, you would be able to draw upon the Pool – after approval from the Sick Leave Pool Administrator – in instances where you used all of your sick, vacation and other paid leave because of personal, or eligible family member's, catastrophic injury or illness.

## What is a catastrophic injury or illness?

Catastrophic injury or illness is defined as a severe condition affecting the physical or mental health of an employee or dependent family member, which has caused the employee to expend all available paid leave (including but not limited to sick, vacation,

holiday, personal leave time, old sick bank, frozen holiday and compensatory) and the injury or illness has caused the employee to be absent from work at least 80 hours during the immediately preceding twelve months.

While employees must have applied for FMLA leave in order to qualify for Sick Leave Pool benefits, an employee who is taking FMLA leave may or may not be eligible for Sick Leave Pool benefits. The definition of a catastrophic illness or injury under the Sick Leave Pool is more severe than a "serious medical condition" as defined by FMLA.

Sick Leave Pool hours will not be granted when the illness or injury of the employee or eligible family member is work-related.

All requests to withdraw hours from the Pool are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and require significant information from a physician who specializes in care of such catastrophic illness or injury.

## Are you eligible for membership?

You are eligible to participate in the Sick Leave Pool if you are a regular employee of the City who normally works 20 or more hours per week and have successfully completed your initial 6 month introductory period.

All eligible employees may enroll in the Pool during a membership drive held during open enrollment. If you are not eligible for membership, you may apply for membership during the next membership drive.

The Pool Administrator may declare a contribution holiday when excess hours are accumulated in the Pool, in which case all eligible employees shall be members of the Pool for that period.

## How do you apply for membership?

Application to the Sick Leave Pool and donation of leave must be made on an annual basis. If you wish to participate in the Pool, please complete and return the application for the Sick Leave Pool membership to the Human Resources Department during a membership drive.

## How are contributions made to the Pool?

You must contribute between 4 and 24 hours sick or vacation leave on your annual membership application. If your application is approved, your donation to the Sick Leave Pool will be deducted from your leave balances.

## How do you receive leave from the Pool?

Any grant of leave from the Sick Leave Pool must be approved by the Sick Leave Pool Administrator, a member of the Human Resources Department who oversees the processing of applications and requests for leave from the Pool. When you make a request to withdraw hours from the Pool, you must forward your request to the Sick Leave Pool Administrator for review and approval or denial of your request. Submit

an application within 2 weeks from when you expect to exhaust paid leave.

While your participation in the Pool will not guarantee that you may be granted Sick Leave Pool hours, you must be a member in order to be considered for Sick Leave Pool hours (even if you exhaust all paid leave due to the catastrophic illness or injury of you or an eligible family member).

If your sick leave request is approved, you may be granted up to 4 weeks per month from the Sick Leave Pool - up to a maximum of 12 weeks per catastrophic illness or injury. Pool benefits are coordinated with any and all group or individual disability insurance benefits an employee may be receiving. Employees will not receive more than their salary after all benefits are applied.

Sick Leave Pool hours will be awarded monthly. If you have hours not used because of your return to employment, termination, etc., the unused Sick Leave Pool hours will return to the Pool.

### **What happens if your request is denied?**

If the Sick Leave Pool Administrator denies your request for leave from the Pool, you will be given a complete explanation. You may appeal that decision to the City Manager. The City Manager's decision about your request will be final.

*All figures mentioned are for full-time employees. If you are a regular, part-time employee your figures will be pro-rated.*

### **When does membership end?**

Membership in the Pool must be renewed annually. If you do not renew membership and make an annual donation during open enrollment, your membership ends March 31.

You may cancel your membership in the Sick Leave Pool at any time by notifying the Sick Leave Pool Administrator in writing. Any hours you have contributed will remain in the Pool.

If you retire, resign or are terminated, you will be terminated from the Pool. The hours you have contributed to the Pool will remain in the Pool to meet future demands on the Pool. If you are rehired at a later date, you must reapply as a new member of the Pool at the next available membership drive.

### **Still have questions?**

Please call the Human Resources Department at 393-8060.



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# **City of San Marcos**

## **Sick Leave Pool**



### **Would you be ready for a rainy day?**

The City of San Marcos Sick Leave Pool was shaped by concerned City employees. These employees were looking for a way to help co-workers and employees or their family members who may have a very serious illness or injury requiring them to use all paid leave and still need time off to recover or care for their loved ones.