EMORY HEALTHCARE

Policy: EXTENDED ILLNESS LEAVE PAY BENEFIT

Submitted By: Leave Management
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Approved By: Dallis Howard-Crow
Title: Chief Human Resources Officer

POLICY:
Emory Healthcare provides benefit eligible employees a benefit so that the employees receive accrued pay for use in the event of an extended absence from work because of an employee's personal illness, injury, childbirth, or other medical conditions.

Eligibility
All benefit eligible employees are eligible to accrue the extended illness leave pay benefit.

Use
Use of extended illness leave pay benefit (EILB) will be authorized only to eligible employees who are medically unable to perform job duties and have provided written medical certification from a healthcare provider authorizing the medical necessity for absence from work. The medical incapacity may be a result of the employee's personal illness or injury, pregnancy, childbirth, or other medical conditions.

If an employee is employed at a 40 hours standard workweek, an absence of forty (40) consecutively scheduled work hours must elapse prior to being eligible to use the extended illness leave pay benefit. Employees who work less than a 40 hour standard work week must have the number of hours of their standard work week as reflected in the Human Resources job record, elapse prior to being eligible to charge extended illness leave pay benefit for the absence (i.e., a 36 hour week employee = 36 consecutive scheduled work hours missed, or 24 hour week = 24 consecutive scheduled work hours missed).

Comprehensive/PTO leave must be charged during the initial forty (40) scheduled work hours of absence or the number of hours of the employee standard work week if the employee is to receive payment during the initial period. If the employee has not accrued 40 hours of comprehensive/PTO leave, any accrued comprehensive/PTO leave available with be combined with unpaid hours to equal 40 hours (or the appropriate work week hours). Use of the extended illness leave pay benefit may be authorized only after the initial forty (40) hours of scheduled work is missed due the employee’s medical condition.

The comprehensive/PTO hours are waived beginning the first day of an inpatient admission during the employee’s initial standard work week missed from the job. Medical certification is required to confirm the date of an inpatient admission. Inpatient admission is defined as greater than 24 hours admission into a hospital. Same day surgery is not an inpatient admission.

If an employee is ill or medically unable to work for more than forty (40) consecutive scheduled work hours and returns from leave only to have the same illness or medical condition reoccur within 30 days, the employee’s absence may be paid via extended illness leave pay benefit accruals without using additional comprehensive/PTO leave accruals. In such cases, a statement from the healthcare provider confirming the reoccurrence of the illness is required before EILB is paid.

Eligible employees may use up to six weeks of accrued extended illness leave pay benefit to receive income during absences due to the adoption or placement of a foster child after the initial 40 hours of missed work is paid from accrued comprehensive/PTO leave is used (or standard work week hours if less than 40 hour employee). If both parents are employed by Emory Healthcare, the use of EILB is limited to a total of six weeks combined between the two employees. If the employee does not have sufficient accrued extended illness leave pay benefit, comprehensive leave or unpaid leave will be used. Adoption/foster leave will begin when the child is placed in the physical custody of the employee or the adoptive parents are en route to the destination to obtain physical legal custody of the child.

Adoptive/foster parents, who choose to be absent from work to bond with or care for the child beyond the six week period, must use comprehensive/PTO leave or leave without pay for this purpose.
Extended illness leave pay benefit is only used for absences when the employee is medically incapacitated, but not for time off to care for family members during their illnesses. Eligible employees on approved leaves of absence for the care of a family member may only use accrued comprehensive/PTO leave during the absent period.

Eligible employees may not use extended illness leave pay benefit to supplement their workers' compensation pay. If the eligible employee chooses extended illness leave pay benefit and completes Workers' Compensation’s written authorization for time off due to work-related injuries, then the worker's compensation pay is waived. If extended illness leave pay benefit is used for approved workers’ compensation, the normal waiting period of charging comprehensive/PTO leave hours is waived.

**Accrual/Accumulation**

Extended illness leave pay benefit is earned or accrued each pay period beginning the first day of employment in a benefits eligible status. The accruals are based on hours paid each pay period; which includes worked and paid time off hours up to 80 in the pay period. The accrual rate for the extended illness leave pay benefit is the same rate per hour for all eligible employees and not affected by an employee's years of service. Accrual is based on the extended illness leave pay benefit Computation Chart.

Effective March 7, 2010 the maximum accumulation limit for extended illness leave pay benefit is 800 hours. As employees’ accruals reach 800 hours the benefit will be capped and no additional earnings will accumulate until EILB hours are charged to an absence for medical reasons and go below 800 hours.

Effective March 7, 2010, employees with extended illness leave pay benefit accumulations greater than 800 hours will be grandfathered and capped at their accrued balance as of March 6, 2010 for potential future use. The grandfathered employee’s balance of greater than 800 hours will not accrue additional hours beyond the grandfathered amount. If the grandfathered extended illness leave pay benefit hours are used and that results in a balance below 800 hours, then the employee is again eligible for accruals up to the 800 hour maximum.

**PROCEDURES:**

**Requesting Extended illness leave pay benefit**

When there are predictable circumstances which cause an employee to be absent from work because they are medically unable to work, such as elective surgery or pregnancy, a request for extended illness leave pay benefit should be made at least 30 days in advance.

**Extended illness leave pay benefit Provisions**

The extended illness leave pay benefit may be granted to nonexempt employees in increments of no less than fifteen (15) minutes.

The amount of extended illness leave pay benefit that may be granted to an employee is based on the employee's standard work hours for the workday(s) and/or work week in which absence(s) occurred. The total number of combined hours, hours worked and extended illness leave hours, paid to an employee should not exceed the standard hours per work week.

A health care provider's statement, including the expected duration of the absence, will be required. Employees are expected to provide a fitness for duty statement from their provider after an extended absence indicating a full release for work and/or any restrictions of duty for review before approval for a return to work. Employee Health’s Case Manager and Human Resources Leave Manager will assist staff and department leadership in determining the appropriateness of an absence or in permitting the staff member to return to work following an illness or injury.

Exempt Employees - The extended illness leave pay benefit balance of an exempt employee should not be charged unless the employee is absent from work for the entire workday or the absence is approved under Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA).

If the exempt employee is on Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA), the employee can be paid for actual hours worked on a reduced or intermittent leave. "Thus, employers can 'dock' the pay of otherwise-exempt, salaried employees for FMLA leave taken for partial day absences." (Section 825.206 from the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993)
GENERAL - The total amount of extended illness leave pay benefit that may be granted to an employee shall not exceed the employee's accrued extended illness leave pay benefit balance.

Extended illness leave pay benefit will not be accrued during an unpaid leave of absence or any other non-active duty without pay.

Employees who have exhausted their extended illness leave pay benefit balances must use their accrued comprehensive/PTO leave to receive pay for any subsequent absence(s) from work due to illness or injury. Employee absences are clocked as unpaid (ABS pay code) if all accrued leave hours have been clocked.

Transfer of Accrued Extended illness leave pay benefit and/or Change in Employment Status
Employees who change from a benefits eligible status to a benefits ineligible status retain their existing extended illness leave pay benefit balance regardless of their length of employment. The extended illness leave pay benefit is no longer authorized to use or accrue during the benefits ineligible status. If the employee transfers to a benefit eligible status the accrued hours are activated for potential use.

In certain circumstances (e.g., a violation of the intent or spirit of this policy is indicated or if there appears to be a definite pattern of extended illness leave pay benefit use), the department may require a statement from a health care provider confirming the employee is medically unable to perform the duties of the job.

In certain cases, because of job requirements, a determination must be made with respect to an employee's relative state of health and recovery prior to the employee's return to active duty. In such instances, the employee will be required to provide a statement from his/her health care provider regarding the employee's state of health, recovery, and ability to perform stated duties.

Administration and Records
Department leadership shall have the responsibility for administration of the Extended illness leave pay benefit policy. Human Resources will provide assistance regarding administration and interpretation of this policy.

Department leadership shall be responsible for the management of department employee leave balances. This can be accomplished by reviewing the Department Time Report for potential errors at the conclusion of each biweekly payroll period. Corrections to an employee's leave balance must be made through Human Resources.

Exceptions to Policy
The chief human resources officer or designate, is authorized to approve exceptions to the provisions of this policy, if extraordinary circumstances warrant such approval. All requests for exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing to the chief human resources officer.

SCOPE/APPLICABILITY:
The extended illness leave pay benefit is accrued by benefit eligible employees. Extended illness leave pay benefit is not subject to a cash-in option during employment nor upon separation from employment.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ASSOCIATED FORMS:
Online Leave Request E Vantage
Comprehensive/PTO Leave Benefit policy
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy
Medical (Non-FMLA) Leave of Absence policy
Time and Attendance policies
Employee Update Form (EUF)
Kronos Timekeeper's Manual

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE:
Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.