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when working is not an option

Your guide to understanding the sick days, leaves, and policies that protect you when you need it most.

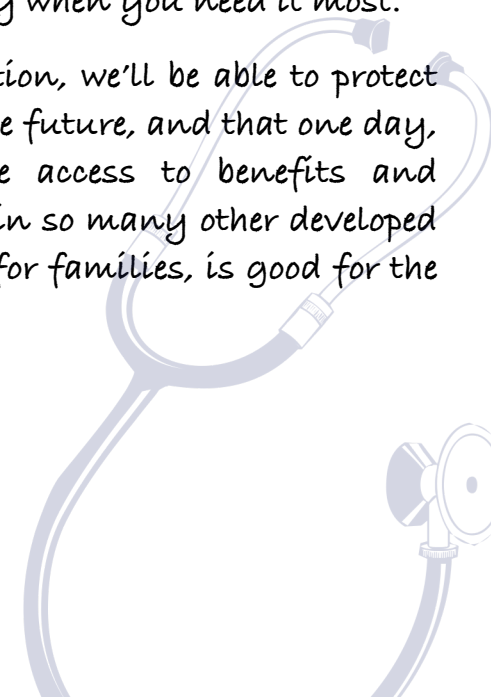
Life can be unpredictable. Whether facing personal illness, tending to a loved one, or even looking to broaden your horizons, there are times when working is not an option. These are among the times workers depend most on the principles advanced by our unions, such as job security, and protecting an employee's ability to provide for his or her family.

This brochure outlines, in one place, the benefits and conditions that have been won through political action and negotiated locally to offer additional job and financial security to you and your family when you need it most.

I hope that, with your participation, we'll be able to protect and improve these benefits in the future, and that one day, working people here will have access to benefits and protections like those that exist in so many other developed nations. After all, what's good for families, is good for the country as a whole.

In solidarity and service,

Richard



Annual Sick and Personal Leave

Our first line of defense in times of need are our individually granted sick and personal leave days. Tenured and non-tenured teachers are granted 13 and 12 sick days per year, respectively. Of these, 5 may be utilized for family illness. Tenured and non-tenured teachers are granted 3 and 2 personal days each year, respectively. These can be used for legal matters, funerals, ceremonies and education. It's important to understand that these days were negotiated years ago to protect members and their families from financial loss when working was not an option.

Accumulated Sick Leave

At the end of each year, remaining personal days are converted to sick days and deposited, along with unused sick days, into your personal sick bank. If a member, unfortunately, is suffering a hardship that burns through his or her annual allotment, the next recourse is to pull from accumulated days. As long as you have days in your bank from which to pull, you stay on payroll, which protects your income, health insurance contribution rate, and seniority accrual. These accumulated days serve as our form of *short term disability*, as there is no standalone short term disability policy in the contract. Members may also choose to purchase additional short term disability coverage through vendors like AFLAC. The average member has around 100 accrued days to pull from in his or her personal bank. Of course, this depends on where they are in their careers and what time they've already had to take off.



Bereavement

In the event of the death of a spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, sibling, grandchild or grandparent, members may use up to 5 bereavement days. These do not accrue, nor are they subtracted from your own days. Should a friend or loved one with whom you don't have one of these relationships pass, you would have to use personal days to attend services.



Workers Compensation

Members who miss work due to on-the-job injuries may be eligible for Workers Compensation. If you miss days due to a workplace injury, those days are initially subtracted from your personal sick bank. The Workers Compensation Board evaluates absences to determine whether or not they are attributable to the injury and directs the District to restore the days pro-rata. In the event that such absences are attributable to an act of student assault, sick leave is restored to the full extent of utilization, up to a maximum of 6 months.



long term absence

Family Medical Leave

The Family Medical Leave Act is a federal law that guarantees job-protected leave for qualifying medical and family reasons. Although most commonly used for child birth, these may also be used if you need to miss an extended period of time due to a medical procedure, illness, dependent illness, etc. An FMLA may be paid or unpaid, depending on the amount of sick time you have accrued. An employee with 12 weeks of accrued time can take a 12-week leave with pay, while one with 6 weeks accrued would be unpaid for half of it. While on FMLA, member contribution rates to their benefits are protected, regardless of whether or not they are using sick days. Salary and seniority accrual, however, are dependent on using sick days to stay on payroll. For members who are suffering a medical hardship or undergoing treatment that is recurring over a period of time, there is also an option for a *rolling* FMLA.

Leaves of Absence

A teacher who has served ten continuous years in the district shall be permitted a one-year leave of absence without compensation or benefits. This form of leave may not be denied to an applying member who has served his or her ten years. Typically, these are used for members pursuing doctorates, fellowships, etc.

In addition, members may apply for other leaves without pay or benefits. Approval for these leaves is based on the sole discretion of Administration and the Board of Education.

Job Shares

Members who want to work but are interested in a reduced schedule may also apply to participate in a Job Share program. Whether it's working mornings to get your kids off the bus, afternoons to get them on, or some other arrangement, Job Shares offer members the flexibility to continue working with prorated access to salary and benefits while decreasing time spent at work to bring it into balance with other things that are important in your life.

Job Share approvals are at the discretion of the District, and the circumstances of each pair are dependent on the teaching and benefit details of the two applying members.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MY SICK TIME RUNS OUT?

By default, if your sick time runs out and you continue to miss work days, the District would dock pay and benefits for any days not worked. Seniority would not accrue for these days either. If you or an immediate family member are suffering a catastrophic illness that renders you unable to work for an extended period of time, you have the option of applying for Long Term Disability or use of the Sick Bank. Neither of these options is available for an employee who still has days in his or her personal bank.

LONG TERM DISABILITY

Under your contract, the District provides you with non-contributory long term disability coverage. This plan is negotiated and maintained by the HHHTA Welfare Trust. To apply for use of the coverage, members can contact the HHHTA office, and we would facilitate the application process with our LTD provider, currently First Reliance. Based on the application and medical documentation, they determine whether or not an employee is eligible for disability. Our long term disability policy currently covers members for 60% of their salary up to a monthly maximum of \$5,000 and would take effect 90 days after you stop working. Members who choose the 'buy up' option offered each fall could be covered up to \$6,000 and only have a 60-day wait period.

SICK BANK

Members suffering a debilitating condition also have the ability to apply for use of the Sick Bank. Members who are approved by the anonymous committee of HHHTA members can borrow up to 45 days from the bank, with an additional 45 available upon further application and approval. While covered under the sick bank, members continue to accrue seniority and have full access to wages and benefits.

In addition, the HHHTA Sick Bank also covers members whose dependents (as defined by the Family and Medical Leave Act) are suffering long-term illness. If you are out of days and need to miss work to care for a dependent, you may also apply for use of the bank. Members who are approved to borrow days for dependent care receive half their salary, but maintain access to benefits and seniority.

Members who borrow from the bank are required to deposit half of each year's allotment until the number of days they borrowed is repaid. Committee members and applicants to the bank are kept anonymous, and no members of the HHHTA Executive Board vote in the approval process.



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