

Catastrophic Leave Donations for University of Wisconsin-Extension Unclassified Employees

Summary

The Unclassified Catastrophic Leave Program is established through the powers and authorities of the University of Wisconsin's Board of Regents (BOR). Any similarities between this unclassified program and the classified catastrophic leave program established by the Department of Employment Relations (DER), are for ease of processing leave requests only. If inconsistencies exist, BOR policies will govern the outcome in all cases.

The University of Wisconsin-Extension, consistent with the University of Wisconsin System's Unclassified Personnel Guideline 9.06, has developed this policy for implementing the Unclassified Catastrophic Leave Program. The basic process is as follows:

1. As donor authorization forms are received, leave will be transferred out from the donors to an external account.
2. All transfers out from donors will be recorded in a spreadsheet.
3. As the recipient exhausts leave, donated leave will be transferred in from the external account to the recipient.
4. Transfers in to the recipient will be recorded in a spreadsheet.

Procedure

Leave will be transferred out from donors to an external account as the donor authorization forms are received. All transfers out from donors to an external account will be recorded in a spreadsheet. This will preserve donated leave that could otherwise be lost after June 30. Once transferred to the external account, donated leave is not subject to limitations on end of year carryover,¹ similar to that of DER's classified employee catastrophic leave program. The donated leave will be used until it is exhausted or the need for catastrophic leave is resolved.

Note: There is no need to move donations of floating holidays and vacation carryover to the top of the pile if donated leave is not subject to limitations on end of year carryover. Leave will be transferred out from donor as soon as the form is received and recorded in a spreadsheet where it will be "held" until it is transferred in to recipient or returned to the donor.

Leave that is transferred in from external account (spreadsheet) to recipient can only be recorded as sick leave on the unclassified leave accounting screen in 3270. Per UPG 9.06, "leave donated for the purpose of a catastrophic illness or medical need shall in no way assume the rights, character or benefits of sick leave." To prevent donated leave from accumulating in the recipient's account and being treated as sick leave (e.g. used as accumulated sick leave conversion credits), donated leave will not be transferred in to recipient's leave account until the pay period in which

¹ This is the rule that applies to classified state employees (ss. ER 18.02(6)(b) and ER 18.04(4)(c), Wis. Adm. Code).

the leave was actually used,² similar to that of DER's classified employee catastrophic leave program. All transfers in to recipient will be recorded in a spreadsheet.

Recipient will need to exhaust any new leave that is allotted prior to using catastrophic leave. For example, if a new fiscal year begins while recipient is using catastrophic leave, recipient will need to use floating holidays prior to using catastrophic leave. Monthly earnings of vacation and sick leave will also need to be used prior to catastrophic leave. Anticipated vacation may not be used until it is actually earned (e.g. a full-time annual basis recipient will have 14.7 hours vacation to use each month rather than 176 hours at the beginning of the new fiscal year).

Per UPG 9.06, "the recipient retains all future rights and interest in the leave donated, credited to their account, under this program." Once donated leave is transferred in to the recipient, it will not be transferred back to donors. However, if donated leave remains when the need for catastrophic leave has been resolved, donated leave not yet transferred in to the recipient will be returned to the donor,³ similar to that of DER's classified employee catastrophic leave program. Once the leave is credited back to donors' leave accounts, donors will be apprised of the leave returned. Donors who donated leave in one fiscal year and have it credited back in the following fiscal year will have until the close of that fiscal year to use returned donated leave.

² This is how the catastrophic leave program is set up for permanent and project classified nonrepresented employees (Sec. 752.080, Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook).

³ Sec. 752.070, Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook.