CATASTROPHIC LEAVE

Effective: 02/26/92

Number: 5.4

I. POLICY STATEMENT

A permanent employee may be granted a Catastrophic Leave for up to twelve consecutive months, if the employee or family member has suffered a catastrophic illness or injury, and exhausted all applicable accrued paid time.

A permanent employee may donate up to 40 hours of accrued paid leave hours (sick leave, overtime, personal holiday, in-lieu holiday, vacation), in a calendar year, to a City employee(s), when an employee or the employee's family member has suffered a catastrophic illness or injury.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. A department must determine that the **RECIPIENT**:

1. is unable to work;

2. has exhausted all applicable accrued paid leave hours;

3. has provided sufficient documentation of need for himself/herself, or immediate family member;

4. receives no more than twelve consecutive months in accrued paid leave hours for any one catastrophic illness or injury; and

5. has completed a "Request for Catastrophic Leave" form.

B. A department must determine that the **DONOR**:

1. will donate no more than 40 hours in total donations in a calendar year;

2. is donating in whole-hour increments;

3. is not donating to a direct manager or supervisor; and

4. has completed a "Donation for Catastrophic Leave" form.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Requesting a Leave

1. With the exception of an emergency situation, an employee shall advise his/her supervisor as soon as it becomes evident that applicable accrued paid leave hours will be exhausted and a catastrophic leave is necessary.

   When requesting verification of the need for a leave, it is important to balance the City's right to information with an employee's right to confidentiality.

2. The employee or authorized representative shall complete the top portion of the "Request for Catastrophic Leave" form, attach the necessary documentation, and give it to his/her supervisor for review and signature. The department head must then sign the "approve/deny" portion.

3. All requests for leave, whether approved or denied at the department level, must be forwarded to the Department of Human Resources. A request will then be reviewed, approved or denied, and a copy returned to the requesting department. When possible, departments must obtain approval prior to the effective date of the leave.

B. Granting a Leave

1. Management should ensure that a request for leave is responded to promptly, indicating whether the request is to be granted, modified, or denied. It is important that a department be consistent when approving a request for leave. Establishing general guidelines will still allow a department to retain flexibility when considering an employee's needs.

2. Following review of a "Request for Catastrophic Leave", the Department of Human Resources will electronically advise the departmental Executive Secretary whether the request has been approved or denied.

3. When the request has been approved and, if the employee has given permission for posting, a "Request for Donations for Catastrophic Leave" form shall be posted on the departmental/bureau/division bulletin boards and, if authorized, throughout City departments (see "Request for Donations for Catastrophic Leave" form). "Donation to Catastrophic Leave" forms should be attached to the notice, or made readily available.

In order to avoid allegations of favoritism, the names of donors and the amounts of donations are to remain anonymous, even to the recipient.

4. Sick-leave usage is subject to all the regulations contained in the Personnel Ordinance and applicable Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). For example, under the 1989-92 International Association of Machinists (I.A.M.) MOU, an employee is only permitted to use a maximum of 24 hours of his/her accrued sick leave, in a calendar year, for doctor appointments and/or the illness of an immediate family member.

   Once an I.A.M.-represented employee has exhausted the maximum allowance of 24 hours for doctor appointments and/or the illness of an immediate family member, donations must be in accrued vacation, overtime, in-lieu holiday, and/or personal holiday leave hours.

5. If an employee fails to receive sufficient donations, he/she shall be placed on either an unpaid “Temporary Disability” or “Extended Leave”, both requiring completion of a HR-1. Refer to the Payroll/Personnel Procedures Manual for instructions.

6. An employee must also be advised that, in an unpaid status, he/she is responsible for payment of all insurance premiums, including the City portion.

C. Donating Accrued Paid Leave Hours

1. Management should ensure that a request to donate accrued paid leave hours receives a prompt response. Prior to responding, it must be verified that the donor has not exceeded the allowable amount of donations (40 total hours within a calendar year). Once completed and approved, the form is to be returned to the departmental Payroll/Personnel Assistant, who will retain a copy and forward the original to the Department of Human Resources.

2. Upon receipt of a request form, Human Resources will approve or deny the donation, return a copy of the form to the department, and retain the original. The department’s Payroll/Personnel Assistant should retain a copy of the form, and give a copy to the donor. If the donation is approved, Human Resources will notify the payroll section in Financial Management, allowing the necessary transfer of donated leave hours to take place.

D. Returning From “Catastrophic Leave”

1. As soon as possible, an employee must notify the City in writing of

the expected date of return to work. An employee who feels an extension of leave may be required, should immediately notify the department in writing.

An employee is entitled to return to the same or a substantially-similar position.

2. An employee, who has been on leave for 180 consecutive days, must be examined at the Health Department prior to returning to work. The departmental Payroll/Personnel Assistant shall schedule an appointment with the Health Department, then advise the employee of the date and time.

IV. DEFINITIONS

A. Family member - means the employee's father, stepfather, father-in-law, mother, stepmother, mother-in-law, brother, sister, husband, wife, child, stepchild, former legal guardian, grandfather, grandmother, grandchild, or foster child.

B. Accrued paid leave hours - means only accrued sick leave, overtime, personal holiday, in-lieu holiday, and vacation.

V. REFERENCES

A. Ordinance No. C-6927 of the City Council

B. Personnel Ordinance: Article Two - Sick Leave Privileges

C. Civil Service Rules and Regulations: Article Five, Section 55, "Physical Examination after Absence"

D. 1989-92 Memorandum of Understanding Between the City of Long Beach and the International Association of Machinists, Article Three, "Paid Time Off Benefits"

VI. APPENDICES/FORMS

A. Request for Catastrophic Leave
B. Donation to Catastrophic Leave
C. Request for Donations for Catastrophic Leave