

---

**ACCRUAL OF SICK LEAVE AND ABSENCE FOR MEDICAL AND RELATED REASONS**

In accordance with Georgia law, regular (not temporary) employees will accrue sick leave with pay at the rate of one and one quarter work days for each completed month of service. Employees regularly working less than 100% but at least 50% will accrue sick leave prorated for the percentage of time worked. Employees working less than 50% will not accrue sick leave. All unused sick leave shall be accumulated from one work year to the next. Employees are entitled to transfer up to 45 days of accumulated, unused sick leave from one school system in the state of Georgia to another and to or from the State Department of Education.

Sick leave provided for under this policy is available only for personal illness, injury or exposure to contagious diseases, or for absences necessitated by illness or death in the employee's immediate family. For any absence in which sick leave is used, the superintendent or appropriate designee shall have the right to require a physician's certificate stating that the employee is ill and is unable to perform his or her duties.

An employee shall not be charged with sick leave for absence due to an injury caused by a physical assault while employee was engaged in the performance of his or her duties; provided, however, that this paragraph shall apply only to the first seven workdays of absence resulting from a single injury. An employee who is absent for up to seven days due to such an injury also shall not have his or her regular pay reduced because of such absence or be required to pay the cost of a substitute.

Employees who do not qualify for participation in the State of Georgia Teacher Retirement System and, as such, cannot utilize unused sick leave accumulated toward retirement service, will be allowed, upon completion of service with the Cherokee County School District, to cash in unused sick leave days earned in the service of the Cherokee County School District at one-half of their value up to a maximum reimbursement of 45 days.

**SICK LEAVE BANK**

A Sick Leave Bank is established and replenished from employee contributions of accumulated sick leave to provide its members with sick leave for catastrophic illness after their own sick leave has been exhausted. Membership in the Sick Leave Bank is voluntary by each eligible employee. Members may withdraw sick leave days from the Sick Leave Bank only in accordance with the guidelines established by the Sick Leave Bank Committee as appointed by the Superintendent.

An employee may make donate up to ten sick leave days to his or her spouse if such spouse is also an employee of the Cherokee County School District for purposes of maternity leave, illness, illness of a family member, or death of a family member.

**ANNUAL (VACATION) LEAVE**

Twelve-month employees regularly working in a position full-time (100%) will accrue annual leave at a rate of one day per month up to 12 days per year with a total maximum accumulation of 45 days. Employees regularly working less than 100% but at least 50% will accrue annual leave prorated for the percentage of time worked with a total maximum

accumulation of 45 days. Employees working less than 50% will not accrue annual leave. Annual leave in excess of the maximum accrual will be forfeited after June 30 of each fiscal year. Upon retirement or completion of service with the Cherokee County School District, all eligible employees will be paid for accrued annual leave at their current daily rate of pay.

The annual leave schedule shall be arranged so that each school and department can maintain effective service levels. Leave may be taken only after approval by the Superintendent of Schools or appropriate designee.

**PERSONAL LEAVE**

Three days of any accumulated sick leave may be utilized during each school year for personal reasons provided prior approval of the absence is given by the superintendent or appropriate designee and provided the presence of the employee requesting absence is not essential for effective school operation. Personal leave may be granted at the discretion of the superintendent or appropriate designee.

**PERSONAL LEAVE FOR EMPLOYEES ELECTED TO PUBLIC OFFICE**

The Cherokee County Board of Education recognizes and affirms the right of a citizen of Georgia to seek and hold public office. Accordingly, personal leave may be requested and granted to employees who are duly elected to a public office.

During the absence of an employee serving in a public office, a substitute (if necessary) will be employed. Upon completion of public service, the employee will immediately resume his/her employment responsibilities. Salary will not be provided for days absent from school duty after the "Personal Leave" allotment is used. Earnings will be reduced based on the individual employee's terms of employment.

Other benefits granted to employees may remain in force during the time of public service upon payment of the full cost of such benefits by the employee if not prohibited by law, contracts, or other agreements with service providers.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-51(c): no person employed by a local board of education shall be eligible to serve as a member of that board of education.

**AUTHORIZED PROFESSIONAL LEAVE**

Authorized leave is leave for which the School District has granted permission and is providing a substitute (if applicable) for the employee to attend a professional development or work related activity provided prior approval for the absence is given by the superintendent or appropriate designee.

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUSPENSION LEAVE**

The superintendent shall have the authority to place an employee on administrative or suspension leave with or without pay in accordance with applicable Board policies and procedures and State law.

**OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Employees may use personal leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays. If an employee desires to take leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays in excess of the days allowed for personal leave, the employee may take unpaid leave for such purposes provided that such leave is not excessive and does not interfere with fulfilling the obligations of his or her job.

**JURY AND WITNESS LEAVE**

Each regular (not temporary) employee shall be allowed leave with pay for the purposes of serving as a juror in any court or when subpoenaed to testify in a case arising out of the individual's job duties with the Cherokee County School District. Jury and/or witness leave shall not be deducted from an individual's accumulated vacation or sick leave. No employee utilizing jury leave shall be required to pay the cost of employing a substitute to serve during his or her absence for jury or witness leave.

**MATERNITY LEAVE**

Any employee who is pregnant shall be entitled to a leave of absence to begin at a time to be determined by the employee, the physician, and the superintendent or appropriate designee between the commencement of the pregnancy and the anticipated date of delivery. The employee may continue in active employment as late into her pregnancy as she desires provided she is able to perform properly the required functions of her job. Final determination of ability to perform properly the required job functions shall be made by the board of education. An employee wishing to work to the date of physical disability shall be entitled to the use of all accumulated sick leave credited to her, not to exceed the doctor's estimated length of physical disability. An employee wishing to discontinue work prior to the date of physical disability shall be governed by the same sick leave provisions as apply to employees on leave for other reasons.

**MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**

Regular (not temporary) employees who have spouses deployed overseas by the United States Military for service in a war zone or war zone support area may request up to a maximum of seven days of Cherokee County School District-paid leave during a 12-month period for Military Family Leave, for days immediately prior to deployment, days immediately upon returning from deployment, or during a spouse's temporary furlough. The 12-month period shall be measured back from the date the employee begins using any Military Family Leave.

**MILITARY LEAVE**

Regular (not temporary) employees are eligible for paid leave not to exceed 18 days in any calendar year for the purpose of complying with ordered military leave duty with the armed forces of the United States or State of Georgia, including duty as a voluntary member of the militia or reserve component of the United States or State of Georgia. Regular employees also are eligible for paid leave not exceeding 30 days in any one calendar year if ordered to duty as a result of the declaration of any emergency by the governor or the appropriate officials of the United States armed forces. Employees who have military commitments shall inform the superintendent or appropriate designee annually and shall cooperate to the extent

possible in scheduling such leave so as to minimize the disruption in those employees' duties and the mission of the Board of Education.

**ADOPTION LEAVE**

An employee may utilize any accumulated sick leave not to exceed 30 consecutive days in connection with the adoption of a child by the employee. An employee seeking to utilize this leave must give at least 30 days prior notice or as much notice as the employee has been furnished. The leave may be taken only during the first year following the placement of the child with the employee. If an employee elects family leave for the adoption of a child provided by The Family and Medical Leave Act, the employee must also utilize the paid leave provided by this policy. If both adoptive parents are employees of this school system, each employee may receive adoption leave but the total number of days for an adoption permitted by this policy shall not exceed 30 days.

**FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE**

The Board of Education ("Board") adheres to the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act ("Act") as adopted by the U.S. Congress on February 5, 1993 and which became effective August 5, 1993 and which was later amended by the National Defense Authorization Act on January 28, 2008. This Board does not intend by this policy to create any additional rights to leave not provided by the Act; provided, however, the Board does wish to extend the rights of the Act to certain employees who have worked at least 12 months for the Board. The Board does intend to elect certain options as the Act authorizes. Any portion of this policy inconsistent or contrary to the Act is unintentional and shall not be given effect. As to the interpretation of this policy, the Board's employees should look to the Act itself and its regulations.

**COORDINATION WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS**

To the extent that any provision in this policy conflicts with or is superseded by State or Federal law, the applicable regulations control.

The Superintendent shall establish and maintain guidelines as necessary for administration of Board Policy: GBRI, Personnel Leaves and Absences.

---

**ADOPTED: August 2, 2001**  
**REVISED: May 3, 2012**

**Cherokee County Board of Education**