

SICK LEAVE BANK Guidelines

The PGCEA Sick Leave Bank ([Contract 19.3]) is a leave system designed for Unit 1 employee's use for qualifying incapacitating personal illnesses during regularly scheduled duty days.

The Sick Leave Bank is administered by an Approval Committee. PGCEA and a Prince George's County Board of Education Absence Management are assigned to work in conjunction with the Approval Committee to process requests to join and use the leave in the Sick Leave Bank.

The Sick Leave Bank does not authorize leave from work. ALL leave requests must be submitted as required by the PGCEA Absence Management Department (absence.mgmt@pgcps.org) for approval.

Eligibility to Join the Bank

Active PGCEA unit members who continuously accumulate 2.5 sick leave days to donate annually are eligible to participate in the PGCEA Sick Leave Bank. (Retire/Rehire and Home and Hospital Teachers are not eligible to join the Bank).

- **New Hires** are eligible to join the Sick Leave Bank in their 7th month of employment/ transferring following 6 month waiting period.

- **Unit Reassignments/Transfers** are eligible to join within 30 calendar days of reassignment.

- Current Employees may join during the annual **Open Enrollment** period which is July 1 to September 30.

Membership Cancellation:

You will remain a member until you request in writing to be removed from the Sick Leave Bank. The request must be sent to both PGCEA and the Board of Education Division of Human Resources. Contributions will not be returned if the unit member effects cancellation ([Contract 19.3]).

You must have 2.5 sick leave days available to contribute annually or your membership will be denied/cancelled and you will have to reapply.

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Annual Donations (2.5 Days)

-All annual donations to the Sick Leave Bank shall be made between July 1 and October 1, except for:

- Members returning from extended leave which included the enrollment period.

- Transfers will be permitted to contribute within thirty (30) calendar days of their reassignment .

- New hires becoming eligible (7th month of employment to join the Bank.

- Unit members returning from extended sick leave or disability leave will be permitted to contribute to the Bank only after approval of the Approval Committee.

The annual rate of contribution for future years is determined by the Rules Committee and announced prior to July 1 of each year.

Claims: Requesting Days from the Sick Leave Bank

Eligibility to File a Claim

Membership Validity: Only contributors will be permitted to use the Bank for payment for qualifying incapacitating personal illnesses during regularly scheduled duty days ([Contract 19.3]). And only earned or available sick leave may be contributed to the Sick Leave Bank (SLB Rule2). Therefore, your usage eligibility date is based on when you were eligible to join **and** actually contributed days to the bank.

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Eligibility to File a Claim

Worker's Compensation Leave: Leave from the Sick Leave Bank may not be used for disabilities that qualify the member for Worker's Compensation benefits, unless the member has exhausted all Worker's Compensation Leave, their own accumulated sick, annual leave and the Member signs over all Worker's compensation checks to the Board of Education.

Waiting Period: The incapacitating illness or disability must be covered by the employee's own accumulated sick leave, annual leave, or leave without pay until it is exhausted. Members must use all accumulated sick and annual leave before applying for leave from the Bank. Leave must be exhausted before or during the waiting period. First time Bank users have a 30 consecutive day wait . Subsequent Bank users have a 10 consecutive day wait.

Claim Process

All requests to draw upon the Bank must be upon a PGCEA Sick Leave Bank Claim/ Request Form and submitted to PGCEA within thirty (30) calendar days of the first date Bank usage is requested (SLB Rule 12). Any incomplete forms will cause processing delays.

All requests to draw upon the Sick Leave Bank must include a physician's statement with the appropriate ICD9 code(s) confirming the cause of illness or confinement and certifying the existence of a disability to perform assigned duties. The form must be personally signed by a physician.

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Claim Process

Leave grants from the Bank shall be in units of not more than thirty (30) workdays (SLB Rule 16).

Applicants may submit requests for extension of Bank leave grants before their prior grants expire (SLB Rule 17). (Use regular Sick Leave Bank Request Form.)

You must reapply every 30 days. Each separate application for a grant from the Bank must include a new physician's statement with the appropriate ICD9 code(s) indicated on the PGCEA Sick Leave Bank Request/Claim Form (SLB Rule 6).

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An applicant may be required to undergo a medical review by a physician of the Committee's choice at any time, at the member's expense. This physician's report, which includes the appropriate ICD(9) code(s), is to be sent directly to the Committee before the Committee may act upon the unit member's application for a grant from the Bank (SLB Rule 14).

SLB Grants will not automatically be carried over from one fiscal year to another. All bank grants end on the last duty day of the school year and must be renewed through the SLB Committee at the beginning of the next school year (if you have not exhausted usage of the bank).

Forms

The PGCEA Sick Leave Bank Request/Claim Form is online at www.pgcea.org, and a copy of your job description is attached to the form. See PGCEA website for all applicable job descriptions.

The form consists of specific information, including signatures and physician's statement with the appropriate ICD9 code(s), which is required for the Committee and the Board of Education to process and evaluate the claim for approval. Any incomplete forms will cause processing delays.

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Forms

The **original** completed form must be submitted to PGCEA at the close of business the Friday before the Committee meets. Faxed or scanned submissions from the **doctor's office ONLY** will be accepted. If you miss the submission deadline your SLB request form will be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting.

Approval Process

Request Forms are reviewed by the Sick Leave Bank Committee every Monday after regularly scheduled pay day (Aug thru Jun) or at the discretion of the Committee. Some dates may vary. You may visit the PGCEA website for a current schedule.).

Using the information provided by the doctor and the federally utilized Official Disability Guidelines (Return to Work Guidelines), the Approval Committee verifies the validity of the request, recommends approval or denial of the requests and communicates its decision to the member and the PGCEA Absence Management Department ([Contract 19.3]), SLB Rules 10).

The Board of Education Absence Management Department will then receive and review the decision of the Approval/Sick Leave Bank Committee. If the grants from the bank are consistent with the Prince George's County Board of Education's sick leave policies and the rules of the Sick Leave Bank, the Absence Management Department will approve the Sick Leave Bank Grants

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Approval Process

that will be paid by the Prince George's County Public Schools to the member and will forward the bank grants to the appropriate department for payment.

In any case where the decision of the Absence Management Department does not concur with the Sick Leave Bank Committee, the Absence Management Department shall explain the full reason for the difference of opinion.

In cases where the Sick Leave Bank Committee disapproves an application for membership, an application for use of the Bank, or for an extension of such use, the applicant may appeal his/her request to the PGCEA Board of Directors (SLB Rule18).

Notification Process

Once the Sick Leave Bank Committee has met, the PGCEA Sick Leave Bank Coordinator sends the processed grants to the Benefits Administration office by close of business the next day.

- The Board of Education Absence Management Office processes the grants and within 48 hours, the grants are sent to the Payroll Department for payment.

- PGCEA sends an email letter of confirmation to each member within 48 hours informing them of the Sick Leave Bank Committees' decision.

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Notification Process

- If an employee is on any type of leave for more than 10 or more days it is their responsibility to complete a Extended Leave Form. The form is obtained from and must be returned to the employee's principal or their immediate supervisor. The statement informs the employer of the employee's condition and the employee's intent to return to work. An Extended Leave Form can be obtained on the PGCEA website.

- The Absence Management Office sends a confirmation letter with final approval dates to the member, the school, Human Resource Department and PGCEA.

Payments

The maximum number of duty days that can be granted in any one fiscal year will be the remaining number of duty days a unit member is scheduled to work. In no case will the granting of leave from the Bank cause a unit member to receive more than annual salary ([Contract 19.3]).

- Payments will be processed by the Board of Education by next pay date after the meeting.

- The Sick Leave Bank does not compensate for unpaid leave during the waiting period.

Returning to Work

The BOE requires a separate release authorization date/statement before you can return to work.

Contact Information