



Town of Hubbardston

7 MAIN STREET
HUBBARDSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01452
(978) 928-1400 FAX (978) 928-3392

SICK LEAVE

I. ACCRUAL

Sick leave for full-time employees and part-time employees with benefits accrues on the first of each month at a rate of one day per month (prorated when applicable) for no more than 12 days per year. Sick leave for full-time employees can be carried forward from year to year with a maximum holding of 90 days (pro-rated when applicable). Sick leave may be used by the employee for his/her own health reasons or to care for a sick member of the employee's family.

Sick leave for part-time employees with leave benefits shall accrue at the rate of one hour of sick leave per 30 hours worked. Sick leave for part-time employees with leave benefits shall accrue after each pay period. Sick leave for part-time employees with leave benefits can be carried forward from year to year with a maximum holding of two pay period's worth of regularly scheduled hours. For example, an eligible part-time employee scheduled to work for 30 hours per pay period can carry up to 60 hours annually.

Probationary employees shall accrue sick leave during the probationary period but shall not be eligible to use the accrued sick leave until the probationary period has been satisfactorily completed or written permission is granted by the Town Administrator.

Upon termination of employment with the Town, all sick leave benefits accumulated or otherwise, shall cease and no compensation will be paid for unused sick leave unless stated otherwise in a negotiated contract.

A. **No Advance.** Sick leave will not be advanced before accrual. When an employee's required time away from work continues beyond his/her accumulated sick time, the employee must use compensatory or other leave time if available. Sick time is not compensable upon termination, resignation or retirement. Sick time does not accrue during unpaid leave.

II. REPORT OF ILLNESS

On the first day of absence from work due to illness, the employee shall report his/her illness to the supervisor, no later than 30 minutes (or as soon as reasonably possible given specific circumstances of illness) after the beginning of his/her scheduled work assignment. After three consecutive work days of missed work, a medical provider's note may be required from the employee if the employee continues to be out sick more than three consecutive work days. If a note is not provided, an employee's supervisor and/or Town Administrator may deny the use of sick time and require the use of personal, vacation, or compensatory time or leave without pay if such time is not available.

III. EVALUATION OF USE OF SICK LEAVE

The Town has the right and the obligation to evaluate the use of sick leave to determine whether it is being used appropriately. Such evaluation is the responsibility of the Department Head or Town Administrator. Sick leave can only be taken:

- For reasons of personal illness or disabling accidents that are not work related, or;
- To care for a sick member of the employee's family, or;
- Under the provisions of other federal and state mandated leave laws

If an evaluation of sick leave usage suggests abuse of this type of leave, further information may be sought (including medical verification of illness) and, if abuse is apparent, disciplinary action may be warranted. Such disciplinary action will follow procedures outlined in the Disciplinary Action Policy and in specific occupational rules and regulations (if available) and will comply with any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Examples of the kinds of situations that might lead the Department Head or Town Administrator to suspect that sick leave is being abused are:

- Patterns of sick leave use, such as Mondays and Fridays;
- Continued utilization of sick leave in increments of one day or less;
- Advance notice given by the employee that s/he will be out sick on a given day;
- An employee calls in sick yet comes into the office on personal business (e.g. to pick up a paycheck);
- Excessive utilization by employees who are terminating employment;
- Absences immediately following a dispute with a supervisor or coworker;
- An employee who often calls in sick during inclement or beautiful weather, prior to, on or following a holiday or on a day which the employee requested off but whose request was denied; and
- An employee who routinely calls in sick on a holiday or event day such as the first day of a hunting season.

If a Department Head or the Town Administrator determines that there is sufficient reason to

believe that abuse of sick leave has occurred, s/he may require the employee to provide medical verification of illness from a licensed health care provider.

This verification must be satisfactory in the judgment of the Department Head or Town Administrator and should include the following:

- The date the employee was seen
- The estimated time for which the employee was or will be incapacitated

This verification must be signed by the licensed health care provider that has examined the employee. Failure to provide this medical verification of the use of sick leave could result in denial of payment to the employee for the relevant day or days.