



2026 HILL COUNTY LEAVE POOL POLICY

1.00 PURPOSE

1.01 The purpose of the Hill County Leave Pool Policy (“Policy”) is to provide additional paid leave to County employees who are unable to perform their job duties due to a catastrophic illness, injury, surgery, or disability.

1.02 Leave from the Pool may only be utilized after the employee has exhausted all accrued paid time off (PTO).

2.00 DEFINITIONS

2.01 Catastrophic Illness or Injury

A terminal, life-threatening, or severe condition, or combination of conditions, affecting the mental or physical health of an employee that:

- (a) requires the services of a licensed health practitioner for a prolonged period; and
- (b) results in the employee exhausting all accrued leave and losing compensation from the County.

2.02 Licensed Practitioner

A practitioner, as defined by the Texas Insurance Code, who is practicing within the scope of his or her professional license.

3.00 ADMINISTRATION OF THE POOL

3.01 The County Treasurer shall serve as the Pool Administrator at the direction of the Commissioners Court.

3.02 The Pool Administrator shall be responsible for:

- (a) receiving applications for use of leave from the Pool;



- (b) establish rules governing the operation of the Pool;
- (c) develop procedures for transferring accrued leave into and out of the Pool;
- (d) create and maintain all forms necessary for contributions to and from the Pool;
- (e) communication pool operating procedures to all employees and interpreting the procedures and rules on request.

3.03 The Leave Pool Administrative Committee (“Committee”) shall be appointed by the Commissioners Court and shall consist of:

- (a) one elected official;
- (b) the County Auditor or a designated staff member;
- (c) the County Treasurer or a designated staff member;
- (d) one County Commissioner or a designated staff member; and
- (e) one non-supervisory employee.

3.04 The Committee shall review and approve or deny all applications for leave from the Pool.

3.05 Vacancies occurring during the year shall be filled by appointment of the Commissioners Court from the same category represented by the vacating member.

4.00 POOL MEMBERSHIP

4.01 All regular full-time employees are eligible to participate in the Pool on a voluntary basis.

4.02 Employees must contribute a minimum of eight (8) hours and a maximum of forty (40) hours of PTO per County fiscal year to participate.

4.03 New employees become eligible after six (6) months of continuous employment.

4.04 Enrollment shall occur annually on October 1.

4.05 New employees may enroll during a thirty (30) day period following their six-month employment anniversary.

4.06 Enrollment forms must be submitted to the County Treasurer’s Office.

4.07 All contributed leave becomes the property of the Hill County Leave Pool and shall not be returned.



4.08 Employees on approved leave as of October 1 shall retain membership without additional contribution for that year.

4.09 To maintain membership:

- (a) employees must contribute at least (8) hours of PTO each October 1;
- (b) the Committee may allow additional contributions during the fiscal year; and
- (c) only one contribution per fiscal year is required to maintain membership.

5.00 HOURS GRANTED

5.01 Leave Pool days shall be granted only for catastrophic illness, injury, surgery, or qualifying disability.

5.02 The condition must require an absence of five (5) or more consecutive workdays.

5.03 For chemotherapy treatment, leave may be granted for absences of eight (8) to thirty-two (32) hours per treatment. Time granted will be in hours and follows the policy.

5.04 Leave Pool benefits apply only to the Pool member's own condition.

5.05 The maximum leave granted per year shall not exceed the lesser of:

- (a) one-third (1/3) of the total Pool balance at the time of request; or
- (b) 360 hours.

5.06 Leave shall not be granted if the employee is receiving Workers' Compensation.

5.07 Pregnancy alone does not qualify; however, complications may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6.00 PROCEDURES

6.01 An eligible employee must submit an application to the Pool Administrator.

6.02 The Pool Administrator shall present valid applications to the Committee.

6.03 The Committee shall determine eligibility.



6.04 Upon approval, the Pool Administrator shall authorize transfer of leave to the employee.

6.05 Transferred leave shall be credited and used in the same manner as PTO.

6.06 Employees utilizing Pool leave shall be treated as if on approved PTO and all county benefits remain intact. Holidays are paid without using sick pool hours. PTO is accrued and used as it becomes available, provided the employees returns to work following the leave.

6.07 If an employee is unable to apply, a department head or family member may submit an application on the employee's behalf.

6.08 Applications shall be reviewed confidentially in a duly called meeting.

6.09 Applicants may be required to appear before the Committee to provide supporting documentation.

6.10 All reviews shall comply with applicable HIPAA "minimum necessary" standards.

6.11 Committee decisions shall be made by majority vote.

6.12 A quorum shall consist of no fewer than four (4) members.

6.13 Decisions to allocate pool resources to eligible employees will be equitable, consistent, and without regard to employee classification or other legally impermissible reason.

7.00 FINAL AUTHORITY

7.01 The Committee shall have final authority to approve or deny all applications related to the Leave Pool.

8.00 APPLICATION FORMS

8.01 Applications for contribution to the Pool shall be available through the County Treasurer's Office and the County website.



9.00 EFFECTIVE DATE

9.01 This Policy was last revised in September 2012 and remains in effect until amended by the Commissioners Court.

Updated: May 12, 2026