

SNU Policy: Shared Sick Leave Policy
SNU Policy ID: Benefit Information D-3.1
Policy Reviewed by: Director of Human Resources
Approval Authority: Vice President for Business and Finance
Approval Date: September 2, 2020
Next Review Date: September 2, 2025

The purpose of the Shared Sick Leave (“SSL”) Program is to provide a means by which a University employee may donate paid sick leave to other, eligible University employees who are experiencing a medical emergency condition as defined below. Donations of SSL hours by employees provide income to affected employees who otherwise may have to take unpaid leave. The purpose is not to provide unlimited sick leave for any medical reason, however.

Initial Employee Recipient Eligibility

Twelve-month employees who hold benefits-eligible appointments that accrue paid sick leave and who have had continuous employment for at least 12 months preceding the medical emergency condition are eligible to be employee recipients of SSL. The employee seeking SSL must have used all of his or her paid time off, including accrued vacation, personal leave and sick leave time hours in order to be eligible to receive SSL. SSL is not available to employees in off-work status due to workers’ compensation.

Employee Donor Eligibility

Twelve-month employees who hold benefits-eligible appointments that accrue paid sick leave and have a paid sick leave balance greater than 50% of annual accrual are eligible to be employee donors of SSL. A donating employee may donate paid leave at any time during the budget year. Terminating or retiring employees may donate the balance of their sick leave to the SSL Program on their last day of work.

Medical Emergency Condition

The term “medical emergency condition” is defined as a serious, extreme or life-threatening illness, impairment or condition of the employee or his or her immediate family member (spouse or child) or parents that will require the absence of the employee from duty and will result in a substantial loss of income to the employee due to the exhaustion of all paid leave available, apart from the leave-sharing plan, including but not limited to: advanced or rapidly-growing cancers, acute and/or chronic illnesses, conditions, infections or injuries requiring immediate care, severe injuries arising from serious accidents and severe or life-threatening conditions involving failure of bodily organs or systems (e.g., heart attack).

Shared Sick Leave Administrator

The Human Resources Director or his or her designee shall act as the SSL Administrator. The SSL Administrator will administer and monitor the SSL Program, coordinate the application process, make policy recommendations to administration and employee governance groups, and

approve the distribution of shared leave to the recipient. The SSL Administrator will report the overall utilization and evaluation of the SSL Program annually to the President, Provost and the Vice President of Business and Finance. The SSL Administrator will also participate in the approval process and may consult with the Benefits Coordinator and the Payroll Supervisor as part of this process.

Shared Sick Leave Pool

The SSL Pool will include paid leave hours that have previously been donated by Employee Donors. Hours donated will be maintained in SSL Pool for general distribution to eligible Employee Recipients. In the event that there is no donated SSL in the SSL Pool or all SSL hours have been exhausted, no SSL hours will be distributed until more SSL hours are donated. If an insufficient balance occurs, the SSL Administrator may send a communication to faculty and staff communicating the insufficiency but may not coerce or require employees to contribute leave time.

General Guidelines for the Shared Sick Leave Program

1. SSL is intended to cover only the duration of the medical emergency condition for which it was approved.
2. An employee donating SSL may not designate a particular employee to receive the SSL donation.
3. Any unused SSL donated to an employee will be donated back to the SSL Pool to be distributed to other qualified Employee Recipients.
3. All SSL must be donated voluntarily. No employee shall be coerced, threatened, intimidated, or financially induced into donating paid leave for purposes of the SSL Program. Employees may not solicit or distribute lists requesting donations from the SSL Pool for themselves or other employees.
4. Persons involved in the administration of the SSL Program will endeavor to maintain the privacy of leave recipients and donors to the extent reasonably possible.
5. Employee Recipients receiving SSL will accrue additional paid leave. All incrementally earned paid time off during any leave will be applied to any such leave before applying SSL to the leave.
6. If intermittent treatment is required, unused approved SSL benefits may be provided on an as-needed basis until the employee (or family member) recovers from the medical emergency condition.
7. The employee receiving SSL shall be paid his or her regular rate of pay per month of approved SSL. Each hour of approved shared leave will be provided to the recipient on an hour for hour basis. The leave received will be designated as shared leave and will be maintained separately from all other leave balances.
8. An employee may receive up to a maximum of 480 hours of SSL in a 12-month period or 960 hours during the entirety of his or her employment.
9. SSL hours may not be converted to cash.
10. The estate of a deceased employee is not entitled to and may not receive payment for approved unused SSL hours.

Additional Requirements for Employee Recipients

1. When submitting the Shared Sick Leave Request Form, an employee seeking SSL shall attach documentation from a licensed physician or healthcare practitioner verifying the need for the leave and expected duration of the medical emergency condition. A Family and Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) Certification of Health Care Provider form shall also be submitted for the purpose of documenting the health condition for the employee, the employee’s spouse, or employees’ dependent children.
2. Approved SSL hours run concurrently with any approved FMLA time.
3. The employee seeking SSL must have a current satisfactory performance evaluation on file, or have no disciplinary actions on file, during the previous 12-month period.
4. The employee seeking SSL must not have abused or misused sick leave in the past year. Sick leave abuse occurs when an employee uses sick leave for unauthorized purposes or misrepresents the actual reason for charging an absence to sick leave. Abuse may also occur when an employee establishes a pattern of sick leave usage over a period of time such as the day before or after a holiday, on Mondays and Fridays, after paydays, any one specific day, half-day, or a continued pattern of maintaining zero or near zero leave balances.

Additional Requirements for Employee Donors

1. An employee seeking to donate SSL will complete and submit a Shared Sick Leave Donation Form to the SSL Administrator.
2. Donations must be made in full-hour increments.

Shared Sick Leave Approval Process

1. An employee seeking SSL will complete and submit a Shared Sick Leave Request Form to the SSL Administrator.
2. If the SSL Administrator determines that the employee meets certain initial eligibility criteria, then he or she will forward the SSL Request Form to the employee’s supervisor/manager for approval.
3. If the supervisor/manager approves the employee’s request, then he or she will communicate with the Divisional Vice President and seek his or her approval.
4. If both the supervisor/manager and the Divisional Vice President approve the request, then the approved request will be returned to the SSL Administrator for review.
5. If the SSL Administrator approves the request, then he or she will forward the request to the University President for approval.
6. If the President approves the request, then he or she will communicate such approval to the SSL Administrator.
7. The SSL Administrator will notify the employee that he or she has been approved.