



PINE TREE ISD SICK LEAVE BANK GUIDELINES

Revised August 2020

SECTION I - PURPOSE AND DEFINITIONS

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Pine Tree ISD Sick Leave Bank is to provide additional sick leave days to members of the Bank in the event of a critical, life-threatening, or catastrophic illness, injury, or non-elective/emergency surgery and the member is unable to perform the duties of their current job. Days may be requested from the Bank only after the member has exhausted all accumulated forms of leave including state personal days, local sick leave days, non-duty days, and/or compensation time.

B. Definitions for Purposes of Sick Leave Bank

1. Bank will refer to Pine Tree ISD Sick Leave Bank.
2. Board will refer to Pine Tree ISD Sick Leave Bank Board of Directors.
3. Member will refer to Pine Tree ISD Sick Leave Bank member.
4. PTISD will refer to Pine Tree Independent School District.
5. Program Year will generally refer to September 1 through August 31.
6. Open Enrollment will refer to July 1 through September 15 for current and new employees hired before the opening day of school.
7. Immediate Family Member will refer to spouse, biological and legally adopted children, step-children, foster children, parents, parents-in-law, grandparents. Approval of any other relationship would be determined on a case by case basis.
8. Catastrophic a severe sudden, extensive, or notable illness or misfortune likely requiring some hospital confinement. Implies an illness or injury of a very serious nature probably involving the need for extended absences.

SECTION II - MEMBERSHIP

A. Eligibility

All full-time employees of Pine Tree ISD will be eligible for membership upon completion of the application form and contribution of the required days as specified in Bank policy.

B. Procedures for Joining the Sick Leave Bank

1. Any employee who is eligible to join the Bank may do so by contributing two (2) days of accrued or anticipated local sick leave during open enrollment.

2. An employee hired after open enrollment desiring to join during the current program year must be able to earn at least two (2) days from the time of his/her employment until the completion of his/her total number of days of work at the end of the school year. Said employee will have 10 working days from their first official day of work to complete the necessary application form and return to the benefit's office to be eligible.
3. The open enrollment period for current employees and new employees hired prior to the opening of the school year will be July 1 through September 15.
4. All personnel who join the Bank within the enrollment period are eligible for membership beginning with their first official day of work.
5. Employees desiring to join the Bank shall complete the membership application form and submit it to the benefit's office for verification of the employee's eligibility.

SECTION III - CONTRIBUTION OF DAYS

- A. To become a member of the Bank, an employee must contribute two (2) days from his/her accrued, or to be earned this year, local sick leave upon initial enrollment.
- B. To continue enrollment beyond the initial year, an employee must contribute one half day (1/2) each subsequent year, unless the total remaining days in the Sick Leave Bank is equal to or greater than three times the Current Bank Membership. These days will be subtracted from the member's local sick leave record.
- C. The days donated become the property of the Bank. All donations will remain in force and cannot be returned even upon cancellation of membership or employment.
- D. If a member uses days from the Bank during the school year, he/she will not be required to repay days the following school year in order to continue membership in the Bank.
- E. Rates of contribution will be determined annually effective July 1, but in no event will the annual contribution for new members be more than two (2) day per fiscal year.
- F. If a member decides to cancel his/her membership in the Bank, the days contributed for Membership remain the property of the Bank. If, at a later date, this individual wishes to rejoin the Bank, he/she may do so during the open enrollment period by donating two (2) days.
- G. Personnel who terminate their employment with the District forfeit membership in the Bank at the effective date of termination/retirement. If the employee is rehired by the District at a later date and wants to rejoin the Bank, the employee must join as a new member and contribute 2 days of local leave.
- H. Employees will be allowed to contribute additional local sick leave days to the Sick Leave Bank if they choose. They must complete the donation form found online at

www.ptisd.org under Human Resources, and submit the completed form to the Benefits Specialist. Once the days are donated they become property of the Sick Leave Bank.

SECTION IV - GRANTING OF DAYS FROM THE SICK LEAVE BANK

- A. Sick leave days from the Bank will be granted only after the Member has exhausted all accumulated forms of leave including state personal, local sick leave days, non-duty and compensation time.
- B. A Member may apply for days from the Bank only after being absent from work the number of days requested.
- C. Sick leave days will be granted only for paid working days. Recognized holidays and non-working days are ineligible for compensation. All available leave days must be used prior to applying to the Bank for benefits.
- D. Sick leave days from the Bank are available only in the event of a critical, life-threatening, or catastrophic disability due to illness, injury, or non-elective/emergency surgery which necessitates an absence from work for **five (5) consecutive days** or longer.
- E. Pregnancy and accompanying complications will not be covered by the Bank. Rare complications arising from pregnancy and/or childbirth will be considered on an individual basis, provided the recovery period requires longer than six (6) weeks.
- F. Employees experiencing reoccurring illnesses or prolonged conditions may not meet the threshold of catastrophic without additional physician documented complications.
- F. Members will not be authorized a grant from the Bank for pre-existing conditions for the first twelve (12) months of membership. Pre-existing condition(s) is defined as a condition(s) for which a member received medical treatment, took prescribed drugs or medicines, or consulted a physician during the 12 months prior to joining the Bank. This limitation ceases to apply on the date the member has received no medical care for the pre-existing condition for a twelve (12) month period ending on or after his effective date of membership in the Bank.
- G. Bank grants will not be authorized for the event of a critical, life-threatening, or catastrophic disability due to illness, injury, or surgery resulting from a self-inflicted injury or act of war.
- H. The maximum number of days that can be granted to any one member will be a total of Forty-five (45) days per school year.
- I. The maximum number of days that can be granted to any one member in a lifetime will be a total of one hundred twenty (120) days.
- J. The Bank may not grant more days than its members have contributed.
- K. If a request to draw upon the Bank is for other than consecutive days of illness, a separate request, including a physician's statement on the required form, must be submitted for

each period of illness. In the event of chemotherapy, one physician's statement will be accepted if the statement outlines the frequency and duration of the therapy. The total number of days must exceed five (5) days. Each separate application must meet the initial criteria of just cause.

- L. All requests to draw upon the Bank must be accompanied by the appropriate physician's statement, signed by the physician, confirming actual treatment, the cause of illness, and certifying the existence of a disability to perform assigned duties. The Board may request verification and/or further explanation from the physician.
- M. The Board may deny a request for leave and request additional medical information from the applicant's physician at the member's expense.
- N. The Board may consider a request by a member for days to assist a critically or terminally ill immediate family member not to exceed twenty (20) days per family member up to the member's maximum days of forty-five (45) per year. Documentation must be provided to the Board indicating the member is either the sole provider of the ill family member or is instrumental in the care of the immediate family member.
- O. Sick leave days from the Bank may not be granted for the period of disability when monies are paid to the member under Worker's Compensation Act.
- P. All unused sick leave days in the Bank at the end of the school year (August 31) will be carried over to the next school year (September 1).
- Q. Members of the Bank are not necessarily entitled to any days from the Bank or a set number of days. The number of days granted, if any, will be determined by the members of the Board who will consider the number of days available in the Bank, the number of pending requests, and the nature and duration of the illness or injury.
- R. A contributor will lose the right to utilize the benefits of the Bank if any one of the following applies:
 - Termination of employment or suspension of employment from PTISD.
 - Cancellation of participation by the member in writing at any time submitted to the human resource office.
 - Being on approved leave of absence for other than personal illness.
 - Attempted abuse of the Bank and/or its policies.
 - Not contributing required days as per Section III or refusal to continue regular contributions.
 - Falsifying information.

SECTION V – APPLYING FOR DAYS

- A. Should the member have a need for additional leave days after all accumulated state personal and local sick leave days have been used, the member may submit a request for days from the Bank. The request form can be found on the Staff tab of the district website.
- B. A member requesting days from the Bank must submit the required form(s) along with all

required documents to the benefit's office within fifteen (15) days of the first day the requested Bank benefits are needed. Forms received after the deadline will not be considered unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond the member's control.

Member's request for days for their personal illness/injury/surgery should be completed on the required form and will include:

- Member's last day state personal or local leave days were available to use (must verify with leave specialist).
- Verification signed by the employee attesting to the fact that the condition which necessitated the request for days from the Bank was not a pre-existing condition as defined by Bank policy.
- Beginning and ending dates of days requested.
- Reason for request.
- Indication of need for additional days related to condition that necessitated the request for days from the Bank.
- Completed attending physician's statement form.
- Verification of emergency need of surgery, if applicable.

Physician's statement should include:

- Description of patient's illness/disability in layman's terms.
- Determination of condition pre-existing or not.
- Identification of the nature/cause/extent of illness/condition or need for non-elective/emergency surgery.
- Anticipated release date to perform current assigned work duties and restrictions, if any.
- Date of initial onset of this particular condition.
- Date(s) of actual treatment and dates patient was under doctor's care.
- Days, if any, for follow up appointments. (May be limited by the Board.)
- Narrative or photocopies of records attached, if needed.

Member's request for days for immediate family illness should include:

Member's last day state personal or local leave days were available to use (must verify with leave specialist.)

- Verification the immediate family member's condition which necessitated the request for days from the Bank was unknown to the employee at the time he/she became a member.
- Beginning and ending dates of days requested.
- Reason for request.
- Indication of the need for additional days related to the condition that necessitated the request for days from the Bank.
- Completed attending physician's statement form.

- C. Forms should be completed with supporting documentation attached and turned in 1 weeks prior to the next scheduled SLB Board meeting. Forms for the above purposes have been prepared and are available online at www.ptisd.org under Employment then under Sick Leave Bank and/or in the human resource office.

- D. The Board may refuse to consider an application that does not contain the required information or is not received in the timelines specified in Sick Leave Bank policy.
- E. If a member is critically ill and unable to file an application for sick leave days from the Bank, a district employee or family member may initiate the application form at the request of the member or a family member.

SECTION VI – GOVERNING COMMITTEE

A. Composition of the Membership of the Board

- 1. Members of the Bank who have been employed by the school district for at least two (2) consecutive years may be elected to the Board.
- 2. Membership of the Board will be elected as follows:
 - a. One representative from each campus.
 - b. One representative from administration - central office administration staff, principal, or assistant principal.
 - c. One representative from facility services, transportation, or child nutrition.
 - d. District Lead Nurse
 - e. In addition to the elected Board Members, the Deputy Superintendent will serve as Executive Officer of the Board.
 - f. The members of the Board will be elected by their campus and nomination forms sent to the Benefits Specialist by August 25.
- 3. Term of office:
 - a. Each representative will serve a minimum of a two (2) year term with a maximum of a four (4) year term. Terms begin September 1 and end August 31.
 - b. To establish continuity on the Board, the term of office for one-half (1/2) of the members of the Board will expire on August 31 of even numbered years.
 - Pine Tree Primary School representative
 - Pine Tree Parkway School representative
 - Pine Tree Middle School representative
 - Pine Tree High School/PACE/ExCEL representative
 - c. The term of office for the other one-half (1/2) of the Board will expire on August 31 of odd-numbered years.

- Pine Tree Birch School representative
- Pine Tree Junior High School representative
- Administration representative
- Facility services, transportation, or child nutrition representative

4. Election procedures:

- a. Elections will be held on the first Monday in May. Only members of the Bank are eligible to vote.
- b. Members of each group named above must be elected from their group.
- c. Candidates must indicate a willingness to serve by April 15 on the provided form.
- d. Voting will be by ballot. Ballots will be distributed through the school mail and returned the same way. The Benefit Specialist will tabulate the ballots which will then be reviewed by the Board at the next scheduled meeting. A notice will be sent out to announce the new Board member(s).
- e. Members assigned to more than one campus will be eligible as a representative from their “home campus”.

B. Duties and Responsibilities of the Board

1. All applications for sick leave bank days will be reviewed individually by the Board in a called meeting.
2. A member may be requested to appear before the Board to substantiate his/her case.
3. The Board will determine the number of days approved and reserves the right to approve, deny, or modify the days requested.
4. A Member may appeal the decision of the Board by writing a letter to the executive officer requesting to appear in person before the Board or requesting the letter to be read to the Board to serve as the appeal.
5. Following an appeal, the decision of the Sick Leave Bank Board will be final.
6. Vacancies on the Board that arise during the school year will be filled by appointment from the group which was represented by the member who resigned.
7. Any member of the Board will excuse him/herself when considering their own request or a request made by any member of his/her family.
8. Notification of the results of all members’ requests will come from the executive officer in the form of a letter to the member with notice given to the payroll department.

C. Final Decisions/Amendments

1. Procedures for deciding any questions not covered herein:
Any questions concerning membership, regulations, or application for sick leave days that may arise after adoption of this plan and not specifically covered herein will be submitted to the Board who will make a recommendation to the Deputy Superintendent for final decision.
2. Suggestions for amendments should be formally submitted to the Board in writing prior to May 1 for revisions to the following year.