FAQ’s on SICK and OTHER LEAVE CATEGORIES FOR UTHSC FACULTY, TENURED AND TENURE-TRACK

1. For unplanned absences, is there a limit to the number of consecutive sick days that must be filed retroactively along with Family Medical Leave Act paperwork?
   • FMLA can be retroactive if designated by the medical provider. The limit for retroactive days is 12 weeks.

2. For unplanned absences, when must a faculty member inform their Chair of their condition, and anticipated duration (assuming that they are able to do so)?
   • Employees need to notify their Chair or immediate supervisor of the unplanned absence as soon as possible. If the leave will require an absence of 3 days or more, the employee must then speak with their supervisor regarding FML. Employees are not required to discuss their medical condition but only that they may need FML coverage. HR can be contacted for additional information and assistance.

3. For planned or unplanned absences, what is the maximum duration that the faculty member can be out on Sick Leave with full pay and benefits?
   • Faculty who are out on sick leave will have full pay and benefits as long as they have sick or annual leave. Departments have the authority to approve leave without pay that is not covered by FML.

4. For planned or unplanned absences, when information from a health professional indicates the possibility that the faculty member may never be able to return to work, what is the maximum duration that the faculty member can remain on full pay and benefits?
   • The faculty member may remain on full pay and benefits as long as they have leave to cover their absences (sick and annual). Once the leave has been exhausted, the Sick Leave Bank may offer additional leave. The faculty member may want to consider disability or retirement once leave is exhausted.

5. If an extended recovery period accompanies a planned or unplanned absence, can a faculty member arrange partial days off under Sick Leave if they are able to perform limited job-related duties, as opposed to taking full-day accumulated Sick Leave?
   • This can be considered on a case by case basis. HR and the faculty member’s department need to be involved if this option is considered.
6. If an extended recovery period accompanies a planned or unplanned absence, and accumulated Sick and Annual leave is used up, can a faculty member go on Disability (if they have paid for this coverage) and still return to work at the end of the recovery period?
   • No. If the faculty member’s illness is not considered long-term and they will recover, disability is not an option. In this case, the Sick Leave Bank is the better option. The Sick Leave Bank could pay the faculty member up to 90 sick days after all other leave has been exhausted. Sick Leave Bank Policy: http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0382/
   • Open enrollment for the Sick Leave Bank begins April 1- June 30: http://www.uthsc.edu/hr/benefits/sick_leave_bank/

7. Are there any conditions under which UTHSC may be able to require other alternatives (e.g., go on Disability, retire earlier than planned, etc.) when extended absence due to Health limitations occur, and accumulated Sick and Annual Leave is available?
   • If any employee’s medical condition has deemed them unable to work or unable to return to work, HR may recommend disability and/or retirement.

8. If an extended recovery period accompanies a planned or unplanned absence, can UTHSC fill a faculty member’s position with a Temporary person or a Full-Time person, if FMLA paperwork has been filed, even if the FMLA covered time period is exceeded?
   • When FML has been filed and approved, the job protection begins and ends at 12 weeks. The department has the discretion to determine if there is a need to place another person in the position during the faculty member’s absence. However, upon return the faculty member should return to their position or one of like duty and pay.

9. Does Compassionate Leave come under Annual Leave, or Sick Leave, or another category?
   • Compassionate or bereavement leave is separate. See policy: http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0340/

10. Are there presets for Compassionate Leave based on the faculty member’s relationship?
    • Yes, the amount of bereavement leave is based on the relationship. Leave can be 3-5 days. See policy: http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0340/

11. If faculty feel that they need additional time for Compassionate Leave, can they use accumulated Sick Leave, Annual Leave, or some other procedure, and in either case, do they need to file FMLA paperwork?
    • In most cases, additional time off for such leave will be considered A/L or S/L depending on the circumstances. FML is not required for additional time off.
12. For Military commitments, what is the policy related to Military Reserve time and being “called up” for Military Service; if it involves using accumulated Sick Leave, Annual Leave, or some other procedure, do they need to file FMLA paperwork?

- Military leave does not involve using S/L or A/L or FML paperwork.
- Employees who are called to active duty will be subject to the Military Leave policy: http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0370/