

**ARTICLE VI. LEAVE POLICIES**

**Section 1. Holidays**

A. Paid Holidays Observed

1. The following holidays and such others as the Board of Commissioners may designate shall be observed by County offices and eligible employees:

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
Good Friday  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Veteran's Day  
Thanksgiving (2 days)  
Christmas (2 days) (In those years in which Christmas Day falls on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, 3 days will be observed as a holiday.)

2. In order to be eligible for holiday pay, all salaried employees must have worked a full regularly scheduled workday before and after the holiday or have been on approved leave. Departments with 24-hour operations or special services may request alternative holiday schedules for approval by the County Manager.

B. Effect of Holidays on Paid Leave

Regular holidays which occur during a vacation, sick or other paid leave period of any officer or employee of the County shall not be charged as vacation, sick, or other paid leave, provided the employee is in an active pay status. Employees who return to active status from leave without pay status must be active the day before a holiday in order to be paid for the holiday.

C. Holidays - When Work Required

Employees required to perform work on regularly scheduled holidays shall be granted time off at another time or be paid for the holiday worked if prior approval has been granted. Holiday time shall be granted whenever feasible and shall be taken within six (6) months from the time it is earned. If an employee is terminated prior to taking this time off, he shall be paid for this time in the same manner as vacation.

D. Holidays – Religious Observances

Employees may wish to be away from work on certain days for religious observances. Department Heads should attempt to arrange the work schedule so that an employee may

be allowed to utilize vacation when requested for the religious observance. This should be denied only when it would create an emergency condition which cannot be prevented in any other manner.

**Section 2. Vacation Leave**

A. Policy

Vacation leave shall be used for rest and relaxation, absences due to adverse weather conditions, personal illness (in lieu of sick leave) and other personal reasons. For the purpose of earning and accruing vacation leave, the period beginning January 1 and ending December 31 is established as the leave year. Due to shift assignments and work schedules in the Emergency Medical Service, specific vacation procedures will be documented and maintained in that department for 24-hour employees.

B. Manner of Accumulation

Each regular salaried employee occupying a permanently established budgeted position shall earn vacation leave on a monthly basis in accordance with the following schedule. Regular part-time employees working at least twenty (20) hours per week shall earn vacation on a prorated basis, depending on the number of hours worked per week.

<b>Randolph County aggregate service</b>	<b>Hours earned per month</b>	<b>Hours earned per year</b>	<b>Days earned per year</b>
less than 5 years	8 hours	96 hours	12 days
5 but less than 10 years	10 hours	120 hours	15 days
10 but less than 20 years	12 hours	144 hours	18 days
20 or more years	14 hours	168 hours	21 days

C. Maximum Accumulation

Vacation leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until December 31 of each calendar year. On December 31, any employee with more than 240 hours of vacation leave shall have the excess accumulation converted to sick leave so that only 240 hours are carried forward to January 1 of the next calendar year.

D. Approval/Manner of Taking Leave

Vacation leave earned by an employee shall be taken only upon **prior approval** of the immediate Supervisor and Department Head. Approval or denial may be based upon the

department's operational needs and staff coverage. Department Heads (with the exception of the Sheriff and Register of Deeds) shall receive approval of vacation leave from their respective governing boards (if applicable) and the County Manager.

E. Initial Appointment Probationary Employees

Employees serving a probationary period following initial appointment shall earn but will not be permitted to take vacation leave during the probationary period unless the denial of such leave will create an unusual hardship. Request for hardship leave must be submitted for approval by the Department Head to the County Manager. Law enforcement officers shall be allowed to take accumulated vacation leave after six (6) months of service, if approved by the Sheriff.

F. Terminal Pay and Repayment of Vacation Leave

An employee who is separated shall be paid for vacation leave accumulated to the date of separation, not to exceed a maximum of 240 hours; however, an employee who resigns must give and work a two-week written notice of resignation to receive his accumulated vacation pay. Probationary employees, whether they resign or are terminated, will not be paid for accumulated vacation leave. Any overdrawn vacation leave owed the County shall be deducted from the employee's final compensation.

G. Payment for Accumulated Vacation Leave Upon Death

The estate of an employee who dies while employed by the County shall be entitled to payment for accumulated vacation leave credited to the employee's account, not to exceed a maximum of 240 hours.

H. Previous Leave Credit

1. A former employee who separated in "Good Standing," as defined in Article VIII of this Ordinance, and is reinstated within three (3) years may receive credit for previous Randolph County service for the purpose of accruing vacation leave. The total months of previous service time will be recognized when the employee has been back in County service for twelve (12) months.
2. An employee who transfers to Randolph County from another North Carolina governmental agency or entity (that is a member of the NC retirement systems) without a break in service of more than thirty-one (31) days from his last day worked with the previous jurisdiction may be credited with prior service credit up to a maximum of 15 years for the purpose of accruing vacation leave. The total months of previous service time will be recognized when the employee has successfully completed twelve (12) months of service with Randolph County.

I. Parental Leave

Randolph County supports involvement of employees in the educational development of their children. Department Heads are to allow employees to use accumulated vacation for these purposes whenever requested, provided such leave does not adversely affect the department's operations.

J. Leave Records

It is the responsibility of each department to maintain records reflecting hours worked and appropriate leave taken for each employee. The records shall be provided as required by the Finance Office for payroll action and are subject to review and audit. The official record, including original signatures, shall be retained for at least five (5) years.

**Section 3. Sick Leave**

A. Policy

Sick leave with pay is not a right which an employee may demand but a privilege granted by the Board of Commissioners. An employee may be granted sick leave if the absence is due to:

1. sickness or bodily injury which may prevent an employee from performing his regular duties.
2. medical/dental appointments.
3. the actual period of temporary disability caused or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, and recovery therefrom. Since there is not certainty as to when disability actually begins and ends, a doctor's certificate shall be required verifying the employee's period of temporary disability recognized as sick leave.
4. illness or injury of a member of the employee's immediate family which requires that the employee provide care to the family member. Immediate family is defined for this leave as spouse, child or parent. For the purposes of this section, the terms "spouse" "child" or "parent" shall be defined in accordance with the definitions provided in Section 4, Part C (Family Medical Leave Act Definitions) of this Article.
5. exposure to a contagious disease when continuous work might jeopardize the health of others.
6. death in the employee's immediate family, not to exceed three (3) days, for any one occurrence. Immediate family for this purpose is defined as spouse, parent, brother, sister, children, grandparents, grandchildren, plus the various combinations of half, step, in-law, and adopted relationships that can be derived from those named.
7. adverse weather conditions.

8. Family Medical Leave Act provisions as described in Section 4 of this Article.

B. Manner of Accumulation

1. Each probationary and regular salaried full-time employee occupying a permanently established budgeted position shall earn sick leave on a monthly basis at the rate of eight (8) hours per calendar month.
2. Eligible part-time employees working at least twenty (20) hours per week earn sick leave on a prorated basis depending on a number of hours worked per week.
3. The Department Head may recommend to the Personnel Director the advancement of sick leave to an employee who has exhausted his sick leave because of personal illness, not to exceed the amount an employee can earn during the current calendar year. An employee may not be advanced sick leave until he has completed his initial probationary period.
4. At the time of separation, any sick leave owed the County shall be deducted from the employee's final compensation. No employee shall be paid for any accrued sick leave at termination.

C. Maximum Accumulation

Sick leave will be cumulative for an unlimited number of hours.

D. Physician's Certificate

1. The employee's Department Head, Personnel Director or County Manager may require a statement from the physician or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to report for work to ensure that there will be no abuse of sick leave privileges.
2. At the expiration of authorized sick leave, the employee's Department Head, Personnel Director or County Manager may require a physician's certification to determine if the employee is able to resume normal duties.

E. Retirement Credit for Accumulated Sick Leave

Earned sick leave is allowed as creditable service at time of retirement to employees who are members of the North Carolina Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System. (One (1) month of credit is allowed for each twenty (20) days of accrued sick leave when an employee retires, and an additional month is allowed for any part of twenty (20) days left over.)

F. Transfer from Other Agencies/Entities

Unused sick leave earned from another North Carolina governmental agency and/or entity (i.e., a member of the North Carolina Local Government Employees' Retirement System, North Carolina Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System, or other retirement systems authorized by the North Carolina Retirement Systems) shall be accepted and transferred to Randolph County according to the following provisions:

1. For sick leave to be accepted as transferred, the employment transfer must be completed within three (3) years from the employee's last workday with the previous agency/entity.
2. Verification of said accumulated sick leave must be received in writing from the previous authorized jurisdiction. Verification received in hours and minutes will be converted to the nearest whole hour.
3. The total number of hours accepted as transferred will be recorded and credited to the employee's sick leave account upon the completion of twelve (12) months of employment with Randolph County.

G. Reinstated Employees

Employees who resign and are reinstated with Randolph County within three (3) years shall have their unused sick leave balance reinstated to their sick leave account when the employee has been back in County service for twelve (12) months. Employees who resign and are not reinstated with Randolph County within a three (3) year period shall lose all sick leave credits.

**Section 4. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

A. Purpose

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 was passed by Congress to balance the demands of the workplace with the needs of families. Its purpose is to promote the stability and economic security of families, to promote national interests in preserving family integrity, and to minimize the potential for employment discrimination on the basis of sex by ensuring generally that leave is available for eligible medical reasons (including maternity-related disability) and for compelling family reasons.

B. Eligible Employees

1. Regular Employee - An employee who has been employed with Randolph County for a total of at least 12 months and who has worked at least 1250 hours during the past 12 months is entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks' leave, paid or unpaid as herein provided, during a rolling 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- a. because the employee's own serious health condition makes the employee unable to perform his job;
  - b. because of the birth of a child or when the employee becomes an adoptive or foster parent;
  - c. because the employee is needed to care for a family member (child, spouse or parent) with a serious health condition;
  - d. because of a “qualifying exigency” arising out of a covered family member’s active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency plan; or
  - e. because the employee is needed to care for a covered family member who has incurred an injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces provided that such injury or illness may render the family member medically unfit to perform duties of the member’s office, grade, rank or rating; provided however that an eligible employee may take up to 26 workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for the service member.
2. Temporary Employee - This rule does not cover temporary employees since the maximum length of a temporary appointment is one year; however, if, by exception, a temporary employee is extended beyond one year, the employee would be covered if he had worked at least 1250 hours during the past 12-month period. Any leave granted to a temporary employee would be without pay.
3. Spouses employed by Randolph County - A husband and wife who are eligible for Family and Medical Leave and are both employed by Randolph County are permitted to take only a combined total of 12 weeks of leave during a rolling 12-month period if the leave is taken:
- a. when the birth of a son or daughter occurs; or
  - b. when the employee becomes an adoptive or foster parent.

C. Definitions (Listed alphabetically)

- 1. **Child.** A biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing “in loco parentis,” who is either under age 18, or age 18 or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
- 2. **Comp-time.** Reflects compensatory time identified as earned overtime that has not been paid and earned holiday time that has not been paid.

3. **Continuing treatment by a health care provider.** Consists of one or more of the following:
  - a. A period of incapacity lasting more than three (3) consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition that also includes:
    - (1) treatment two (2) or more times by or under the supervision of a health care provider (i.e. in-person visits, the first within 7 days and both within 30 days of the first day of incapacity); or
    - (2) one treatment by a health care provider (i.e. an in-person visit within 7 days of the first day of incapacity) with a continuing regimen of treatment (e.g. prescription medication, physical therapy, etc.).
  - b. Any period of incapacity related to pregnancy or prenatal care. A visit to the health care provider is not necessary for each absence.
  - c. Any period of incapacity or treatment for a chronic serious health condition which continues over an extended period of time, requires periodic visits (at least twice a year) to a health care provider, and may involve occasional episodes of incapacity. A visit to a health care provider is not necessary for each absence.
  - d. A period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. Only supervision by a health care provider is required, rather than active treatment.
  - e. Any absences to receive multiple treatments for restorative surgery or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three (3) days if not treated.
4. **County.** Randolph County.
5. **Covered family member.** For military caregiver leave, a covered family member is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of an employee who is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious illness or injury.
6. **Department Head.** The Department Head of the department in which the employee is assigned, or if the employee is assigned to work for more than one department, the Department Head of the department in which the employee is assigned for the greater part of the workweek.

7. **Parent.** A biological parent or an individual who stands or stood in “loco parentis” to an employee when the employee was a child. This term does not include parent “in-law.”
8. **Qualifying Exigency.** An eligible employee may take FMLA leave for qualifying exigencies arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active federal duty in the National Guard or Reserves, in support of a contingency operation. Qualifying exigencies may include any of the following as defined in federal law:
  - a. Issues arising from a covered military member’s short notice deployment (i.e. deployment on 7 or less days of notice) for a period of 7 days from the date of notification;
  - b. Military events and related activities;
  - c. Certain childcare and related activities;
  - d. Making or updating financial and legal arrangements;
  - e. Attending counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider;
  - f. Taking up to 5 days of leave to spend time with a covered military member who is on short-term temporary, rest and recuperation leave during deployment;
  - g. Attending to certain post-deployment activities; and
  - h. Any other event that the employee and employer agree is a qualifying exigency.
9. **Serious health condition.** This refers to an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either:
  - a. Inpatient care (i.e. an overnight stay) in a hospital, or residential medical-care facility, including any period of incapacity (i.e. inability to work, attend school/workshops, or perform other daily activities) or subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care; or
  - b. Continuing treatment by a health care provider (see Definition 3 above).
10. **Spouse.** A husband or wife as defined or recognized under North Carolina law for purpose of marriage.

#### D. Leave Charges

1. For the birth of a child, the parents shall exhaust all available vacation leave and accrued comp-time before going on leave without pay, except that sick leave may be used during the period of disability.
2. For the adoption of a child or becoming foster parents, the parents shall exhaust all vacation leave and accrued comp-time before going on leave without pay.
3. For the employee's personal illness or for the illness of an employee's child, spouse, or parent, the employee shall exhaust available sick and vacation leave and accrued comp-time before going on leave without pay.
4. For a qualifying exigency family member's active duty or call to active duty, the employee shall exhaust available vacation leave and accrued comp-time before going on leave without pay.
5. For the injury or illness of an employee's covered family member who has incurred such injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces, the employee shall exhaust available sick and vacation leave and accrued comp-time before going on leave without pay.
6. Periods of paid leave and accrued comp-time shall be counted as all or part of the Family and Medical Leave authorized by this Section.
7. Leave without pay beyond the approved Family and Medical Leave period will be administered under Section 5 of this Article.

#### E. Intermittent Leave or Reduced Work Schedule

1. The employee may not take leave intermittently or on a reduced work schedule due to childbirth, adoption, or foster care unless approved by the Department Head and the Personnel Director.
2. With approval of the Department Head and the Personnel Director, the employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule to care for the employee's child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition, or because the employee has a serious health condition. If such leave is foreseeable, based on planned medical treatment, the Personnel Director may require the employee to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and that has equivalent pay and benefits and better accommodates recurring periods of leave.

F. Employee Responsibility

1. The employee should notify his Supervisor and/or Department Head of the need for Family and Medical Leave as soon as the need for said leave becomes known or foreseeable.
2. The employee should complete and return all required forms provided by the County in a timely manner. Failure to provide a complete and sufficient medical certification, in accordance with the forms provided, may result in a denial of the employee's FMLA request.
3. Failure to report at the expiration of the leave, unless an extension has been requested and granted, shall be considered as a resignation.
4. If, at any point during FMLA leave, the employee decides not to return to work, the employee shall notify his Department Head immediately in order that his position may be filled.
5. When required by the County, the employee shall provide a fitness for duty statement from his health care provider prior to returning to work.

G. Certification

1. A claim for leave because of adoption shall be supported by acceptable proof of adoption.
2. A claim for leave because of a serious illness of the employee or of the employee's child, spouse, or parent shall be supported by a doctor's certification that includes the following:
  - a. the date on which the serious health condition began;
  - b. the probable duration of the condition;
  - c. the appropriate medical facts regarding the condition;
  - d. a statement that the leave is needed to care for the child, spouse, or parent, and an estimate of the amount of time needed; or that the employee is unable to perform the functions of the position, whichever applies; and
  - e. where certification is necessary for intermittent leave for planned medical treatment, the dates on which the treatment is expected to be given and the duration of the treatment.

3. Where the Department Head or the Personnel Director has reason to doubt the validity of the certification, the employee may be required to get the opinion of a second doctor designated or approved by the Personnel Director. Where the second opinion differs from the original certification provided, the Personnel Director may require the employee to get the opinion of a third doctor designated or approved jointly by the County and the employee. The third opinion is final and is binding on the County and the employee. The Personnel Director may require that the employee get subsequent recertification on a reasonable basis. The second and third certification and the recertification shall be at Randolph County's expense.

#### H. Employment and Benefits Protection

1. Reinstatement - The employee shall be reinstated to the same position held when the leave began or one of like status, pay, benefits, and other conditions of employment. The Personnel Director or the Department Head may require the employee to report at reasonable intervals on the employee's status and intention to return to work. The Personnel Director also may require that the employee obtain certification that he is able to return to work.
2. Benefits - The employee shall be reinstated without loss of benefits accrued when the leave began. All benefits accrue during any period of paid leave; however, no benefits will be accrued during any period of leave without pay.
3. Health Benefits - Randolph County shall maintain coverage for the employee under Randolph County's group health plan while on FMLA leave. If the employee desires to continue dependent coverage, premiums must be paid to Randolph County by the first (1st) of each month. Randolph County may recover the premiums if the employee fails to return after the period of leave to which the employee is entitled has expired for a reason other than the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or circumstances beyond the employee's control.

#### I. Conflict of Provisions

In cases where the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the Randolph County Personnel Ordinance are in conflict, the Family and Medical Leave will overrule.

### **Section 5. Leave Without Pay**

- A. Leave without pay is an administrative decision that may be granted for up to but not to exceed six (6) months, upon approval by the Department Head and Personnel Director. With approval of the County Manager, it may be extended up to an additional six (6) months.
  1. Leave without pay may be granted during the time before and after childbirth or adoption when no actual disability is present. When an actual disability exists that is caused by or contributes to pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, and recovery, employees will be allowed to use accumulated sick leave.

2. Leave may be granted for reasons of personal or family illness or injury, completion of education, or special work which will permit the County to benefit by the experience gained or work performed; or for reasons that be of general benefit to the County.
  3. Failure to report for duty at the expiration of a leave of absence, unless an extension has been requested and granted, shall be considered a resignation.
- B. Vacation and sick leave credits will not be accrued during leave without pay. An employee ceases to earn leave credits on the date leave without pay begins.
- C. Except during FMLA, the employee may continue to be eligible for benefits under the County's group insurance plans, subject to any regulations adopted by the County Commissioners and the regulations of the respective insurance companies at the employee's expense for a period not to exceed six months. The employee's responsibility to pay for insurance expenses occurs whenever the employee works less than ½ the scheduled workdays in a month. Failure to pay the employee portion for 30 days will result in termination of insurance coverage.
- D. The Department Head shall promptly notify the Personnel Office in writing of any leave without pay absences.

#### **Section 6. Workers' Compensation Leave**

A. Probationary and Regular Employees

When any probationary or regular employee is injured as a result of a compensable accident or occupational illness covered by the Workers' Compensation Law the following procedures will apply:

1. When an employee is injured on the job as a result of a compensable injury or occupational illness and loses time from work while seeking medical attention due to the injury, the employee shall not be charged leave for time lost from work on the day of the injury.
2. Injured employees are expected to return to work following the initial medical treatment at our designated initial provider unless the treating physician indicates the employee must go home for the day.
3. In situations where the employee cannot return to work, the employee will be paid full salary for normal working hours on the day of the injury.
4. Time lost due to follow-up appointments after return to full duty with no restrictions will be charged to employee leave accounts. The employee is expected to make every effort to schedule such appointments either at the beginning or the end of his regular workday so as to minimize the amount of time needed away from work.

5. If the injury results in additional time away from work, the employee will be placed on Worker's Compensation Leave, and receive the Worker's Compensation weekly benefits after the required waiting period.
6. All Workers' Compensation leave will also be charged as Family Medical Leave pursuant to the Family Medical Leave Act.
7. The employee may elect to take sick or annual leave during the required seven (7) day waiting period or may elect to go on Workers' Compensation Leave with no pay for the required waiting period.
8. Once an employee begins drawing Workers' Compensation pay, the employee will not be allowed to receive pay for annual leave or sick leave in addition to Workers' Compensation payments.
9. Health benefits provided by the County to an employee will continue to be provided while on Workers' Compensation Leave for up to one (1) year. After that period, the employee may elect to continue the health benefits by electing COBRA. (Upon his / her return to work, the employee's health benefits will become effective without a waiting period).
10. Employees receiving Workers' Compensation benefits will not accrue vacation or sick leave and their local government retirement and 401k benefits are not paid during this period.

B. Temporary Employees

Temporary employees will be placed in a leave-without-pay status and will receive all benefits for which they may be adjudged eligible under the Workers' Compensation Law.

C. Adverse Reactions to Smallpox Vaccinations

On June 12, 2003, the State of North Carolina passed Session Law 2003-169 – Adverse Reactions to Smallpox Vaccination. As a result, Randolph County specifically includes infection with smallpox, infection with vaccinia (the virus in smallpox), and any adverse medical reaction due to the employee's receiving vaccination against smallpox, as an occupational disease for purposes of Workers' Compensation Leave. This paragraph only covers documented adverse reaction and the associated absence from work due to employment-related smallpox inoculation pursuant to the Homeland Security Act and is not intended to apply to any other disabling procedure or event, nor is it intended to apply to adverse reactions pursuant to smallpox vaccinations for individuals who are not covered under the Homeland Security Act. Any covered employee who is absent from work as a result of an adverse reaction to the smallpox vaccination shall be seen by our Workers' Compensation Initial Medical Provider and, if confirmed, the absences for the Workers' Compensation waiting period will be recorded as administrative leave and not charged to the employee's vacation, sick, or compensatory leave balances. Absences that extend beyond the waiting period will be administered within our existing Workers' Compensation procedure, as set out above.

## **Section 7. Military Leave for Training**

Each regular salaried employee occupying an officially budgeted position and who is a member of the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve shall be allowed two (2) weeks of military training leave annually with pay. If military duty is required beyond this two (2) week period, the employee shall be eligible to take accumulated vacation leave or be placed on leave-without-pay status. While taking military leave with pay, the employee's leave credits and other benefits shall continue to accrue as if the employee physically remained with the County during this period. Employees who are guardsmen and reservists have all job rights specified in the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act.

## **Section 8. Civil Leave**

A Randolph County employee called for jury duty or as a court witness for the federal or state government or a subdivision thereof is entitled to a leave with pay for the period of absence required. The employee is entitled to regular compensation, plus fees received for jury duty.

## **Section 9. Educational Leave With Pay**

- A. A leave of absence at full or partial pay for a period not to exceed sixty (60) working days may be granted upon the recommendation of the Department Head and Personnel Director, with the approval of the County Manager, to take courses of study which will better equip the employee to perform his duties for Randolph County. An example of this training program would be for spot training such as a clerk-typist taking a course in shorthand or typing or an accounting clerk taking a course in programming for the computer, etc. This type of training is not intended to be oriented toward a degree from an accredited institution such as an Associate or Bachelor's Degree. When a County employee enters into a job-related training program with prior approval as indicated above, he may be reimbursed for expenses such as tuition and books upon successful completion of the course.
- B. A leave of absence at full or partial pay for a period not to exceed one (1) year may be granted upon the recommendation of the Department Head, Personnel Director and the County Manager with the approval of the Board of Commissioners.
- C. Employees granted educational leave with pay shall agree to return to the services of Randolph County upon completion of their training and remain in the employ of the County for a period equal to twice the education leave or reimburse Randolph County for all compensation received while on educational leave.
- D. An employee on educational leave with full or partial pay shall continue to earn leave credits and any other benefits to which County employees are entitled.

## **Section 10. Shared Leave Policy**

### A. Purpose

This policy provides an opportunity for employees to assist another employee affected by a serious health condition of the employee or his/her spouse that results in loss of income following exhaustion of accumulated leave for a prolonged period of time (ten (10) calendar days or more).

### B. Eligibility

In case of a prolonged medical condition a regular employee may request to become a recipient of leave transferred from another Randolph County employee's vacation leave account, subject to the limitations and conditions listed below. The individual will complete a "Request for Shared Leave" form, which will be given to the Department Head for initial approval and then be forwarded to the Personnel Director for final approval. The individual must attach a doctor's statement for verification of the need for prolonged leave (over 10 days). The medical condition of the employee will be held confidential and only a general statement "that a verified medical condition exists" will be issued when a request for leave donation is made. The requester must use all his vacation and sick leave before shared/donated leave shall begin to be transferred. No individual will be granted more than 1040 hours of donated leave for a continuous medical problem or for an intermittent or recurring medical problem in any two (2) year period from the onset of the first shared hour. However, management may grant an exception up to a maximum of 1040 additional hours if the individual would otherwise be granted leave without pay. Any unused donated leave will be credited back to the donor(s) on a prorated basis. Fractions of hours will not be returned.

### C. Procedure

Donation of vacation leave will be accomplished by completing a "Donation of Vacation Leave Authorization" form, which will be forwarded to the Personnel Director. Vacation leave may be donated in increments of eight (8) hours. No individual may donate leave that will reduce his accumulated vacation leave balance to below forty (40) hours. The establishment of a leave "bank" for use by unnamed employees is strictly forbidden. Leave must be donated on a one-to-one basis. Any employee who voluntarily donates vacation leave cannot and shall not receive any pay, benefits, or other compensation/enumerations for the donated hours. No employee shall earn or accrue vacation or sick leave while receiving donated vacation leave. Forms must be submitted in a timely manner and will be processed according to the cut-off dates established for processing payroll.

### **Section 11. Adverse Weather Conditions**

- A. In situations involving inclement weather, heavy snow storms, or other unusual circumstances affecting all or a majority of County departments and/or their operations, it is incumbent upon the Department Head to ensure that his department is opened to the public at the usual time, unless prior notification to the contrary has been received from the County Manager's Office.
  
- B. County offices and departments shall remain open for the full scheduled workday unless authorization for early closing or other deviation is received from the County Manager's Office. All departments and offices will be given sufficient advance notice of any authorized early closing. Employees, who of their own will, leave work before an official early closing time, as well as those employees who report for work late or do not report for work at all, will be required to use earned vacation, compensatory time, or sick leave for days or hours taken.

### **Section 12. Job Abandonment**

Any employee who is absent without an approved leave of absence for three (3) consecutive workdays will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from his employment with the County and will be separated from the County's employment.