



# Guilford County Issue Brief

## Human Resources – Total Rewards

<b>Statement of Issue:</b>	Attracting and retaining talent for the County is a complex problem involving several components including compensation, benefits, career opportunities, and culture. Our ability to recruit and retain talent directly impacts our ability to operationalize the Board's values and strategic priorities and provide high quality services to residents. The County should regularly review these components and update as necessary to maintain or improve our competitive position.
<b>Background:</b>	During our compensation study in 2022, we discussed our comparison and benchmarking process for our employee benefits. Again, compensation is just one component of attracting and retaining talent while also supporting a positive employee and citizen experience. Human Resources and Budget worked closely together to evaluate market competitiveness of our current benefits and we now have a package of recommendations for consideration.
<b>Relevant Analysis:</b>	<p>We benchmarked our benefits with our in-state custom survey respondents including The City of Greensboro, The City of High Point, Mecklenburg County, New Hanover County, Orange County, Durham County, Randolph County, Forsyth County, and Wake County.</p> <p>We also benchmarked against some comparable out of state respondents including Douglas County (Nebraska), Greenville County (South Carolina), and Richland County (South Carolina). Our consultant also looked at private survey data available to them in the government industry with similar employee size.</p> <p>The analysis included our various insurances, our retirement programs, our wellness offerings, and our various leave programs.</p>
<b>Findings:</b>	<p>The County has already moved on some changes that came from this benchmarking and analysis as well as ongoing conversations with employees. Those include improvements to our dental insurance, short-term disability, our 401(k) match, the addition of the Juneteenth holiday, improvements to our population health focus, and reinstatement of Longevity Pay.</p> <p>Beyond those items it was discovered that the County needs to make some additions or modifications for appropriate market alignment including Bereavement Leave and Paid Caregiver Leave. Additionally, we found that some modifications to existing policies would be necessary to achieve market alignment including tuition reimbursement, vacation leave, and sick leave.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>Staff recommends that the Board considers adoption of staff's proposed changes to the following existing Personnel Regulations: Regulation 26 – Training/Education, Regulation 20 – Vacation Leave, Regulation 21 – Sick Leave, and Regulation 40 – Parental School Leave.</p> <p>Staff additionally recommends that the Boards considers adoption of staff's proposals for the following additions to our County Personnel Regulations: Regulation 45 – Bereavement Leave, Regulation 46 – Paid Caregiver Leave.</p>

## Document Index

1. Draft Overview Slides
2. Draft Regulation 26 – Training/Education (changes shown)
3. Draft Regulation 26 - Training/Education (clean copy)
4. Draft Regulation 20 – Vacation Leave (changes shown)
5. Draft Regulation 20 - Vacation Leave (clean copy)
6. Draft Regulation 21 – Sick Leave (changes shown)
7. Draft Regulation 21 – Sick Leave (clean copy)
8. Draft Regulation 40 – Parental School Leave (changes shown)
9. Draft Regulation 40 - Parental School Leave (clean copy)
10. Draft Regulation 45 – Bereavement Leave (clean copy)
11. Draft Regulation 46 – Paid Caregiver Leave (clean copy)

# Employee Benefit Updates

**Jason Jones**

Assistant County Manager for Quality Government

**Patrick McCoy**

Assistant Director - Human Resources

# Purpose



- Compensation is just one component of attracting and retaining talent while also supporting a positive employee experience

Compensation	Benefits	Career	Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pay Rate</li><li>• Pay Raises</li><li>• Pay Equity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Time off</b></li><li>• Insurance</li><li>• Retirement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Progression</li><li>• Coaching</li><li>• <b>Education</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Values</li><li>• Vision</li><li>• <b>Community</b></li></ul>

- Compensation study evaluated market competitiveness of our compensation structure **AND our employee benefits**

# Study Findings



	Benefit	Competitiveness	Status
✓	Medical Insurance	At Market	No Change Recommended
🚧	Dental Insurance	Below Market	CY23 Benefit Change Implemented
✓	Vision Insurance	At Market	No Change Recommended
✓	Life Insurance	At Market	No Change Recommended
🚧	Short Term Disability	Below Market	CY23 Benefit Change Implemented
✓	Long Term Disability	At Market	No Change Recommended
✓	LGERS + NC 401(k)	At Market	Equity/Inclusion Value Change Implemented (5% contribution)
✓	Vacation & Sick Leave	At Market	Proactive Recruitment/Retention Change Proposal
✓	Holidays	At Market	Equity/Inclusion Value Change Implemented (Juneteenth)
✓	Parental School Leave	At Market	Proposal To Promote School Success & Positive Student Outcomes
🚧	Bereavement Leave	Below Market	Market Alignment Proposal
🚧	Caregiver Leave	Below Market	Market Alignment Proposal
🚧	Tuition Reimbursement	Below Market	Market Alignment Proposal
🚧	Wellbeing + Population Health	Below Market	Changes Implemented & Ongoing





## Board Accomplishments Include:

- ✓ Maintain competitive health insurance & improve dental insurance
- ✓ Added & streamlined voluntary benefit offerings
- ✓ Reinstate Longevity & adopt a 5% 401(k) contribution with no match
- ✓ Addition of the Juneteenth Holiday
- ✓ Adoption of full broker relationship & population health management expansion

## Staff Recommendations for Consideration Include:

- Caregiver Leave
- Bereavement Leave
- Parental School Leave
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Vacation Leave

# Recommendations Discussion

# Caregiver Leave



**Current:** Guilford does not provide paid caregiver leave, but employee may use FMLA + accrued leave

**Proposal:** Make the necessary regulation modifications for the addition of Paid Caregiver Leave to provide up to eight (8) weeks of paid leave for the care of a newborn, child placed for adoption, foster care, or guardianship or to provide care for a seriously injured child, spouse, or parent.

- City of Greensboro (8 weeks)
- City of Raleigh (8 weeks)
- City of Winston Salem (6 weeks)
- City of Charlotte (6 weeks)
- City of Durham (12 weeks)
- Durham County (6 weeks)
- Wake County (8 weeks)
- Forsyth County (6 weeks)
- Mecklenburg County (8 weeks)
- Orange County (6 weeks)



# Bereavement Leave



**Current:** Guilford does not currently provide bereavement leave. Employee may use accrued sick leave.

**Proposal:** Make the necessary regulation modifications for the addition of the equivalent of five (5) days of Bereavement Leave for full-time benefits-eligible employees with some paid leave available to part-time employees on a prorated basis.

- City of Greensboro (0 days)\*
- City of Raleigh (5 days)
- City of Winston Salem (0 days)
- City of Charlotte (5 days)
- City of Durham (5 days)
- Durham County (3 days)
- Wake County (5 days)
- Forsyth County (3 days)
- Mecklenburg County (3 days)
- Orange County (3 days)

\*Greensboro provides 48 hours to use as necessary

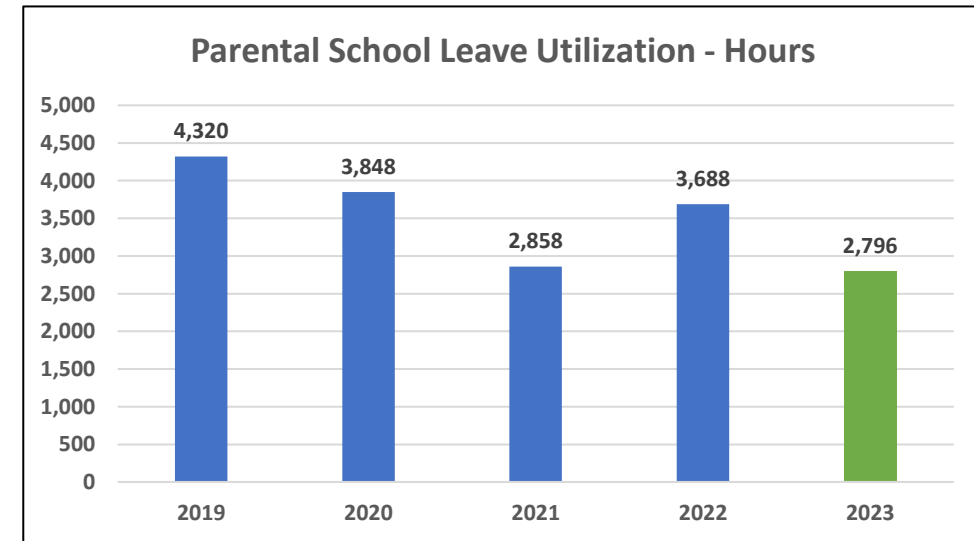
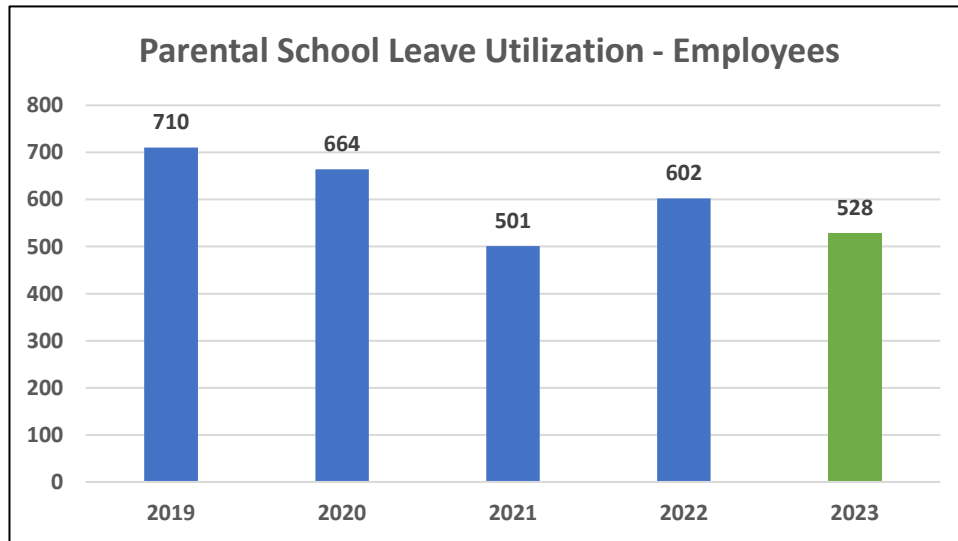


# Parental School Leave



**Current:** Guilford currently provides four (4) hours of paid leave per school year per child up to the age of 26 (N.C.G.S. 95-28.3)

**Proposal:** Modify Regulation 40 to provide eight (8) hours of paid leave per school year per child up to the age of 26.



\*No available benchmarks. Other jurisdictions provide for this as required by N.C.G.S 95-28.3

# Tuition Reimbursement



**Current:** Reimbursement up to \$600

**Proposal:** Modify Regulation 26 to increase the County's tuition reimbursement yearly maximum to \$1,800 per requesting employee.

- City of Greensboro (\$500-\$2,00 Tiered)
- City of Raleigh (\$1,250)
- City of Winston Salem (\$2,000)
- City of Charlotte (No Maximum)
- City of Durham (None)
- Durham County (No Maximum)
- Wake County (\$1,200)
- Forsyth County (\$400)
- Mecklenburg County (\$1,200)
- Orange County (\$1,990)

# Vacation Leave Accrual



**Current:** Employees earn 12 to 24 days a year based on years of service

**Proposal:** Update Regulation 20 so vacation accruals are based on total LGERS service. HR will evaluate all current employees based on active service credit in LGERS and all new employees may request services credit during New Employee Orientation.

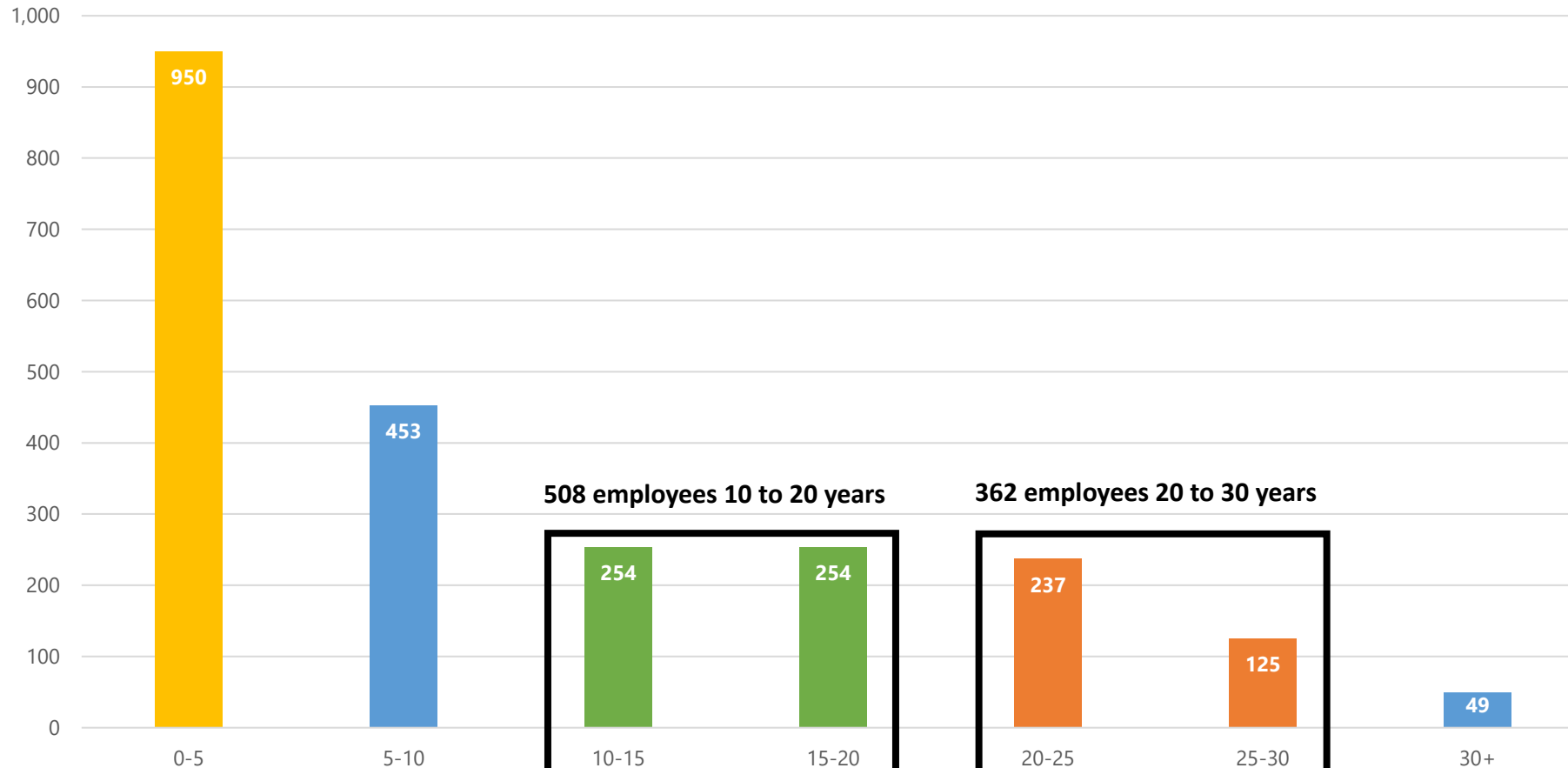
\*No available benchmarks although currently under consideration for approval but several other jurisdictions



# Vacation Leave Accrual



LGERS Active Credited Service - Guilford County Full-Time Benefited Employees



## December Orbit Report

2,322 Employees Shown

**950 Employees, 0-5 Years**  
**41% of Total**

**508 Employees, 10-20 Years**  
**22% of Total**

**362 Employees, 20-30 Years**  
**16% of Total**

# Staff Recommendation



- Consider and adopt staff's proposed changes to the following existing Personnel Regulations:
  - Regulation 26 – Training/Education
  - Regulation 20 – Vacation Leave
  - Regulation 21 – Sick Leave
  - Regulation 40 – Parental School Leave
- Consider and adopt staff's proposals for the following additions to our County Personnel Regulations:
  - Regulation 45 – Bereavement Leave
  - Regulation 46 – Paid Caregiver Leave

# Discussion



# Training/Education

Regulation Number: 26

Revision: ~~TBD~~ January 7, 2016

Page 1 of 1

Guilford County fosters an environment of learning which reflects the County's mission, values, and goals and supports the growth and development of all employees.

## A. Meetings, Seminars, and Conferences

Subject to approval of the employee's Department Director and within budgeted funds, employees may attend professional meetings, seminars and conferences.

## B. Tuition Reimbursement

Guilford County recognizes employee efforts to develop skills and enhance performance through the successful completion of course work at an approved institution of higher learning. Courses must be directly or reasonably related to the employee's job duties or to a position to which the employee could reasonably aspire to progress. Subject to available resources in the Human Resources budget and IRS regulations, the County will provide financial assistance to eligible employees on a graduated scale. Benefitted employees who occupy a budgeted position and who have been employed a minimum of one year are eligible. Upon successful completion of the course work, reimbursement will be made, limited to tuition expenses at in-state rates. The maximum reimbursement of 75% will be granted for an A, 50% for a B, and 25% for a C or "Pass" or "Completion" in the course(s). Reimbursement for one employee shall not exceed a maximum total of ~~\$600~~\$1,800 during any fiscal year.

The Human Resources Department will develop and administer the tuition reimbursement process.

# Training/Education

**Regulation Number: 26**

**Revision: TBD**

**Page 1 of 1**

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The Human Resources Department will develop and administer the tuition reimbursement process.

# Vacation Leave

Regulation Number: 20

Revision: [June 16, 2011](#)[TBD](#)

Page 1 of 2

- A. Exempt and non-exempt benefited employees who occupy budgeted positions and who [are in paid status work](#)—at least half of the standard work schedule period of the pay group to which the employee is assigned shall earn and accumulate a vacation leave accrual on the last day of each biweekly reporting period, in accordance with the annualized schedule below based on the employee's assigned annual hours. Vacation leave earned by part-time employees shall be at a rate proportionate to that earned by full-time employees. Employees of non-standard pay groups will accrue vacation leave in an equitable manner as determined by the County Manager. The maximum annual carryover is 30 days based on the average annual hours for the pay group to which the employee is assigned.

ANNUALIZED VACATION ACCRUAL SCHEDULE	
Years of Continuous Service	Average Number of Days Earned Per Year
Less than 5 years	12 Days
At least 5 but less than 10 years	15 Days
At least 10 but less than 15 years	18 Days
At least 15 but less than 20 years	21 Days
At least 20 years or more	24 Days

- B. Vacation leave may be taken as earned by an employee provided the employee's Department Director or designee approves the leave.
- C. [For vacation leave accrual purposes, service credit will be granted to employees who have prior work experience in local government as a contributing member of the NC Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System \(LERS\). To receive service credit, Human Resources \(HR\) will verify an employee's prior active local government experience using the employer's LERS portal. New employees will be made aware of this provision at the time of hire and must submit a service credit request to HR within their first two weeks of employment. Any service credit that was purchased by an employee before or after employment with Guilford County cannot be used to increase an employee's vacation leave accrual.](#)

# Vacation Leave

Regulation Number: 20

Revision: TBD

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~~C.D.~~ Generally, employees must exhaust all applicable paid leave balances for absences prior to being placed in an “absent no-pay status”. In accordance with County Regulation 21, sick leave is not intended to provide time off for recreation, personal reasons, or to extend vacations; therefore, it is not appropriate to use sick leave when the vacation balance has been exhausted.

~~D.~~ A terminating employee shall be paid for unused vacation accrued as of the date of separation. Terminating employees may not utilize paid leave after their last actual hour worked nor can be used to satisfy a resignation notice period.

E. For the purpose of earning and accruing vacation leave, the period between March 1 and the last day of February is established as the vacation accrual year. As of 12:00 a.m. on March 1, any regular employee with more than thirty days of accumulated vacation leave shall have the excess vacation leave converted to sick leave. This converted leave shall be available for use in the same manner as accrued sick leave and may be used for authorized sick leave purposes (refer to Regulation 21). Upon retirement, any unused converted sick leave may be counted toward creditable service in accordance with applicable retirement system regulations.

# Vacation Leave

**Regulation Number: 20**

**Revision: TBD**

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- A. Exempt and non-exempt benefited employees who occupy budgeted positions and who are in paid status at least half of the standard work schedule period of the pay group to which the employee is assigned shall earn and accumulate a vacation leave accrual on the last day of each biweekly reporting period, in accordance with the annualized schedule below based on the employee's assigned annual hours. Vacation leave earned by part-time employees shall be at a rate proportionate to that earned by full-time employees. Employees of non-standard pay groups will accrue vacation leave in an equitable manner as determined by the County Manager. The maximum annual carryover is 30 days based on the average annual hours for the pay group to which the employee is assigned.

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- B. Vacation leave may be taken as earned by an employee provided the employee's Department Director or designee approves the leave.
- C. For vacation leave accrual purposes, service credit will be granted to employees who have prior work experience in local government as a contributing member of the NC Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (LGERS). To receive service credit, Human Resources (HR) will verify an employee's prior active local government experience using the employer's LGERS portal. New employees will be made aware of this provision at the time of hire and must submit a service credit request to HR within their first two weeks of employment. Any service credit that was purchased by an employee before or after employment with Guilford County cannot be used to increase an employee's vacation leave accrual.

# Vacation Leave

**Regulation Number: 20**

**Revision: TBD**

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- D. Generally, employees must exhaust all applicable paid leave balances for absences prior to being placed in an “absent no-pay status”. In accordance with County Regulation 21, sick leave is not intended to provide time off for recreation, personal reasons, or to extend vacations; therefore, it is not appropriate to use sick leave when the vacation balance has been exhausted.

A terminating employee shall be paid for unused vacation accrued as of the date of separation. Terminating employees may not utilize paid leave after their last actual hour worked nor can be used to satisfy a resignation notice period.

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# Sick Leave

Regulation Number: 21

Revision: ~~January 7, 2016~~TBD

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## **Sick Leave**

Guilford County provides employees with a sick leave benefit. Employees are encouraged to use their sick time wisely, and to maintain adequate leave balances to protect themselves against loss of income. Sick leave is not intended to provide time off for recreation, ~~personal reasons~~, or to extend vacation time. Generally, employees must exhaust all their applicable paid leave balances for absences before being placed in an “~~absent leave~~ no- pay status”, unless, for example, the employee is being paid disability or workers’ compensation benefits. The following guidelines govern the use of sick leave:

### **A. Eligibility to accrue sick leave benefits**

Full and part-time exempt and non-exempt benefited employees who occupy budgeted positions accrue sick leave. Leave earned by part-time employees is earned at rates proportionate to those earned by full-time employees and is based on the scheduled work hours.

### **B. Amount of sick leave accrued**

Full-time exempt and non-exempt benefited employees who occupy budgeted positions are eligible to earn and accumulate sick leave based on a rate of 12 days per year. Employees within non-standard pay groups receive sick leave in an equitable manner, as determined by the County Manager. Part-time exempt and non-exempt employees, who occupy budgeted positions and work at least half of the normal work schedule of the pay group to which assigned, are eligible to earn and accumulate sick leave. The accrual rate is 1/26 of the annualized rate and is granted on the last day of each biweekly period. Employees are permitted to take available sick leave immediately. The County does not advance sick leave. There is no limit to the amount of sick leave an employee may accrue. Unused sick leave balances may be counted as creditable service at retirement, based on criteria set forth by the Retirement System. Employees who leave the employment of the County under any circumstances will not receive monetary compensation for unused sick leave.

### **C. Transfer of sick leave**

Full and part-time exempt and non-exempt benefited County employees who occupy budgeted positions may transfer accrued but unused sick leave hours earned while employed with another North Carolina local government or agency which is a member of the Retirement System, State of North Carolina, Department of the State Treasurer. Credit for the transfer will be processed as

# Sick Leave

Regulation Number: 21

Revision: ~~TBD~~ January 7, 2016

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quickly as feasible upon receipt of the confirmation from the previous local government or agency.

This policy applies only to sick leave accrued during employment under a duly adopted sick leave policy while the employee was a member of the Retirement System, State of North Carolina, Department of the State Treasurer and for which the employee may have been able to take credits and receive payment for sick leave without restriction.

~~The amount of sick leave transferred shall not exceed the amount the employee would have accrued had the employee been with Guilford County during that period.~~ It is the responsibility of the employee to seek, secure, and produce to the Guilford County Human Resources Department appropriate documentation to verify the amount of accrued but unused sick leave which the employee had at the time of termination of his/her former employment.

Guilford County will process requests from terminated employees to transfer out their accumulated but unused sick leave balances on record to another North Carolina local government or agency. Sick leave accrued but unused during previous employment which remains on record with Guilford County will be reinstated immediately upon reemployment with the County.

## D. Absences for which sick leave usage is permitted

Sick leave may be used for approved absence from work with pay due to an employee's:

- ~~sickness~~ illness;
- ~~bodily~~ physical injury;
- ~~M~~ mental health;
- Quarantine;
- ~~pregnancy and related~~ medical conditions;
- Physical, mental health or dental ~~examination or treatment~~ appointments;
- On the advice of a physician due to exposure to a contagious disease, which may jeopardize the health of others should the employee continue to work; and
- FMLA ~~eligible conditions~~ qualifying events.

~~Also e~~ Employees are permitted to use sick leave because of an absence made necessary due to the illness of \_, or to attend the funeral for, a member of the employee's immediate family. For purposes of this Regulation (unless otherwise noted), immediate family includes both

# Sick Leave

Regulation Number: 21

Revision: **January 7, 2016**

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biological ~~noted~~), ~~immediate family includes both biological~~ and adopted family members, and is defined as the employee's:

- Spouse;
- Parent, step-parent, parent-in-law, or person who acted as a legal guardian in place of a parent for the employee;
- Sibling, step-sibling, or sibling-in-law;
- Child, step-child, or child for whom the employee is acting as legal guardian in place of a parent, or child-in-law;
- Grandparent, step-grandparent, or grandparent-in-law; and
- Grandchild, step-grandchild, or grandchild-in-law.

## E. Notice Requirements

Whenever possible, notification of the need to use sick leave should be given by an employee to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible prior to such leave being taken. If an employee is unable to provide prior notice of a sick leave absence, notification must be given no later than thirty (30) minutes after the beginning of the employee's workday or by following departmental attendance policy. Employees may be required to provide a doctor's note when they are absent from work for ~~more than three (3) consecutive days or more~~, note upon return to work, at the discretion of the Department Director. A Director may request an employee to submit a doctor's note to Human Resources upon their return to work.

## F. Voluntary Sick Leave Donation

Sick Leave Donation is intended to provide salary continuation during the twenty-one (21) day waiting period for the employee's own sickness until the ~~Short Term~~Short-Term Disability benefit begins, if the employee elected this optional benefit.

An employee may apply for sick leave donation as soon as it becomes apparent that all available paid leave (comp, sick and vacation) will be exhausted during an absence for his/her own serious medical condition, as defined by the FMLA. The employee should submit the sick leave donation application while still in a paid status, to avoid loss of income due to the time needed to process and obtain approval for the donation request.

An employee may receive a maximum of 120 hours of donated sick leave during the entire period of his/her employment. Any leave donations received and processed after July 22, 2010, will be counted toward the maximum limit.

Generally, an employee may donate up to 40 hours (lifetime maximum) to any one employee, provided the donation does not cause the donating employee's sick

# Sick Leave

Regulation Number: 21

Revision: ~~TBD~~ January 7, 2016

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leave balance to fall below 240 hours. However, an immediate family member (as defined by the Family and Medical Leave Act) may donate up to 120 hours (lifetime maximum) to another family member employed by the County, provided the donation does not cause his/her sick leave balance to fall below 240 hours.

Use of donated sick leave will run concurrently with an employee's FMLA entitlement.

No employee may ask another employee for donations on his/her own behalf or on behalf of a co-worker. No employee may threaten, coerce, or intimidate another employee to donate sick leave.

County Human Resources will coordinate the donation process and manage sick leave donation requests in accordance with HIPAA requirements and established County guidelines.<sup>1</sup> The Human Resources Department will review each donation request and each donation for policy and procedure compliance and forward the requests and donations to the appropriate Assistant ~~Deputy~~ County Manager for final approval.

Leave donations will be processed and assigned to recipients in the order received by the HR Department. The amount processed will not exceed the 120-hour maximum for any employee and the total amount needed to account for the employee's regularly scheduled hours during the pay period, as applicable.

-Employees may not use any paid leave when receiving 3<sup>rd</sup> Party disability or workers' compensation payments.

# Sick Leave

Regulation Number: 21

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## **Sick Leave**

Guilford County provides employees with a sick leave benefit. Employees are encouraged to use their sick time wisely, and to maintain adequate leave balances to protect themselves against loss of income. Sick leave is not intended to provide time off for recreation, or to extend vacation time. Generally, employees must exhaust all their applicable paid leave balances for absences before being placed in an “leave no- pay status”, unless, for example, the employee is being paid disability or workers’ compensation benefits. The following guidelines govern the use of sick leave:

### **A. Eligibility to accrue sick leave benefits**

Full and part-time exempt and non-exempt benefited employees who occupy budgeted positions accrue sick leave. Leave earned by part-time employees is earned at rates proportionate to those earned by full-time employees and is based on the scheduled work hours.

### **B. Amount of sick leave accrued**

Full-time exempt and non-exempt benefited employees who occupy budgeted positions are eligible to earn and accumulate sick leave based on a rate of 12 days per year. Employees within non-standard pay groups receive sick leave in an equitable manner, as determined by the County Manager. Part-time exempt and non-exempt employees, who occupy budgeted positions and work at least half of the normal work schedule of the pay group to which assigned, are eligible to earn and accumulate sick leave. The accrual rate is 1/26 of the annualized rate and is granted on the last day of each biweekly period. Employees are permitted to take available sick leave immediately. The County does not advance sick leave. There is no limit to the amount of sick leave an employee may accrue. Unused sick leave balances may be counted as creditable service at retirement, based on criteria set forth by the Retirement System. Employees who leave the employment of the County under any circumstances will not receive monetary compensation for unused sick leave.

### **C. Transfer of sick leave**

Full and part-time exempt and non-exempt benefited County employees who occupy budgeted positions may transfer accrued but unused sick leave hours earned while employed with another North Carolina local government or agency which is a member of the Retirement System, State of North Carolina, Department of the State Treasurer. Credit for the transfer will be processed as

# Sick Leave

**Regulation Number: 21**

**Revision: TBD**

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quickly as feasible upon receipt of the confirmation from the previous local government or agency.

This policy applies only to sick leave accrued during employment under a duly adopted sick leave policy while the employee was a member of the Retirement System, State of North Carolina, Department of the State Treasurer and for which the employee may have been able to take credits and receive payment for sick leave without restriction.

It is the responsibility of the employee to seek, secure, and produce to the Guilford County Human Resources Department appropriate documentation to verify the amount of accrued but unused sick leave which the employee had at the time of termination of his/her former employment.

Guilford County will process requests from terminated employees to transfer out their accumulated but unused sick leave balances on record to another North Carolina local government or agency. Sick leave accrued but unused during previous employment which remains on record with Guilford County will be reinstated immediately upon reemployment with the County.

## **D. Absences for which sick leave usage is permitted**

Sick leave may be used for approved absence from work with pay due to an employee's:

- Illness;
- Physical injury;
- Mental health;
- Quarantine;
- Medical conditions;
- Physical, mental health or dental appointments;
- On the advice of a physician due to exposure to a contagious disease, which may jeopardize the health of others should the employee continue to work; and
- FMLA qualifying events.

Employees are permitted to use sick leave because of an absence made necessary due to the illness of a member of the employee's immediate family. For purposes of this Regulation (unless otherwise noted), immediate family includes both

# Sick Leave

**Regulation Number: 21**

**Revision:**

**Page 3 of 4**

biological and adopted family members, and is defined as the employee's:

- Spouse;
- Parent, step-parent, parent-in-law, or person who acted as a legal guardian in place of a parent for the employee;
- Sibling, step-sibling, or sibling-in-law;
- Child, step-child, or child for whom the employee is acting as legal guardian in place of a parent, or child-in-law;
- Grandparent, step-grandparent, or grandparent-in-law; and
- Grandchild, step-grandchild, or grandchild-in-law.

## **E. Notice Requirements**

Whenever possible, notification of the need to use sick leave should be given by an employee to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible prior to such leave being taken. If an employee is unable to provide prior notice of a sick leave absence, notification must be given no later than thirty (30) minutes after the beginning of the employee's workday or by following departmental attendance policy. Employees may be required to provide a doctor's note when they are absent from work for three (3) consecutive days or more. A Director may request an employee to submit a doctor's note to Human Resources upon their return to work.

## **F. Voluntary Sick Leave Donation**

Sick Leave Donation is intended to provide salary continuation during the twenty-one (21) day waiting period for the employee's own sickness until the Short-Term Disability benefit begins, if the employee elected this optional benefit.

An employee may apply for sick leave donation as soon as it becomes apparent that all available paid leave (comp, sick and vacation) will be exhausted during an absence for his/her own serious medical condition, as defined by the FMLA. The employee should submit the sick leave donation application while still in a paid status, to avoid loss of income due to the time needed to process and obtain approval for the donation request.

An employee may receive a maximum of 120 hours of donated sick leave during the entire period of his/her employment. Any leave donations received and processed after July 22, 2010, will be counted toward the maximum limit.

Generally, an employee may donate up to 40 hours (lifetime maximum) to any one employee, provided the donation does not cause the donating employee's sick

# Sick Leave

**Regulation Number: 21**

**Revision: TBD**

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leave balance to fall below 240 hours. However, an immediate family member (as defined by the Family and Medical Leave Act) may donate up to 120 hours (lifetime maximum) to another family member employed by the County, provided the donation does not cause his/her sick leave balance to fall below 240 hours. Use of donated sick leave will run concurrently with an employee's FMLA entitlement.

No employee may ask another employee for donations on his/her own behalf or on behalf of a co-worker. No employee may threaten, coerce, or intimidate another employee to donate sick leave.

County Human Resources will coordinate the donation process and manage sick leave donation requests in accordance with HIPAA requirements and established County guidelines.<sup>1</sup> The Human Resources Department will review each donation request and each donation for policy and procedure compliance and forward the requests and donations to the appropriate Assistant County Manager for final approval.

Leave donations will be processed and assigned to recipients in the order received by the HR Department. The amount processed will not exceed the 120-hour maximum for any employee and the total amount needed to account for the employee's regularly scheduled hours during the pay period, as applicable.

Employees may not use any paid leave when receiving 3<sup>rd</sup> Party disability or workers' compensation payments.

# Parental School Leave

Regulation Number: 40

~~Adopted: January 7, 2016~~

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~~Effective Date: July 1, 2016~~TBD

- A. Consistent with N.C.G.S. § 95-28.3, Guilford County believes that parental involvement is an essential component of school success and positive student outcomes. Therefore, Guilford County will grant school parental leave with pay in the amount of ~~four (4)~~eight (8) hours per school year, per child up to the age of 26 who is enrolled in a structured educational program, to an employee who is a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis (responsible for) of a school-aged child or children so that the employee may attend or otherwise be involved with school matters.

Parental leave shall be at a time that is mutually agreed upon by the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor. Leave taken under these conditions will be charged to the employee's paid leave balance, if any; otherwise, the school parental leave will be considered approved leave without pay.

The supervisor may require the employee to make a written request for parental leave at least 48 hours before the time requested. The supervisor may also require that the employee furnish written verification from the child's school that the employee attended or was otherwise involved at that school during the time of the leave.

For purposes of this Parental School Leave policy, a "school" means any public school; school of religious charter, or nonpublic school that regularly provides a course of grade school instruction; preschool; and a child day care facility with a structured program.

- B. Guilford County will not discharge, demote, or otherwise take adverse employment action against an employee because the employee requests or takes leave under this Parental School Leave policy.

# Parental School Leave

**Regulation Number: 40**

**TBD**

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- A. Consistent with N.C.G.S. § 95-28.3, Guilford County believes that parental involvement is an essential component of school success and positive student outcomes. Therefore, Guilford County will grant school parental leave with pay in the amount of eight (8) hours per school year, per child up to the age of 26 who is enrolled in a structured educational program, to an employee who is a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis (responsible for) of a school-aged child or children so that the employee may attend or otherwise be involved with school matters.

Parental leave shall be at a time that is mutually agreed upon by the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor. Leave taken under these conditions will be charged to the employee's paid leave balance, if any; otherwise, the school parental leave will be considered approved leave without pay.

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For purposes of this Parental School Leave policy, a "school" means any public school; school of religious charter, or nonpublic school that regularly provides a course of grade school instruction; preschool; and a child day care facility with a structured program.

- B. Guilford County will not discharge, demote, or otherwise take adverse employment action against an employee because the employee requests or takes leave under this Parental School Leave policy.

# Bereavement Leave

**Regulation Number: 45**

**Revision: TBD**

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Guilford County understands the importance in supporting employees as they grieve the loss of an immediate family member. Therefore, Guilford County provides full-time and part-time benefit eligible employees with a bereavement leave benefit regardless of their length of service. In the event of a death of an immediate family member, full-time benefit eligible employees are provided up to five (5) days of bereavement leave per fiscal year. Part-time benefit eligible employees receive a prorated amount of bereavement leave based on their assigned work hours.

For the purpose of this Regulation, immediate family members include both biological and adopted family members, and is defined as the employee's:

- Spouse.
- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or person who acted as a legal guardian in place of a parent for the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, or sibling-in-law.
- Child, stepchild, or child for whom the employee is acting as legal guardian in place of a parent, or child-in-law
- Grandparent, step-grandparent, or grandparent-in-law; and
- Grandchild, step-grandchild, or grandchild-in-law.

Bereavement leave may be used to handle funeral arrangements, attend a funeral or handle business matters related to a death. Written verification may be required prior to crediting bereavement leave. Acceptable forms of verification include obituary, funeral program, death certificate or other written verification approved by Guilford County Human Resources.

Bereavement leave can be used intermittently. Use of this leave requires prior supervisory approval. Unused bereavement leave does not accrue and is not paid out upon separation from employment.

Bereavement Leave Prorated Schedule:

Annual Hours Worked	Hours Granted
2080 (FTE 0.5)	20
2080 (FTE 0.625)	25
2080 (FTE 0.75)	30
2080 (FTE 0.875)	35
2080 (FTE 1.0)	40
2184 (FTE 1.0)	42
2912 (FTE 1.0)	56

# Paid Caregiver Leave

**Regulation Number: 46**

**Revision: TBD**

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The purpose of paid caregiver leave is to provide full-time and part-time benefit eligible employees with paid leave to support personal and professional balance and allow them flexibility with important life events and family obligations outside of the workplace. This leave benefit will provide up to eight (8) weeks of paid leave to qualifying employees.

Up to eight (8) weeks of Paid Caregiver Leave may be taken for one or more of the following events, consistent with how those events are defined under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):

- The birth or placement with the employee of a child via adoption, surrogacy or foster care, within the first 12 months following that event.
- The care of the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition.
- The care of a spouse, child, parent or next of kin who is a member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, and 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 injury or illness incurred by the service member in the line of active duty (Military Caregiver Leave).
- A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, child, or parent of an employee is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation (Military Exigency Leave).

Employees must be eligible for FMLA to access this paid leave benefit. Eligibility requirements are defined in *Personnel Regulation 41- Family and Medical Leave Act*.

To receive this benefit, an employee must complete and submit an FMLA application along with required supporting documentation. This leave benefit will run concurrently with the employee's approved FMLA leave.

The use of paid caregiver leave is only permitted during an approved FMLA qualifying event and may be either be used continuously or intermittently.

An employee may only receive up to eight (8) weeks of paid caregiver leave in a rolling twelve (12) month period that begins with an FMLA qualifying event date. In no event will the amount of paid caregiver leave exceed eight (8) weeks in a rolling 12-month period. This limitation also applies when the leave is used for a combination of qualifying events and when more than a single qualifying event occurs within the 12-month period. The first qualifying event will be used for the purpose of determining the rolling 12-month period.

Additionally, employees are limited to a total of sixteen (16) weeks of Paid Caregiver Leave within a five-year period, not to exceed eight (8) weeks per rolling 12-month period. Regular County benefits continue during Paid Caregiver Leave.

Holidays occurring during Paid Caregiver Leave will be recorded as such and do not extend the leave period or augment pay. Eligibility for leave stops upon termination of employment and unused Paid Caregiver Leave is not subjected to payout.

# Paid Caregiver Leave

**Regulation Number: 46**

**Revision: TBD**

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Spouses who are both eligible employees may each take leave under this policy for the same qualifying event, however the total combined eligibility will be limited to a total of eight (8) weeks of Paid Caregiver Leave within rolling 12-month period and sixteen (16) weeks within a five-year period.

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