

Earned Sick Leave ESTA Policy

PURPOSE

This policy ensures compliance with the Earned Sick Leave Act and provides employees with paid sick leave at the beginning of each benefit year, allowing them to address personal or family health-related needs. This law fosters a healthier workplace and supports public health.

GUIDELINES

Eligibility

- All full-time and part-time employees are eligible to earn sick leave.
- Earned Sick leave may be used for personal reasons.

All employees are eligible for earned sick leave benefits from their first day of employment.

Grand Traverse County has adopted to front-load sick time instead of accruing earned sick leave during the year. Eligible employees will receive their full annual earned sick leave allocation at the beginning of each year. For purposes of this policy, a "year" runs from January 1 to December 31. If you are under a bargaining unit, your earned sick leave will continue to be frontloaded in the month of November until 2027 Plan Year.

Full-time non-contract employees will receive 72 hours of earned sick leave at the start of each calendar year.

Part-time, non-contract employees will receive a prorated amount of earned sick leave based on their scheduled work hours at the start of each year. Earned sick leave hours will be adjusted closer to the end of the year if the employee works more or less hours than expected at the time of the front-loading of earned sick leave. Seasonal, on call and temporary employees ESTA hours will not be frontloaded but accumulated based on hours worked.

Sick leave may be used in increments of thirty minutes.

Union employees should refer to their collective bargaining agreement for details on earned sick leave, including personal/ESTA time eligibility. Again, ESTA does not apply to the employees subject to that agreement until the stated expiration of the agreement.

Use of Sick Leave

Earned sick leave may be used for the following purposes:

- The employee's own illness, injury, or medical appointments
- A family member's illness, injury, or medical appointments
- Preventative care of the employee or his or her family member
- Absences due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking
- Public health emergencies or workplace/school closures

- Meetings at a child's school or place of care related to the child's health or disability.

Michigan's Earned Sick Leave Act defines "family member" as follows, but the list is not exhaustive and is subject to change:

- A biological, adopted, or foster child
- A stepchild
- A grandparent or grandchild
- A spouse
- A biological, foster, or adopted sibling
- An individual who stood in place for a parent when the eligible employee was a minor
- Domestic partner
- Committed relationship
- Individuals related by blood or whose close relationship with the employee is equivalent of a family one

Notification & Documentation

Employees must notify their supervisor as soon as possible when using sick leave. For absences of more than 3 consecutive days, Grand Traverse County reserves the right to require documentation from a health care professional to verify the need for sick leave. If documentation is required by your supervisor, that documentation must be provided in 15 days after the employer's request.

Carryover & Expiration

Unused earned sick leave does not carry over to the next year, as employees receive a new front-loaded balance annually. Each year it will be determined if Grand Traverse County will pay out up to a maximum of 40 hours of unused time. Grand Traverse County may determine the amount that would have been accrued as of the date of separation and recoup the value of leave used more than the employees' leave balance.

Employees Rights under ESTA

An employee's ESTA balances can be checked on Workday and can be found under absence balance.

Retaliatory actions against an employee for requesting or using paid sick leave are prohibited. If an employee believes that the Employer has violated this Policy, that employee may file a complaint with the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity.

Compliance

This policy complies with applicable federal, state, and local sick leave laws. If changes occur, GTC will update the policy accordingly.