

## **Leave Benefits – Hardship Leave**

**Policy Number: 147**

Hardship leaves are available to employees who may have a serious injury or illness.

When a County staff person has used, or will exhaust their sick, vacation, personal, and catastrophic leave for their injury or illness, they can file a hardship leave request. The employee seeking to file a hardship leave request must use up his/her own sick and vacation leave first, and have outlined the amount of time that the employee will be on leave.

The employee must speak to their supervisor and the Human Resources Office and request the procedural documentation to fill out and return to the Human Resources Office. A release of information, which includes how long the employee is to be on leave, when the sick/vacation leave expires, and estimated time of return to work, must be completed. A doctor's statement and/or order will be given to the Human Resources Office, and will remain in the employee's medical file. The requests will be submitted to the County Board for the purpose of information only.

Upon the filing of the release of information, the Human Resources Office can then post the request to County employees for donated vacation leave to the injured/sick employee. Donated time will be only from vacation time currently earned. Once donated, the time will then be placed into the requestor's sick leave. There is no limit on the number of vacation days and or hours that can be donated. However, once donated, they cannot be reclaimed. If the employee leaves the employment of Cottonwood County, the newly accrued sick leave will be paid out per the County Policy and contractual language. Donated hours will be submitted to the payroll clerk on the donation leave forms that each County Department will have on file. Posting of requests will be 2 calendar weeks time at the first day of posting.

For accounting purposes, vacation hours shall be donated on an hour for hour basis. The ill employee will receive the donation regardless of the pay scale of the donor or the recipient.