Staff Policy Review Committee

Concept Proposal regarding Shared Leave

Having completed its review of the Shared Leave Policy in collaboration with the Shared Leave Committee and the Office of Human Resources, the Staff Policy Review Committee recommends that the Staff Senate endorse the following conceptual changes to the University of Louisville Voluntary Shared Leave Policy.

Name: Change from Voluntary Shared Leave to Catastrophic Shared Leave, to clarify program intent.

Purpose: Expand purpose statement to read: “To promote a sense of collegiality and community among UofL staff by permitting administrators and staff employees to voluntarily contribute vacation or sick leave to fellow staff employees who would otherwise suffer a loss of regular income due to a personal or family catastrophic illness.”

Program Enhancements:

- Permit personal representatives (including supervisors) to request leave on an employee’s behalf, if the employee is incapacitated.
- Permit administrators to donate leave (even though administrators are not eligible for leave awards).
- In addition to maintaining the current shared leave pool, permit direct transfers of leave from one employee to another (with the recipient employee’s permission), subject to the following safeguards:
  - Only HR could publish the need for shared leave on behalf of an employee.
  - Employees will not be permitted to solicit leave on their own behalf.
  - Supervisors and managers will not be permitted to solicit leave from subordinate employees.
- Increase award limit from 320 hours to 480 hours per year, equivalent to Family Medical Leave (FML).
- Permit Catastrophic Shared Leave to be used to augment workers’ compensation leave and disability leave (to the same extent an employee would be eligible to use sick leave).

Program Limitations:

- Require 12 months of continuous service to be eligible to apply for catastrophic shared leave, equivalent to FML eligibility. [Employees may contribute vacation or sick leave, as soon as they are eligible to use their own vacation or sick leave, subject to maintaining minimum sick leave balance in existing policy.]
- Use of Catastrophic Shared Leave would trigger and run concurrently with Family Medical Leave.
- Continue to use FML “serious health condition” as standard subject to the following limitations:
  - Exclude illnesses of seven calendar days or less (similar to Workers’ Compensation leave) to encourage employees to save sufficient sick and vacation leave to cover short-term absences.
  - Require that the condition must prevent the employee from being able perform work and permit managers to assign alternative work within employee’s ability.
  - Exclude conditions not medically necessary.
- Continue provision that Catastrophic Shared Leave may not be used to augment Parental Leave.

Program Operation & Evaluation:

- Ensure request for Catastrophic Shared Leave is acknowledged by supervisor.
- HR will process all requests for Catastrophic Shared Leave and approve or disapprove requests consistent with policy (subject to appeal to the Shared Leave Committee).
- Shared Leave Committee would hear appeals and periodically evaluate program.

Approval & Policy Dissemination

- If approved by the Staff Senate, these recommendations will be conveyed to University Leadership for consideration.
- If approved by University Leadership, these recommendations will be submitted to the Board of Trustees in May & June; with a proposed effective date of July 1, 2010.
- Human Resources will exercise administrative authority to draft a revised policy consistent with approved concepts and convey draft policy to Staff Senate for review & comment prior to publication.