

# Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program Guidelines

(Rev.06/08/2022)

The UC Berkeley (UCB) Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program permits an employee to voluntarily donate a portion of their accrued vacation leave to the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank to be used by other UCB employees (who have exhausted all of their own accrued paid leave benefits) to address events such as:

- A catastrophic injury or illness
- A serious health condition for an employee
- Caring for a catastrophically ill or injured family member or household member
- The death of a family or household member
- A catastrophic casualty loss suffered by an employee such as a terrorist attack, fire, natural disaster, a pandemic or other event as declared by the Office of the President.

## Definitions

These definitions address circumstances such as: a catastrophic injury or illness or serious health condition for an employee; an employee caring for a catastrophically ill or injured family member or household member; the death of a family or household member; a catastrophic casualty loss suffered by an employee due to, for example, a terrorist attack, fire, natural disaster; a pandemic or other event as declared by the Office of the President.

### [View the Catastrophic Leave Sharing definitions](#)

#### Catastrophic illness or injury

A serious non-work-related health condition of the employee or employee's family or household (e.g., spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, in-laws, step-relatives in the relationship or individuals residing in the employee's household), which creates a financial hardship because the employee has exhausted all available leave accruals and is not, or not yet, eligible for disability benefits.

#### Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, physical or mental condition that involves:

1. Any period of incapacity or treatment connected with inpatient care ( e.g., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility;
2. A period of incapacity requiring the absence of more than three calendar days from work, school, or other regular daily activities that also involve continuing treatment by (or under the supervision of) a licensed healthcare provider;
3. Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care;
4. Any period of incapacity or treatment due to a chronic serious health condition (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.);

5. A period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may be effective (e.g., Alzheimer's, stroke, terminal disease, etc.);
6. Any absence to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery) by, or referral by, a licensed healthcare provider (e.g., chemotherapy, physical therapy, dialysis, etc.)

## Catastrophic Casualty Loss

A loss suffered by an employee due to a terrorist attack, fire, natural disaster; a pandemic or other event as declared by the Office of the President.

## Eligible Recipient (Requestor)

A UCB employee is eligible to receive Catastrophic Leave if they:

1. Are a career staff employee who has completed the probationary period and is eligible to accrue and use vacation;
2. Are a fiscal-year academic employee who is eligible to accrue and use vacation;
3. Have exhausted all paid leave accruals (vacation, sick, Compensatory Time Off - CTO), or will do so before the return to work date;
4. Have submitted all required leave of absence paperwork and have an approved leave of absence in relation to the catastrophic illness or injury.
5. Are not presently receiving University disability benefits or Workers' Compensation payments. An employee who has applied to receive Workers' Compensation benefits is not eligible to apply for Catastrophic Leave; however, that employee may apply if his/her claim is denied.
6. Have not received any formal disciplinary action for excessive absenteeism during the 12 month period immediately preceding the request for catastrophic leave.
7. The recipient has sole responsibility for assessing the potential impact on taxes and benefits.

## Eligible Donor

UCB career staff employee or academic employee who are eligible to accrue and use vacation.

## Donation Leave Credits

Leave that may be donated is defined as accrued whole hours of vacation leave. Donations must be eight (8) hours minimum at any one time. Donor must maintain a minimum balance of eighty (80) hours of vacation accruals at any given time. Donations can be made to the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank. Leave may not be donated prior to accrual. All donations are irrevocable. Sick leave and compensatory time cannot be donated.

## Approved Leave of Absence

Approved leave of absence is defined as the Requestor's required leave paperwork as determined by the type of leave being requested and approved by the department.

## Policies and Limitations

The following Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program policies and limitations address circumstances such as: a catastrophic injury or illness or serious health condition for an employee; an employee caring for a catastrophically ill or injured family member or household member; the death of a family or household member; or a catastrophic casualty loss suffered by an employee due to, for example, a terrorist attack, fire, natural disaster; a pandemic or other event as declared by the Office of the President.

### [View the Catastrophic Leave Sharing policies and limitations](#)

- An eligible recipient is required to use any leave accrued on a monthly basis prior to receiving donations through this program.
- An eligible recipient may receive no more than one month or 184 hours of donated leave, whichever is greater, in a rolling twelve-month period beginning with the date of the first Request for Donations form received by People & Culture Benefits.
- For an employee's own serious health condition, donated time may be applied to the disability waiting period only.
- For a Bereavement Leave, an eligible recipient may receive no more than 40 hours of donated leave, in a rolling twelve-month period beginning with the date of the first Request for Donations form received by People & Culture Benefits.
- An eligible recipient must apply for catastrophic leave donations by the end of the month following the month in which paid leave accruals are exhausted.
  
- Due Dates:
  1. For Exempt (monthly paid) employees, requests for donations are due by the 10th of each month.
  2. For Non-Exempt (bi-weekly paid) employees, requests for donations are due the Friday before the Employee Data Change deadline per UCPATH Production Schedule. For payroll schedules please contact your HR Partner or Liaison.
- An eligible recipient is required to use any leave accrued on a monthly basis prior to receiving donations through this program.
- Available donated hours in the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank will be processed in the order received.
- Donations are reflected as an hour-for-hour deduction from the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank and will be received on an hour-for-hour basis by the eligible recipient.

- Donations will be transferred each pay period.
- Once processed and transferred, donations are irrevocable.
- Donations are not tax-deductible.

The Human Resources Associate Vice Chancellor may authorize exceptions to limits in unusual situations, consistent with system-wide policy and collective bargaining agreements.

## Procedures

In this section, you will learn how to request a catastrophic leave and how to donate vacation hours to the Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program.

[View the Catastrophic Leave Sharing procedures](#)

### Requesting Catastrophic Leave

1. The Requestor must complete the [Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program Request Form](#).
2. People & Culture Benefits will verify that the requesting employee has exhausted all paid leave accruals or will do so before the return to work date and verify the status of the leave with the HR Business Partner or Liaison.
3. After verification, People & Culture Benefits will transfer available donated hours in accordance with the Catastrophic Leave Sharing policy based on availability of hours.

### Donating Vacation Hours to the Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program

1. Donors must complete the [Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program Donation Form](#). People & Culture Benefits will verify that the donor has the vacation accruals available to make the donation to the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank.
2. After verification, People & Culture Benefits will transfer donated hours to the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank in accordance with the Catastrophic Leave Sharing policy.

## Responsibilities

In this section, you will learn about the responsibilities for the Requestor, Donor, People & Culture Benefits as well as any special considerations and miscellaneous responsibilities.

[Learn about the Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program responsibilities](#)

Requestor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete and submit the Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program Request Form for review and processing.</li> <li>2. Ensure all leave of absence paperwork requested by the department has been submitted.</li> </ol>
Donor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete the Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program Donation Form for review and processing.</li> <li>2. Ensure that the vacation hours are available for donation</li> <li>3. Donations made to the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank are irrevocable.</li> </ol>
People & Culture Benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Verify the availability of donated hours.</li> <li>2. Verify the Requestor's sick, vacation, and compensatory time accruals.</li> <li>3. Contact the Requestor's HR Business Partner or Liaison to verify the status of the leave of absence.</li> <li>4. Verify the disability waiting period.</li> <li>5. Confirm the number of hours needed by the Requestor with the department/Regional Service Center.</li> <li>6. Notify Requestor of approval/denial.</li> <li>7. If approved, transfer donated hours from the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank to eligible Requestor in accordance with the Catastrophic Leave Sharing policy.</li> <li>8. Review Donor request.</li> <li>9. Notify Donor of approval/denial.</li> <li>10. If approved, transfer donated hours to the Catastrophic Leave Donation Bank</li> </ol>
Special Considerations	<p>In the case of approved Bereavement Leave, up to 40 hours of Catastrophic Leave Donation may be used if all other paid leave has been exhausted.</p>

## Miscellaneous

1. Participation in the Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program by employees is on a strictly voluntary basis.
2. The Catastrophic Leave Sharing Program is not subject to any grievance or arbitration procedure applicable to the employee.
3. Administration of the program will be coordinated by People & Culture Benefits.
4. For further information or questions, please contact [catleave@berkeley.edu](mailto:catleave@berkeley.edu).

## Reference and Related Policies

[UC Policy PPSM 2.210 Absence from Work Policy](#)

[UC Policy APM 730 b Benefits & Privilege, Leaves of Absence/Vacation  
Applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements](#)