

To: UGA Faculty and Staff
FROM: Human Resources
RE: Review Leave Balances for New Shared Leave Program

The University of Georgia will be changing its Shared Leave program effective January 1, 2017 in order to comply with the manner in which the program is administered by the University System of Georgia. The Shared Leave Program will still allow employees who have a serious illness and have exhausted all forms of sick and annual leave to apply to receive leave donated by other employees and will now further permit the use of shared leave for the care of seriously ill, immediate family members instead of being limited to employees only. However, there are several other changes regarding participation of which you need to be aware. The program is changing in several ways and Human Resources encourages you to review your sick leave balance now before the upcoming benefits open enrollment period.

One primary change is that anyone who wants access to shared leave as of January 2017 must donate sick leave to a leave pool during the open enrollment period in fall 2016. During open enrollment, employees who wish to participate must donate a minimum of 8 hours of sick leave, but are eligible to donate up to 80 hours. In order to donate, employees must have at least 40 hours of sick leave remaining as of January 1, 2017, after the donation is taken from their sick leave balances. Therefore, employees considering participation in the new program should ensure they have sufficient sick leave hours accrued by January. Participation in this program is voluntary; however, in order to participate and be eligible to use shared leave, an employee must have donated to the program.

Factors that can affect whether and how much employees want to donate to the leave pool can include having responsibility for young children or elderly parents, current leave balances, and participation in the TRS system, which allows unused sick leave balances to be credited toward retirement.

For more information, see the current UGA Shared Leave guidelines at <http://www.hr.uga.edu/shared-leave> and view the University System of Georgia Shared Leave program at http://www.usg.edu/hr/manual/shared_sick_leave_program.

Human Resources will share additional information about the revised Shared Leave program during open enrollment this fall. You are encouraged to review your sick leave balance prior to that time. In the meantime, please call HR at 706-542-2222 if you have questions about the Shared Leave program.