

1 AN ACT relating to the use of sick leave by school district personnel.

2 ***Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

3 ➔Section 1. KRS 161.155 is amended to read as follows:

4 (1) As used in this section:

5 (a) "Assault" shall mean an act that intentionally causes injury so significant that
6 the victim is determined to be, by certification of a physician or surgeon duly
7 qualified under KRS Chapter 342, incapable of performing the duties of his or
8 her job;

9 (b) "Employee" shall mean any person, other than a teacher, employed in the
10 public schools, whether on a full or part-time basis;

11 (c) "Immediate family" shall mean the teacher's or employee's spouse, children
12 including stepchildren and foster children, grandchildren, daughters-in-law
13 and sons-in law, brothers and sisters, parents and spouse's parents, and
14 grandparents and spouse's grandparents, without reference to the location or
15 residence of said relative, and any other blood relative who resides in the
16 teacher's or employee's home;

17 (d) "Sick leave bank" shall mean an aggregation of sick leave days contributed by
18 teachers or employees for use by teachers or employees who have exhausted
19 all sick leave and other available paid leave days; and

20 (e) "Teacher" shall mean any person for whom certification is required as a basis
21 of employment in the common schools of the state.

22 (2) Each district board of education shall allow to each teacher and full-time employee
23 in its common school system not less than ten (10) days of sick leave during each
24 school year, without deduction of salary. Sick leave shall be granted to a teacher or
25 employee if he or she presents a personal statement or a certificate of a physician
26 stating that the teacher or employee was ill, that the teacher or employee was absent
27 for the purpose of attending to a member of his or her immediate family who was

1 ill, or for the purpose of mourning a member of his or her immediate family.

2 Teachers and employees of the school district may also use accumulated sick
3 leave for the observance of religious holidays not otherwise included in the
4 school calendar, provided the teacher or employee submits a personal statement
5 verifying the observance of the religious holiday and provides sufficient advance
6 notice as determined by the school district. The ten (10) days of sick leave granted

7 in this subsection may be taken by a teacher or employee on any ten (10) days of
8 the school year and shall be granted in addition to accumulated sick leave days that
9 have been credited to the teacher or employee under the provisions of subsection
10 (4) of this section.

11 (3) A school district shall coordinate among the income and benefits from workers'
12 compensation, temporary disability retirement, and district payroll and benefits so
13 that there is no loss of income or benefits to a teacher or employee for work time
14 lost because of an assault while performing the teacher's or employee's assigned
15 duties for a period of up to one (1) year after the assault. In the event a teacher or
16 employee suffers an assault while performing his or her assigned duties that results
17 in injuries that qualify the teacher or employee for workers' compensation benefits,
18 the district shall provide leave to the teacher or employee for up to one (1) year
19 after the assault with no loss of income or benefits under the following conditions:

20 (a) The district shall pay the salary of the teacher or employee between the time
21 of the assault and the time the teacher's or employee's workers' compensation
22 income benefits take effect, or the time the teacher or employee is certified to
23 return to work by a physician or surgeon duly qualified under KRS Chapter
24 342, whichever is sooner;

25 (b) The district shall pay, for up to one (1) year from the time of the assault, the
26 difference between the salary of the teacher or employee and any workers'
27 compensation income benefits received by the teacher or employee resulting

1 from the assault. Payments by the district shall include payments for
2 intermittent work time missed as a result of the assault during the one (1) year
3 period. If the teacher's or employee's workers' compensation income benefits
4 cease during the one (1) year period after the assault, the district shall also
5 cease to make payments under this paragraph;

6 (c) The Commonwealth, through the Kentucky Department of Education, shall
7 make the employer's health insurance contribution during the period that the
8 district makes payments under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection;

9 (d) The Commonwealth, through the Kentucky Department of Education, shall
10 make the employer's contribution to the retirement system in which the
11 teacher or employee is a member during the period that the district makes
12 payments under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection; and

13 (e) Payments to a teacher or employee under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this
14 subsection shall be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits under
15 KRS Chapter 342, disability retirement benefits for teachers under KRS
16 161.661 to 161.663, and disability retirement benefits for employees under
17 KRS 61.600 to 61.621 and 78.5522, 78.5524, 78.5526, 78.5528, and 78.5530
18 so that the teacher or employee receives income equivalent to his or her full
19 contracted salary, but in no event shall the combined payments exceed one
20 hundred percent (100%) of the teacher's or employee's full contracted salary.

21 (4) Days of sick leave not taken by an employee or a teacher during any school year
22 shall accumulate without limitation and be credited to that employee or teacher.
23 Accumulated sick leave may be taken in any school year. Any district board of
24 education may, in its discretion, allow employees or teachers in its common school
25 system sick leave in excess of the number of days prescribed in this section and
26 may allow school district employees and teachers to use up to three (3) days' sick
27 leave per school year for emergency leave pursuant to KRS 161.152(3). Any

1 accumulated sick leave days credited to an employee or a teacher shall remain so
2 credited in the event he or she transfers his or her place of employment from one (1)
3 school district to another within the state or to the Kentucky Department of
4 Education or transfers from the Department of Education to a school district.

5 (5) Accumulated days of sick leave shall be granted to a teacher or employee if, prior to
6 the opening day of the school year, a statement or a certificate of a physician is
7 presented to the district board of education, stating that the teacher or employee is
8 unable to commence his or her duties on the opening day of the school year, but
9 will be able to assume his or her duties within a period of time that the board
10 determines to be reasonable.

11 (6) Any school teacher or employee may repurchase previously used sick leave days
12 with the concurrence of the local school board by paying to the district an amount
13 equal to the total of all costs associated with the used sick leave.

14 (7) A district board of education may adopt a plan for a sick leave bank. The plan may
15 include limitations upon the number of days a teacher or employee may annually
16 contribute to the bank and limitations upon the number of days a teacher or
17 employee may annually draw from the bank. Only those teachers or employees who
18 contribute to the bank may draw upon the bank. Days contributed will be deducted
19 from the days available to the contributing teacher or employee. The sick leave
20 bank shall be administered in accordance with a policy adopted by the board of
21 education.

22 (8) (a) A district board of education shall establish a sick leave donation program to
23 permit teachers or employees to voluntarily contribute sick leave to teachers
24 or employees in the same school district who are in need of an extended
25 absence from school. A teacher or employee who has accrued more than
26 fifteen (15) days' sick leave may request the board of education to transfer a
27 designated amount of sick leave to another teacher or employee who is

1 authorized to receive the sick leave donated. A teacher or employee may not
2 request an amount of sick leave be donated that reduces his or her sick leave
3 balance to less than fifteen (15) days.

4 (b) A teacher or employee may receive donations of sick leave if:

5 1. a. The teacher or employee or a member of his or her immediate
6 family suffers from a medically certified illness, injury,
7 impairment, or physical or mental condition that has caused or is
8 likely to cause the teacher or employee to be absent for at least ten
9 (10) days; or

10 b. The teacher or employee suffers from a catastrophic loss to his or
11 her personal or real property, due to either a natural disaster or fire,
12 that either has caused or will likely cause the employee to be
13 absent for at least ten (10) consecutive working days;

14 2. The teacher's or employee's need for the absence and use of leave are
15 certified by a licensed physician for leave requested under subparagraph
16 1.a. of this ~~paragraph~~^{subsection};

17 3. The teacher or employee has exhausted his or her accumulated sick
18 leave, personal leave, and any other leave granted by the school district;
19 and

20 4. The teacher or employee has complied with the school district's policies
21 governing the use of sick leave.

22 (c) While a teacher or employee is on sick leave provided by this section, he or
23 she shall be considered a school district employee, and his or her salary,
24 wages, and other employee benefits shall not be affected.

25 (d) Any sick leave that remains unused, is not needed by a teacher or employee,
26 and will not be needed in the future shall be returned to the teacher or
27 employee donating the sick leave.

1 (e) The board of education shall adopt policies and procedures necessary to
2 implement the sick leave donation program.

3 (9) (a) A teacher or employee may use up to thirty (30) days of sick leave following
4 the birth or adoption of a child or children. Additional days may be used when
5 the need is verified by a physician's statement.

6 (b) On or before July 1, 2030, each school district shall establish a policy to
7 provide up to thirty (30) paid maternity leave days for a teacher or employee
8 who gives birth to a child. The maternity leave days shall be used without
9 deduction of salary and shall be used prior to the teacher or employee using
10 any other leave. Any maternity leave days unused by the teacher or employee
11 shall not transfer into sick leave or be converted to any other leave type and
12 shall expire upon return to work. This paragraph shall not limit a school
13 district's authority to establish additional paid maternity benefits or to provide
14 paid parental leave benefits.

15 (10) (a) A district board of education may compensate, at the time of retirement or
16 upon the death of a member in active contributing status at the time of death
17 who was eligible to retire by reason of service, an employee or a teacher, or
18 the estate of an employee or teacher, for each unused sick leave day. The rate
19 of compensation for each unused sick leave day shall be based on a
20 percentage of the daily salary rate calculated from the employee's or teacher's
21 last annual salary, not to exceed thirty percent (30%).

22 (b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this subsection, payment for unused
23 sick leave days under this subsection shall be incorporated into the annual
24 salary of the final year of service for inclusion in the calculation of the
25 employee's or teacher's retirement allowance only at the time of his or her
26 initial retirement, provided that the member makes the regular retirement
27 contribution for members on the sick leave payment. The accumulation of

1 these days includes unused sick leave days held by the employee or teacher at
2 the time of implementation of the program.

3 (c) For a teacher or employee who becomes a nonuniversity member of the
4 Teachers' Retirement System on or after January 1, 2022, as provided by KRS
5 161.220, payment for unused sick leave days under this subsection shall not
6 be incorporated into the annual compensation used to calculate the teacher's or
7 employee's retirement allowance in the foundational benefit component as
8 described by KRS 161.633 but may be deposited into the nonuniversity
9 member's supplemental benefit component as provided by KRS 161.635.

10 (d) For a teacher or employee who begins employment with a local school district
11 on or after July 1, 2008, the maximum amount of unused sick leave days a
12 district board of education may recognize in calculating the payment of
13 compensation to the teacher or employee under this subsection shall not
14 exceed three hundred (300) days.

15 (e) 1. Actuarial costs to the Teachers' Retirement System for the inclusion of
16 payment for unused sick leave days that are eligible for compensation
17 under paragraph (b) of this subsection shall be funded in accordance
18 with this paragraph.

19 2. The state shall pay the actuarial costs for the compensation attributable
20 to the actual unused sick leave accrued as of June 30, 2025, plus annual
21 adjustments to the sick leave balance each fiscal year thereafter, based
22 upon the sick leave accrued or used by the teacher or employee, not to
23 exceed thirteen (13) additional days per year. Unused sick leave payable
24 by the state shall not include any annual leave described by KRS
25 161.540(1)(f) or the cost of unused sick days for employees retiring
26 from agencies listed in KRS 161.220(4)(d) and (f).

27 3. The last employer who is compensating the unused sick day as provided

1 in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall pay the actuarial costs of
2 compensation for unused sick leave days not paid by the state under
3 subparagraph 2. of this paragraph. Upon the teacher's or employee's
4 retirement, the Teachers' Retirement System shall bill the last employer
5 for the cost of the unused sick days, and the employer shall pay the costs
6 within fifteen (15) days after receiving notification of the cost from the
7 system.

- 8 4. The actuarial costs of the unused sick days shall be the amount payable
9 for unused sick days after the fixed statutory employee and employer
10 contributions have been paid as provided in KRS 161.540 and
11 161.550(1) and that is necessary to fund the benefit.

- 12 (f) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, each
13 school district shall annually report to the Teachers' Retirement System the
14 sick leave balances for each teacher and employee who is a member of the
15 Teachers' Retirement System. The report shall include for each teacher or
16 employee:

- 17 1. The sick leave days accrued at the beginning of the fiscal year;
18 2. The sick leave days accrued during the fiscal year;
19 3. Any other days of leave added to the sick leave balance during the fiscal
20 year by rollover, conversion, or any other method;
21 4. The sick leave days used during the fiscal year; and
22 5. The sick leave balance at the end of the fiscal year.

- 23 (g) Each school district shall file with the Teachers' Retirement System
24 information regarding their sick leave policies and provisions that are
25 applicable to members of the system, including:

- 26 1. The number of sick leave days accrued annually under the sick leave
27 program established pursuant to subsection (2) of this section;

1 2. Any other types of leave and the amount of leave by type that may, prior
2 to retirement or at the time of retirement, be included by rollover,
3 conversion, or any other method, in an employee's sick leave balance
4 pursuant to any district policy or any contract entered into by the
5 district; and

6 3. Any other information required by the system.

7 The reporting required by this paragraph shall include a description of
8 whether the policies or contracts governing sick leave policies apply to all
9 employees, a class of employees, or a specific employee of the district.

10 (11) Any statute to the contrary notwithstanding, employees and teachers who
11 transferred from the Department of Education to a school district, from a school
12 district to the Department of Education, or from one (1) school district to another
13 school district after July 15, 1981, shall receive credit for any unused sick leave to
14 which the employee or teacher was entitled on the date of transfer. This credit shall
15 be for the purposes set forth in subsection (10) of this section.

16 (12) The death benefit provided in subsection (10) of this section may be cited as the
17 Baughn Benefit.