DATE: November 13, 1990

TO: Department Heads & Payroll Clerks

FROM: Bonnie Suddarth, Payroll Manager

SUBJECT: CATASTROPHIC LEAVE POLICY (updated)

On November 10, 1987, the Board of Supervisors approved a Catastrophic Leave Policy. This will allow an employee to donate vacation or comp hours to another employee who is experiencing a catastrophic illness/injury, to himself/herself, spouse, or dependent minor child. The following guidelines apply:

1. Catastrophic Leave is a paid leave of absence due to verifiable, long-term illness or injury such as, but not limited to, cancer and heart attack which clearly disables the individual.

2. To be eligible to receive Catastrophic Leave:

   A) There must be a verifiable serious illness or injury to the employee, his/her spouse or dependent, minor child, and

   B) The employee must exhaust all accrued sick leave, vacation leave, and compensatory time; and

   C) Must have successfully completed at least 2,080 hours in paid status in an allocated position for the County of Sonoma, the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Sonoma County Community Development Commission, or the Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District; and

   D) Must receive the recommendation of his/her Department Head and the approval of the Personnel Director.

3. Catastrophic Leave may be granted for a maximum of 340 hours, with the option of a 340 hour extension where justified.

4. The decision of the Personnel Director to deny Catastrophic Leave shall be appealable to the Civil Service Commission within 10 calendar days of the decision. The decision of the Civil Service Commission shall be final.

5. Catastrophic Leave shall not be used in conjunction with any long or short-term disability insurance, worker's compensation, or Social Security benefits.
6. While an employee is on Catastrophic Leave using donated hours, the employee shall not accrue any vacation or sick leave.

7. Employees may donate vacation or compensatory leave hours to a specific eligible employee. Donors and hours shall be maintained as confidential payroll information.

8. Leave must be donated in increments of whole hours with a one-hour minimum.

9. The donating employee must have a vacation leave balance of at least 40 hours after the donation of vacation time. Employees may donate all of their accrued compensatory time.

10. The cash value of donations will be converted to sick leave hours using the recipient's hourly rate of pay, and posted to his/her sick leave balance. All unused donated hours remaining in the recipient's sick leave balance when he/she returns to work will be retained by that employee for future use.

11. Employee organizations and/or individual employees will be responsible for securing donations for specific employees entitled to Catastrophic Leave. Employees wishing to donate leave hours must complete the attached Catastrophic Leave Transfer form.

12. The Auditor-Controller, Payroll Division will administer the program, accounting for the donation and disbursement of catastrophic leave donations.

Catastrophic Leave Request and Catastrophic Leave Transfer forms are attached. Please copy as needed.

Please correct your Payroll Manual to include these additions as indicated on the attached table of Contents. Place a copy of this memo in Section VI and a copy of the Catastrophic Leave Transfer and Catastrophic Leave Request in Appendix A.

Please feel free to contact me at Ext. 3267 if you have any questions.

BONNIE E. SUDDARTH
Payroll/Manager

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