Sick leave (see page 38) may be used by the parents or a member of the immediate family during the time required for disability caused by childbirth. Up to 30 days of sick leave may be used by parents for adoption purposes. You may also take leave without pay to have or adopt a child.

Regardless of the type of leave you use, you should make this request to your supervisor as soon as possible.

**Voluntary Shared Leave**

Prolonged medical conditions sometimes require state employees to use all of their leave. This can force them to go on leave without pay at a critical point in their lives. Voluntary Shared Leave allows state employees to donate leave to another state employee in this situation.

You may donate vacation leave to an eligible employee in any state agency or donate vacation and/or sick leave to an immediate family member in any state agency or public school.

Also, if you have used all your sick and vacation leave, you may be nominated or apply to receive voluntary shared leave. You may be eligible if you have a prolonged medical condition or to care for your spouse, parents, children or other dependents (including step and in-laws).

Once the employee returns to work, the leave account balance may not exceed a total of 40 hours. Any additional unused donated leave over the 40 hours will be returned to the donors on a prorated basis.

Public School employees may participate in this program with immediate family members who are state employees. This policy does not apply to local governments, or community colleges.

**Community Service Leave**

North Carolina State Government recognizes the need for volunteers to maintain the quality of life in our state. As a state employee, you are encouraged to do volunteer work to support our schools, communities, citizens and non-profit organizations. If you have a full-time or part-time (half-time or more) permanent, probationary, trainee or time-limited appointment, you may take up to 24 hours (prorated at two hours per month for new employees) of paid leave each calendar year for the following reasons:

- To meet with a teacher or administrator concerning your child
- To go to non-athletic functions that are part of the school’s academic or artistic program in which your child is participating
- To perform school-approved volunteer work that is approved by a school official
- To perform a service for an approved non-profit, non-partisan community organization
You must clear this leave with your supervisor in advance. Community Service Leave not taken during the calendar year will be forfeited. If you leave state service, you are not paid for unused Community Service Leave; however, it will transfer with you to other state agencies.

Additional time above the 24 hours of paid leave may be requested to perform significant community service activities with provisions to make up the time at a later date. Otherwise, vacation leave must be used for additional volunteer work.

**Tutoring and Mentoring Service**
An employee may choose to mentor or tutor a student in a school in lieu of using the 24-hour community service leave. Under this option, the employee will receive one hour of community service leave for each week, up to a maximum of 36 hours, that the school is in session. The employee's agency and the school must document this agreement in writing.

**Special Community Service Leave Provisions**
In addition to the above leave provisions, there are special guidelines that apply to Emergency Services, Blood and Bone Marrow Donorship and Disaster Service Volunteer with the American Red Cross.

- Employees shall be given reasonable time off with pay for whole blood donation, pheresis procedure, bone marrow transplant, and organ donor ship.
- An agency may grant leave with pay not to exceed 15 workdays in any 12-month period to participate in specialized disaster relief services with the American Red Cross within the United States.
- Agency heads may establish policies for time off with pay for employees participating in volunteer emergency and rescue services. A bonafide need should be defined as real or eminent danger to life or property.

Before using leave for any of the above special provisions, employees should speak with the supervisor or human resource director for details about the state's policy on emergency services.

**Military Leave**
If you are in the Uniformed Service, you will receive up to 120 hours each Federal fiscal year (Oct.-Sept.) for:
- active duty for training (annual training or special schools)
- inactive duty training (drills - usually on weekends)

This does not apply to duties resulting from disciplinary action or inactive duty training performed for the convenience of the member. You may also use vacation leave or military leave without pay.

In addition to the 120 hours, you will be granted necessary time off with pay for a required physical examination relating to membership in the uniformed services.
The following questions and answers concerning Community Service Leave have been developed to assist State employees who are subject to G.S. 126 that are interested in volunteering for community service.

Q. What types of organizations can be designated as an IRS 501(c)(3) agency?

A. The 501(c)(3) agencies are commonly referred to as charitable organizations. The organization must be organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or education purposes, or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals. The agency must operate as a non-partisan, non-profit organization.

Q. Is there a list available of the community organizations that have been designated as an IRS Code 501(c)(3) agency?

A. The IRS does have a website (www.irs.ustreas.gov/prod/bus_info/eq/eqsearch.html) that allows you to search for exempt organizations by name, city and state; however, this is not a comprehensive list of designated organizations. Churches or charitable organizations with less than $5,000 in revenue are not required to fill out the formal paperwork for exemption, so they may or may not appear on the list.

Q. Can employees use Community Service Leave to volunteer time to work at their church?

A. All churches are designated as 501(c)(3) organizations; however, all services provided for a church might not meet the intent of the policy. The volunteer service for a church related community service project must somehow meet a service need of the State of North Carolina's schools, communities and citizens. For example, a church sponsored mission trip to Brazil to rebuild a church destroyed by an earthquake would not qualify; however, a church sponsored project to repair a home in Wilson, N. C. that was flooded by Hurricane Floyd, would qualify for community service leave. Also, qualifying service does not include activities designed to promote religious belief such as teaching or leading religious assemblies or in raising funds to support religious activities.

Q. Can an employee use Community Service Leave to coach Little League Baseball, soccer, or any other athletic program?

A. No. Participation in recreational or athletic activities does not meet the eligibility requirements.

Q. Would volunteer time spent as a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) qualify for Community Service Leave?

A. Yes. A GAL is responsible for serving as a representative for children who are alleged to be abused, neglected or abandoned and who are involved in court proceedings. Any service that directly impacts the human service needs of children is considered eligible.

Q. How can I find out about volunteer opportunities that are available in my community?

A. Contact the Governor’s Office of Citizen and Community Services at 1-877- SERVE NC.

Q. If a new employee begins work on August 29, will they begin earning their 2 hours of prorated community service leave in August or September?

A. They would begin earning credit for community service leave in September. As with other benefits such as vacation leave and sick leave, employees must be in pay status for one-half or more of the regularly scheduled workdays and holidays in the pay period in order to earn benefits.

Q. Can an employee use Community Service Leave to participate in meetings of civic groups such as Kiwanis, Jaycees, Lion’s Club, etc?

Q. Can employees use community service leave to assist with selling Girl Scout cookies or Boy Scout popcorn?

A. No. Participation in fundraising projects does not meet the intent of the Community Service Leave policy. Volunteer services performed by employees should be delivered in a way that directly meets a human service need of citizens of North Carolina, and that need can only be met during regularly scheduled work hours.

Q. Is there a list available of human service organizations that are licensed or accredited to serve citizens with special needs?

A. There is not an all-inclusive list of human service organizations available. Some examples of human service organizations would include psychiatric hospitals, developmental disability centers, alcohol/drug abuse treatment centers, nursing care facilities, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, home health agencies, and intermediate care facilities for mentally retarded (ICF-MR) persons. Most of these organizations have very active volunteer service programs. To find out more about human service organization, you can visit the website of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services at www.dhhs.state.nc.us.

Q. Can employees use community service leave to work at the polls on Election Day?

A. Employees can use leave if they are volunteering to work inside the polls for the State or County Board of Election to facilitate the voting process. Leave cannot be used for handing out brochures, transporting voters or other partisan campaigning.

Q. Can employees use Community Service Leave for roadside cleanup projects associated with the Adopt-A-Highway Program?

A. Yes. The Adopt-A-Highway Program is a volunteer program of the N. C. Department of Transportation. Any volunteer work performed for State or Local government agencies would qualify for community service leave. Volunteers perform many services that would otherwise become the financial responsibility of the State and local governments if not performed by volunteer workers.

Q. Can travel time be charged to Community Service Leave or is it limited to time spent providing direct service like the Tutoring/Mentoring policy?

A. There is currently no restriction on using leave for travel time. We will continue to allow reasonable travel time to be charged toward community service leave. The majority of the leave should be used for direct service. Each agency/university will be responsible for determining approval of travel time on a case by case basis to ensure consistency in the interpretation of reasonable travel time. Check with your agency/university Human Resources Office to see if they have written guidelines on travel time.

Q. Who can I contact for more information about Community Service Leave?

A. For more information on the Community Service Leave, contact either Shari Howard (shari.g.howard@ncmail.net) or Marilyn Hucks (marilyn.hucks@ncmail.net) who can assist you.