

E-4 POLICY Benefits

Benefits for Eligible Employees

College-sponsored benefits are intended to support and provide investment in employee health, wellness and their futures. As the delegated authority in relation to Nebraska Revised Statute 85-1511, the Board of Governors authorizes the College President, or designee, to develop a program of benefits (Program of Benefits) for eligible employees complying with all state and federal laws and regulations to be incorporated into the employment contracts of individual employees by reference; provided that any such Program of Benefits are subject to collective bargaining agreements.* The College President, or designee, shall annually prepare a cost analysis of the Program of Benefits as part of the Board of Governor's annual budgeting process, which shall be reviewed by the Board of Governors as part establishing the budget for the ensuing College fiscal year. The Program of Benefits shall be designated as a College Procedure and posted on the Southeast Community College - Employee website.

The Program of Benefits shall not include the Southeast Community College - Retirement Savings Plan – Group Retirement Account (GRA), which is addressed in College Policy.

The administration of salary or hourly compensation and benefits such employees is delegated to the College President or designee. Benefits for individual employees shall be established by (1) the terms of an applicable collective bargaining agreement, or (2) the terms of the individual contract between the employee and the College. The determination of the specific benefits to be provided to an individual employee or for which such employee is eligible shall be set forth in a personal services contract, which may incorporate all, or portions of, the Program of Benefits. It will be the responsibility of the employee to take whatever actions are necessary to enroll or continue eligibility or entitlement to employee benefits which are available to them.

College procedure governs all benefits offered to College employees unless they are specifically defined in their contractual agreement negotiated through their collective bargaining unit.

Full-time employees of Southeast Community College are eligible for benefits, some benefits may differ by Classification (Faculty, Staff, Administration, Support). Part-time employees are eligible for limited benefits.

A position with a full-time status is defined by an FTE 0.75 or greater.

A position with a part time status is defined by an FTE of less than 0.75.

Some benefits, such as paid leave, may be pro-rated based on the employees FTE.

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If an employee is on approved, unpaid leave status, eligible leave benefits (sick, vacation, personal) will not be accrued.

In the event an employee is approved for a voluntary leave of absence without pay, the College will cease contributions to insurance and retirement benefits. Participation in the College's health insurance and life insurance programs may continue if employees pay premiums in advance for up to one (1) year.

Employees may continue to contribute to TIAA, without a contribution match. All other benefits will not be available to the employee until they return to work in a full-time capacity or the affected employee's normal part-time capacity.

Leave

In order to promote the well-being of all employees, the following leave requests are granted as benefits to all full-time employees.

Bereavement Leave –

Upon application, an employee may be granted approved leave for bereavement purposes. Such leave will be subject to approval of the employee's supervisor and will be for such time as the employee's immediate supervisor will deem reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances. Faculty are subject to the provisions outlined in the Faculty Association Agreement.

Catastrophic Leave –

Catastrophic leave provides eligible employees with additional paid leave time to alleviate hardship caused from catastrophic illness or injury. No employee will be eligible for catastrophic leave until they have exhausted all other available paid leave benefits (sick, vacation, and personal leave).

Catastrophic leave is not available to employees receiving workers compensation, long-term disability insurance or other related compensable benefits and is reserved for situations involving the potential loss of compensation.

Employees are eligible by optionally donating 1 day of either vacation or personal leave to the catastrophic leave bank (CBL).

Civic Leave –

Eligible Employees: Full time status.

An employee elected or appointed to public office will be granted civic leave not to exceed two (2) days per month. Such leave will be without pay.

Jury Duty Leave –

Eligible Employees: All employees, in all positions and statuses.

When an employee is required to serve on jury duty, an absence from work for this reason will be excused. Full-time employees will serve without loss of pay.

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Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) –

Southeast Community College sick leave is subject to the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the College allows FMLA with or without paid leave. Southeast Community College complies in all respects with [the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 as amended](#).

Eligible employees:

- One year of College employment
- 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months (rolling 12-month calendar)

Basic Leave

The College will provide up to 12 weeks of paid or unpaid, job-protected leave within a given fiscal year to eligible employees. FMLA may be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule when medically necessary or otherwise approved. An employee must use existing or accrued paid leave (sick, personal and/or vacation if applicable) while on FMLA. Once all paid leave is exhausted, the employee will continue on FMLA in an unpaid status. Employees must comply with policies and procedures of the College. FMLA will be granted for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within one year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

Serious Health Condition defined as:

- Illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition
- Overnight stay in a medical care facility, or
- Continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either:
 - prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or
 - prevents the qualified family member from participating in College or other daily activities.
- Continuing treatment requirement:
 - a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider

Benefits and Protections

In addition to all stated benefits of the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#), Southeast Community College will:

- Require qualified employees to use paid accrued leave in conjunction with FMLA leave. The employee must comply with the College's normal paid leave procedures-
- Maintain employee health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms.

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- Allow for most employees to be restored to original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.
- Expect that employees make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical appointments so as not to unduly disrupt the College's operations.

Leave of Absence Without Pay –

Eligible Employees: Full time status.

Upon the recommendation of the President and approval by Human Resources, a full-time leave of absence without pay not to exceed twelve (12) months may be granted a member of the staff who:

1. Has at least three consecutive years of experience with the College working three-fourths (3/4) time or more;
2. Makes written application, approved by Human Resources, in time to reach the president at least ninety (90) calendar days prior to the time leave is to begin;
3. Will notify the president by letter at least 90 calendar days prior return of the individual's intent to return to employment with the College. Otherwise, it will be assumed that no return is expected.
4. Approval subject to department's ability to operate with such a vacancy.

When a voluntary leave of absence without pay is granted, the College will cease its contributions to insurance and retirement benefits.

Subject to the above conditions, Southeast Community College, in granting a full-time leave of absence without pay, agrees to:

1. Permit the employee to continue participation in the health and life insurance programs, if the carriers permit continued participation, at the employee's own expense, except when the employee enters other employment for pay during the leave;
2. Reinstatement, upon return to employment, years of service level for leave benefits at the rate the employee held prior to the leave.

Leave of Absence Without Pay (Short Term)

An employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay upon the approval of the Administrative Representative. Such leave shall not exceed five (5) days in a fiscal year.

Long Term Disability Leave –

After an employee satisfies a 120-calendar day elimination period for any particular illness or accident, or related illness or accident, the employee may be placed on unpaid long-term disability leave for the duration of the illness or accident.

An employee may be placed on unpaid long-term disability leave whether or not the employee qualifies for the College's long-term disability insurance plan. Disability leave may be granted for less than the full-time equivalency of the employee's position. That is, the employee may work part-time and be on unpaid long-term disability leave part-time.

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Even though long-term disability leave will be without pay in most circumstances. The College will:

1. Pay employer contributions for long term disability insurance for the lesser of 120-calendar days or until such time as the employee becomes eligible for benefits under the provisions of the long-term disability insurance plan.
2. Pay the health insurance premium for the employee's current coverage for the lesser of two (2) calendar years or until the employee reaches age 65, provided that the employee is not covered by other health insurance. However, if the employee's status changes such that a lower level of health coverage is appropriate, then only the premiums for the lower level of coverage will be paid by the College.
3. The College will continue to pay the group life insurance premium for six (6) months.

Long-term disability leave will be granted upon the recommendation of Human Resources and the approval of the president of the College if approved by the insurance provider.

Military Leave –

All employees, in all positions and statuses.

All employees of Southeast Community College who are members of the National Guard, Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve will be entitled to leave of absence from their respective duties without loss of pay. This includes all days during which they are employed with or without pay under the orders or authorization of competent authority in the active service of the state or the United States not to exceed fifteen (15) work days in any one calendar year. Advance notice to the employee's direct Supervisor and Human Resources with a copy of the orders is required.

Such leave of absence will be in addition to the regular annual leave of the employees. If the governor of the state declares a state of emergency and any of the employees are ordered to active service of the state, an additional leave of absence will be granted until such member is released from active duty by competent authority. During the additional leave of absence because of the call of the governor, any official or employee subject to the provisions of this ruling will receive such portion of his/her salary or compensation as will equal the loss he/she may suffer while in active service of the state.

Personal Leave –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status and part-time status positions. Adjunct Faculty, part-time temporary status, Seasonal, student workers and work study positions are not eligible.

Faculty

All personal leave for faculty is subject to the terms and conditions of the currently executed faculty agreement.

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Administrative, professional staff, and support staff

Full-time employees are granted thirty-two (32) hours of personal leave with pay at the beginning of the fiscal year or employee start date. Administrative, professional staff, and support staff employees may carryover accrued but unused personal leave to a subsequent fiscal year provided that total accrued personal leave shall not exceed forty-eight (48) hours.

Part-Time Regular Administrative, professional staff, and support staff positions

Part-time regular employees are granted two (2) personal leave days with pay upon hire based on their FTE. An additional two (2) days will be awarded annually at the beginning of each fiscal year. Personal leave days may not be carried over into the next fiscal year.

Sick Leave –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status

Employees may elect to use sick leave for their own medical concerns or to assist members of their immediate family who required care due to a medical conditions or concern.

Employees must submit sick leave requests to their immediate supervisor for review and consideration for approval. Approval/denial will be based on sound reasoning, compassion, and respect.

The College defines immediate family as spouse, children, parents, parents-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, and sisters.

New full-time employees, during their first year of employment, may have up to 12 days of sick leave advanced to them. In order to use this unearned leave, they must first sign a document stating that upon separation from the College, any such employee who takes advantage of the advanced sick leave will reimburse the College for all used but unearned sick leave. If the employee fails to do so, the College will deduct such amount from the employee's final paycheck.

Employees will not be paid for accrued but unused sick leave upon termination or separation of employment.

| <i>Months of Service x</i> | <i>Maximum Sick Leave Accumulation</i> |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1 day/8 hours | 100 days |

Employees accrue one day of sick leave for each month of employment during the fiscal year based on their full-time equivalency factor. Employees can accumulate unused sick leave to a maximum of 100 days. Once maximum sick leave has been reached no new sick leave will be granted.

Temporary Reduction in Employee's Length of Contract or Work Schedule –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status.

An employee may request a temporary reduction in the length of their contract or their full-time equivalency factor (FTE). The expectation is that such a request would be used for no longer than a semester for Faculty and no more than 60 days in duration for non-Faculty positions.

Employees seeking a temporary reduction in contract length or FTE may be considered if they:

1. Have at least two consecutive years of service with the College working full time.
2. Understand and agree that they are continuing to be responsible for maintaining their work assignments in a satisfactory manner.
3. The temporary voluntary reduction in work schedule will:
 - a. Result in a reduction to salary proportionate to the temporary voluntary reduction in work schedule.
 - b. Not affect the employee's benefits except as necessary due to the reduction in salary and full-time equivalency factor.
 - c. This procedure may not be used repeatedly by an employee to create an ongoing reduction in the FTE of their position.
4. The temporary reduction in contract length will:
 - a. Result in a reduction in salary proportionate to the temporary reduction in contract length or FTE.
 - b. Not affect the Faculty employee's benefits except as necessary due to the reduction in salary and full-time equivalency factor.
 - c. Not affect the computation of a salary increase for the Faculty employee. The Faculty employee's base salary and not their temporary reduced contract length salary will be used in computing any salary increase, which may become effective while the Faculty employee is on temporary reduced contract length.



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Vacation Leave –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status. Faculty positions are not eligible.

Vacation leave is offered to encourage eligible employees to promote their own health and well-being. Vacation leave will be used on a normal work hour basis.

Employees accrue vacation leave each month based on the employees’ years of service with the College and pro-rated based on their full-time equivalency factor.

Vacation leave accrual:

| <i>Months of Service</i> | <i>Hours per Month</i> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1-24 | 8.00 |
| 25-72 | 12.00 |
| 73 and above | 16.00 |

Accrual of leave will be effective the 1st of the month following the hire date.

Eligible employees may carryover accrued but unused vacation leave to a subsequent fiscal year. The maximum accumulation for vacation leave is 360 hours. Once the maximum has been reached no additional vacation leave will be accrued or accumulated until vacation leave has been used by the employee. Employees are encouraged to request and use vacation leave regularly to prevent any loss of leave accrual. Employees will be paid for accrued but unused vacation leave upon separation from the College.

Health & Dental Insurance –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status.

The College will provide group health and dental insurance coverage for employees with a full-time equivalency factor (FTE) of 0.75 or greater and dependents of such employees.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status.

The College will provide an employee assistance program (EAP) and pay the premiums to provide coverage for regular employees with a FTE of 0.75 or greater and their immediate families. Each individual is responsible for any cost if a referral is made by the EAP to an additional facility or service.

Life Insurance –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status.

The College will provide a minimum of \$50,000 of life insurance coverage and \$50,000 accidental death and dismemberment coverage for employees with a full-time equivalency factor (FTE) of 0.75 or greater. Additional employee, spouse, and dependent life insurance coverage is available through payroll deduction at the employees’ cost.

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Safety Eye Wear –

Eligible Employees: Employees whose positions require safety eyewear.

The College will reimburse regular employees with a FTE of 0.75 or greater who are assigned to a position requiring that they utilize Z87.1 rated eyewear in their work environment.

Employees meeting this requirement are eligible for reimbursement for the cost of one pair of protective eyeglasses every 24 months based on a predetermined reimbursement amount with proof of a receipt. All safety eyeglass reimbursement requests must be approved by Human Resources and officially requested through fiscal services.

The College will negotiate an agreement with a local vendor, or vendors, for the procurement of protective eyeglasses. The College will reimburse the eligible employees at the negotiated price or the actual cost, if that is less than the negotiated price. If an employee chooses a style of eyeglasses different than the negotiated style(s), the College will only reimburse the negotiated price or actual cost whichever is less. If an employee chooses to use a different vendor, the College will only reimburse the negotiated price less \$10 or the actual cost whichever is less.

SCC BEN Dollars –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status.

Regular employees with a FTE of 0.75 or greater will be eligible for SCC Ben Dollars.

All employees will be required to elect a health insurance option. If the cost of insurance coverage selected by an employee exceeds the SCC Ben Dollars available, all additional costs will be withheld from the employee's paycheck. Any SCC Ben Dollars that the employee does not elect to use for the purchase of dependent health and dental insurance will be paid to the employee in cash at \$.93 per \$1 benefit dollar. All amounts paid are subject to withholding for income and employment taxes, but not subject to the College's contribution toward Retirement Savings Plan – Group Retirement Account (GRA).

Tuition Reimbursement –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status.

A full-time employee will have the opportunity to be reimbursed for costs incurred for the completion of undergraduate or graduate credit course(s) from other accredited colleges or universities according to the following:

1. The course(s) must have prior approval of the Responsible Administrator.
2. The course is taken to maintain or improve job-related skills or the course is in a formal program of study the employee is pursuing and is job related or required to meet the qualifications for another position within the College.
3. Eligibility for reimbursement extends to a maximum of twelve (12) semester or equivalent credit hours in each fiscal year. The 12-credit hour limitation will be based on courses completed (not begun) in the given fiscal year. The intent is to reimburse employees for continuing their education but at the same time not to encourage employees to take so many hours and/or courses that it would interfere with their work responsibilities and/or performance at the College.

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4. The employee must provide verification of satisfactory completion at the "C" grade level or above or pass if the course is taken as pass/fail. If the employee provides a transcript showing that the granting institution accepted the course with the appropriate grade, satisfactory completion may be achieved by testing out.
5. Following satisfactory completion of items 1, 2, 3, and 4 above, the employee will be eligible for:
 - a. reimbursement equal to the UNL undergraduate courses in-state tuition rate per semester credit hour for undergraduate courses, or
 - b. the UNL graduate in-state tuition rate per semester credit hour for graduate courses, or
 - c. the actual cost if less than the UNL undergraduate courses tuition rate per undergraduate semester credit hour or the UNL graduate courses tuition rate per graduate semester credit hour.
 - d. UNL distance education courses typically have higher tuition rates than undergraduate or graduate courses but will be reimbursed at the appropriate undergraduate course tuition rate or graduate course tuition rate. Employees will complete and submit the proper forms for prior approval and final approval.

If an employee is reimbursed by the College for any credit hours and the employee voluntarily ends their employment with the College for a reason other than retirement or disability within two years of when the last course was completed, the employee will be required to repay the College for the tuition reimbursed in the previous two-year period according to the following schedule:

- 100% for courses completed in the last 12 months
- 66% for courses completed in the last 13 to 24 months

The repayment to the College will be made within six months unless other payment arrangements are made with the College.

Tuition Waiver –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status.

The College will waive tuition for full-time employees, their spouses or dependents* or an eligible retired employee who had been employed at the College on a full-time basis for at least 10 years in good standing for course(s) offered by the College under the following conditions:

Credit Course(s)

1. The tuition will be waived but the employee will pay the amount of any additional instructional costs (books, laboratory fees, materials, fees, etc.)
2. The course(s) does not conflict with the employee's responsibilities with the College.

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Noncredit Course(s)

1. The tuition will be waived but the employee will pay the amount of any additional instructional costs (books, laboratory fees, materials, fees, etc.).
2. Tuition waiver will not apply to courses that have been designated as exempt from tuition waiver.
3. The course(s) does not conflict with the employee's responsibilities with the College.
4. If the maximum enrollment in the course has not been reached.
5. If the minimum enrollment in the course has been reached.

The College reserves the right to amend this benefit based on budgetary amounts set annually. Upon retirement, the tuition waiver benefit will extend solely to the retired employee of SCC.

*(*Dependent is defined as a dependent for Federal Income Tax purposes.)*

Vision Insurance –

Eligible Employees: Full and part-time positions.

The College will select and manage a group vision insurance plan for employees.

Wellness Initiative –

Eligible Employees: Full-time status within the following classifications: Administrative, Professional, Support.

SCC is committed to encouraging all employees to seek opportunities to promote wellness. Eligible employees may participate in 90 minutes/week for physical activity during the work week. Employee must have wellness time approved by their immediate supervisor and must complete the wellness form on a fiscal year basis.

***Faculty and Professional Association members are subject to the terms set forth in their negotiated agreements regarding College sponsored benefits in the event there are differing terms in College procedure.**

Related Procedure: E-4a

Adopted: 12/13/22

Reviewed: 07/15/20, 08/04/21, 10/29/21, 12/10/21, 10/21/22, 11/08/22, 12/05/22

Next Review: TBD

Web link:

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