

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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HOUSE BILL 1140

Short Title: State Employee Bereavement Leave/Up To 40 Hrs. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Hawkins, Colvin, and Cotham (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 4, 2026

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT PROVIDING STATE EMPLOYEES WITH PAID BEREAVEMENT LEAVE OF UP
TO FORTY HOURS ON DEATH OF AN IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER AND EIGHT
HOURS ON DEATH OF A COLLEAGUE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THAT
PURPOSE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) Effective July 1, 2026, Article 2 of Chapter 126 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 126-8.8. Paid bereavement leave.

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Colleague. – A coworker with whom the employee worked at the employee's current agency, if the coworker worked for the agency within one year of their death.

(2) Immediate family member. – A spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or dependent living in the employee's household. The term includes the step, half, adoptive, foster, in-law, legal ward, and in loco parentis relationships.

(b) The State Human Resources Commission (Commission) shall adopt rules and policies to provide that a permanent, probationary, or time-limited full-time State employee is granted up to 40 hours of paid leave following the loss of an immediate family member and up to eight hours of paid leave to eligible employees for bereavement following the loss of a colleague.

(c) The Commission shall adopt rules and policies to provide that a permanent, probationary, or time-limited part-time State employee shall be granted a prorated amount of paid bereavement leave on an equitable basis.

(d) The rules and policies adopted by the Commission shall include the following requirements, at a minimum:

(1) That an employee requesting paid bereavement leave submit a statement stating the name and relationship of the deceased.

(2) Employees are eligible for paid bereavement leave immediately upon being hired for any loss that occurs on or after the first day of work with the agency.

(3) No annual limit on the number of uses of paid bereavement leave, if the leave follows the loss of an immediate family member or colleague.

(4) The amount of time required to travel to and from and to attend a funeral or other memorial event of a colleague is allowed, but not to exceed eight hours. The leave may only be used on the date of the funeral or other memorial event.



- 1 Employees shall provide documentation of attendance at the memorial event
2 following use of the leave.
- 3 (5) If an employee transfers from one agency to another agency, and the employee
4 has any amount of unused paid bereavement leave for which they are eligible,
5 the employee may use the remainder of the paid bereavement leave for which
6 they are eligible at that agency.
- 7 (6) Employees must provide documentation of death of an immediate family
8 member at the time the paid bereavement leave is requested or, if the
9 documentation is not available at the time of the request, as soon as the
10 documentation is available. Acceptable documentation may include a death
11 certificate, obituary, and funeral or memorial event information.
- 12 (7) Paid bereavement leave for an immediate family member must be used within
13 180 days of the date of death (or discovery of death if circumstances caused
14 the discovery of the death to be significantly later than the date of death). The
15 leave may be used as the employee needs and does not have to be used on
16 consecutive days, subject to approval.
- 17 (8) Any employee who attempts to gain eligibility for paid bereavement leave
18 through falsification of a familial relationship, falsification of a death,
19 falsification of supporting documentation, or any other untruthful manner
20 shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- 21 (e) The paid bereavement leave authorized by this section:
- 22 (1) Is available without exhaustion of the employee's sick and vacation leave and
23 is awarded in addition to shared leave under G.S. 126-8.3, or other leave
24 authorized by State or federal law.
- 25 (2) Has no cash value upon termination from employment.
- 26 (3) May not be used for calculating an employee's retirement benefits.
- 27 (4) Shall not be applied to negative leave balances.
- 28 (5) Shall not be donated as shared leave under G.S. 126-8.3.
- 29 (f) The provisions of this section shall apply to employees of State agencies,
30 departments, and institutions, including The University of North Carolina; to public school
31 employees; and to community college employees. The appropriate governing board, officer, or
32 entity shall adopt rules and policies to award paid bereavement leave to employees that are
33 substantially equivalent to those adopted by the State Human Resources Commission."
- 34 **SECTION 1.(b)** Effective July 1, 2026, G.S. 126-5(c19) reads as rewritten:
35 "(c19) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, ~~G.S. 126-8.6~~ applies
36 G.S. 126-8.6 and G.S. 126-8.8 apply to all State employees, public school employees, and
37 community college employees. ~~G.S. 126-8.6 does and G.S. 126-8.8 do not~~ apply to employees
38 described in subdivisions (2) and (3) of subsection (c1) of G.S. 126-5. The legislative and judicial
39 branches shall adopt parental leave and bereavement leave policies."
- 40 **SECTION 2.** Effective July 1, 2026, there is appropriated from the General Fund to
41 the Reserve for Compensation Increases the sum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) for the
42 2026-2027 fiscal year to fund paid bereavement leave as authorized by this act.
- 43 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2026, and applies to requests for
44 paid bereavement leave for deaths occurring on or after that date.