October 15, 2012

TO: NIH Staff

FROM:  Acting Chief, Benefits and Payroll Liaison Branch

SUBJECT:  Annual Leave – Use It or Donate It!

At this time of year, employees should review their annual leave balances, with the carryover (240 hours for non-SES members) limitation in mind. Annual leave in excess of the carryover limitation is considered “use or lose” annual leave and must be used before the end of the leave year (**Saturday, January 12, 2013**) to avoid forfeiture.

Supervisors are to assist employees in planning and scheduling the use of annual leave during the entire leave year. If circumstances arise which prevent an employee from taking previously approved leave due to sickness, an administrative error or an exigency of public business, the leave may be restored. In order for leave to be considered for restoration, the leave must be: 1) requested and approved in ITAS before the start of the third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year; 2) cancelled by the supervisor; and 3) cannot be rescheduled prior to the end of the leave year. Therefore, “use or lose” annual leave must be scheduled no later than **Saturday, December 1, 2012**.

Employees may also consider a leave donation under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP) or the Voluntary Leave Bank Program.  These programs allow employees to donate accrued annual leave to others who are faced with a personal or family medical emergency.  NIH colleagues who have been approved for either program have exhausted their own leave and have a medical emergency that prevents them from working. VLTP donations are made to specific individuals, while Leave Bank donations are made to a “pool” from which leave bank members can withdraw leave. The Leave Bank can accept annual leave donations from any NIH employee; however, only NCI, NIAID and NHGRI employees are eligible to become members and receive donations during leave year 2013. If you have “use or lose” leave that you don’t plan to use this year, please consider a donation to others in need of paid leave.

For more information, please visit the [NIH Voluntary Leave Transfer Program](http://intrahr.od.nih.gov/vltp/default.htm) webpage or the [NIH Leave Bank](http://hr.od.nih.gov/benefits/leave/vlbp/default.htm) webpage. Should you have questions regarding any of the above information, please contact your Administrative Officer or VLTP Coordinator. Remember to use it or donate it…but don’t lose it!

 /s/

Brenda S. Morissette