



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SHELBY COUNTY MAYOR LEE HARRIS INTRODUCES NEW SAFE LEAVE POLICY
TO OFFER SICK LEAVE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS**

New policy, if approved, would apply to County employees.

Shelby County, TN – Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris will propose updates to the current sick leave policy to include “Safe Leave”. The “Safe Leave” policy will allow employees experiencing domestic violence to use sick leave to seek help. The “Safe Leave” Policy seeks to address the increase of domestic violence throughout the pandemic. Just last summer, the Shelby County Crime Commission reported a 21% increase of domestic violence aggravated assaults in Shelby County. Victims of domestic violence will be able to use sick leave for these purposes and more: to obtain services from a domestic violence shelter, meet with an attorney or social services provider to prepare for any proceeding that addresses domestic violence, file a complaint with law enforcement, and enroll children in a new school.

Mayor Harris will bring “Safe Leave” to the County Commission for approval in today’s General Government Committee meeting. The proposal has already received unanimous approval from the Shelby County Government Unified Personnel Policy Committee.

Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris: “All too often, survivors of domestic violence need time away from work to navigate the system and ultimately get the help they need for their families. In the midst of COVID-19, when domestic violence has become even a larger problem, we do not want survivors to have to choose between their jobs and putting their family life and safety in jeopardy. Our safe leave policy implements one of the best practices from around the nation for giving survivors the space to find a new place to live, enroll children in a new school, seek services, and get justice from law enforcement.”

(end of release)

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