



Santa Maria Joint Union High School District

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As we move forward with our plans to return to school in the fall, we have received questions from employees about what to do if you are sick or if you have an underlying health condition that places you at a higher risk of serious illness due to COVID-19. We hope the following information is helpful, but please feel free to contact human resources if you have any questions or need additional information.

Absence(s) Related to COVID-19

Where an employee is unable to return to work for some qualifying reasons, he/she may be able to access existing, available, accrued leave, as well as newly created leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (“FFCRA”). The FFCRA created two new categories of leave for District employees, Emergency Paid Sick Leave (“EPSL”) and Emergency Family and Medical Leave (“EFML”). These leaves went into effect on April 1, 2020 and expire December 31, 2020. https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA_Poster_WH1422_Non-Federal.pdf.

What Reasons Qualify for Leave?

Under the FFCRA, an employee qualifies for paid sick time if the employee is unable to work (or telework) and requires leave because the employee:

1. is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19 (this is the reason commonly utilized for employees who have a chronic condition or are over 65 and have been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine);
3. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
4. is caring for an individual subject to an order described in 1 or self-quarantine as described in 2, above;
5. is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed when they would have normally been open (or child care provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19; or
6. is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS). (Note that no conditions have yet been identified by DHSS, so this leave is not currently available).

What is the Duration of Leave Available?

For reasons (1)-(4) and (6): Employees are eligible for two weeks of leave for the number of hours of leave that the employee works on average over a two-week period.

For reason (5): Employees are eligible for up to twelve (12) weeks of leave (two weeks of EPSL leave followed by up to ten weeks of paid expanded family & medical leave) over that period.

How is Pay Calculated?

For leave reasons (1), (2), or (3): employees taking leave are entitled to pay at either their regular rate or the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher, up to \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate (over a two-week period).

For leave reasons (4) or (6): employees taking leave are entitled to pay at two-thirds (2/3) their regular rate, up to \$200 per day and \$2,000 in the aggregate (over a two-week period).

For leave reason (5): employees taking leave are entitled to pay at 2/3 their regular rate, up to \$200 per day and \$12,000 in the aggregate (over a twelve-week period).

If you would like to request a leave for a qualifying reason, please contact human resources to obtain a leave request form.

Underlying Health Conditions that May Cause Employee to be at Greater Risk of Serious Illness due to COVID-19

If you have an underlying condition that may put you at risk of serious illness due to COVID-19, please contact human resources as soon as possible so that we can set up an interactive process meeting to determine whether the District can provide you with reasonable accommodations which will allow you to perform the essential functions of your position.