

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Leave Guidelines for Employees**

The University has been actively monitoring the COVID-19 epidemic. We understand that the fluid nature of this situation can be stressful. The following guidelines address not only personal preparedness but also define expectations concerning the potential need for leave time or telework.

### **Personal Preparedness**

All faculty and staff are urged to take basic preventive measures to prepare themselves and their families to avoid exposure to or infection by the virus causing COVID-19. More information may be found on the University's web page, [Southeast Missouri State University COVID-19 Information](#). Employees may also contact e4Health, the Employee Assistance Program, at 800-765-9124 for help with feelings of stress or anxiety about these events. Additional information is available on the Employee Assistance Program benefits at <http://www.semo.edu/hr>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourage employees to use telehealth services, rather than visiting a doctor's office or clinic, to limit the spread of the disease. University employees may access Teladoc for telehealth services. Teladoc gives you access 24 hours, seven days a week to a U.S. board-certified doctor through the convenience of phone, video or mobile app visits. For more information, visit <https://semo.edu/hr/pdf/teladoc.pdf>. For more information about the CDC's assessment tool for COVID-19 risk categories, click [here](#).

It is important to practice some easy and simple ways to avoid spreading disease. Clean your hands often through the day and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Do not share personal items, especially cell phones and other high touch items. Always cover mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the used tissues away quickly in a lined trash can. Wash your hands immediately with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. For more preparedness information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html>.

### **Essential Work Functions**

Many employees must work on campus to provide services that are essential to residential life, campus health and safety, the maintenance of physical assets, and the continuation of academic programs and business operations.

Employees who are ill not related to COVID-19:

Employees who have symptoms of illness should stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever, and any other symptoms, for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g., cough suppressants). Employees will be expected to use their available paid sick leave to cover time away from work unless their physician or public health determine the illness is related to COVID-19.

Employees with concerns or questions about their illness or seeking advice about whether to come to work should contact their supervisor, the Director or Assistant Director of Human Resources and their personal health care provider to manage their situation appropriately.

Well employees who are affected by COVID-19:

There may be extraordinary circumstances related to COVID-19 in which a Well Employee may need to take leave (ex. family member of an individual quarantined, parent/guardian of a child whose school has closed). Employees should consult with the Director or Assistant Director of Human Resources for guidance. Human Resources will work with the employee and supervisor to determine if working from home (preferred method) or flexible working hours is a viable option. Should the employee not be able to perform work during the equivalent of a typical eight-hour workday, up to eighty (80) work hours will be paid outside of the employee's personal leave balances.

Employees with positive or presumed positive COVID-19:

Employees who are experiencing respiratory illness due to having a positive or presumed positive test of COVID-19 will receive paid leave time outside of their personal leave balances until a physician releases them to active work. Human Resources will track leave time taken. The CDC offers additional guidance about symptoms and testing at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/index.html>.

Employees at higher risk:

Employees who are at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions are urged to consult their physician about steps they must take to protect their health. If an employee at risk for complications from COVID-19 and their physician agrees that increased social distancing in the workplace is prudent, but does not feel full removal from the workplace is needed, the employee should contact the Director of Human Resources to discuss alternatives. A physician's note may be required. This link provides more

information about people at higher risk: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>.

Additional questions not addressed in these guidelines should be directed to the Director or Assistant Director of Human Resources at (573) 651-2206.