

COVID-19 Personnel Guidance for Supervisors
City of Madison

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This document provides the latest guidance to City of Madison supervisors on managing employees, administering emergency and other leave, and maintaining a healthy work environment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Section I: Emergency Paid Leave

A. What is Emergency Paid Leave (EPL)?

The COVID-19 outbreak will have a significant impact on employees and their families. And, the impact will be different for every employee. For some, it may be caring for family members who become sick. For others, it may be an unexpected 14-day quarantine.

The City provides significant sick leave benefits, which accrue over time, to help employees manage their health and provide care to their families. Consistent with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, HR 6201 (FFA), and the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, the creation of EPL recognizes that not all employees have adequate leave time available. Some employees may have joined the City recently, or may have had a significant medical event which has caused them to use their sick leave. EPL is a way for the City to support all employees, even those employees with minimal sick leave balances, through this unprecedented situation. Employees can and should use this additional leave benefit as a way to support themselves and their families through the impact of COVID-19.

B. How much EPL is available to an employee?

For full-time employees, 80 hours of EPL is available. For part-time employees, and hourly/seasonal employees, EPL will be available based on the number of hours the employee works, on average, over a 2-week period.

Crossing guards will receive EPL based on their average 2-week work schedule.

C. Which employees are eligible for EPL?

Part-time, full-time, and hourly/seasonal employees, including new hires, are eligible for EPL.

Election poll workers are not eligible for EPL.

D. What purposes can employees use EPL?

EPL is intended to support employees through the COVID-19 outbreak. EPL may only be used for the following purposes:

- *COVID-19-related illness*
- *COVID-19-related illness of a family member*
Quarantine
- *Respite needs in relation to COVID-19*
- *Care for the employee's child(ren) if the school or place of care for the child(ren) has been closed, or the childcare provider is unavailable due to COVID-19 precautions. EPL is not to be used as additional vacation time or to volunteer with community organizations, even if those organizations are supporting COVID-19 efforts.*

E. When will employees see EPL on their paycheck?

Employees should expect to see EPL on their April 3rd paycheck, but they can begin to use EPL immediately.

F. Does EPL expire?

Yes, EPL is only available through December 31, 2020. On January 1, 2021, any EPL balance will expire. This is like floating holiday leave, which also expires at the end of the year. EPL is available through all of 2020 because the Center for Disease Control believes that the pandemic may last at least this long. Therefore, employees should be careful to preserve the EPL for use with COVID-19 related issues, and understand that we may be dealing with this for the rest of 2020.

G. If an employee leaves City employment, will their EPL balance be paid out?

*No, EPL is intended to support employees through the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees leaving City employment before December 31, 2020, will not be paid out for EPL balances. EPL balances are **not** eligible for conversion upon retirement, like a sick leave balance would be.*

H. Can employees donate EPL to a work colleague?

No.

I. What are the City's expectations for employees using EPL?

The City is providing EPL so that employees can maintain their health and the well-being of their families. If employees are sick with COVID-19-like symptoms, they should use EPL to stay home from work. If employees are advised to quarantine as the result of possible exposure to COVID-19, they should use EPL to complete the full quarantine.

J. Can employees use EPL for medical needs or illnesses other than COVID-19?

No, EPL may not be used for other illnesses, surgeries, or medical needs that are not related to COVID-19.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to the flu, the common cold, and allergies. If you have COVID-19 related symptoms, you can use EPL until a medical determination is made. Common COVID-19 symptoms may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

K. Can employees use EPL before using all of their sick leave?

Yes, employees can use EPL before using sick leave.

L. Do employees need approval from Human Resources before accessing EPL?

No, employees should work with their supervisor(s) to use EPL in the same way they do for sick leave.

M. Who can employees contact with specific questions about EPL?

Employees can email hr@cityofmadison.com. Please use the email subject “EPL Use Question” so that the email can be quickly routed to the appropriate person.

Section II: Negative Sick Leave Balances

A. What are negative sick leave balances?

The City provides a substantial sick leave benefit. However, employees gain sick leave over time instead of receiving a lump sum at the beginning of the year. This means that new employees or employees who have had recent illnesses may not have adequate sick leave balances to deal with difficulties associated with COVID-19.

This guidance allows employees to use sick leave that they have not yet earned through the end of 2020. For employees without sick leave, or with low balances, this will result in a negative sick leave balance in ESS and on paychecks.

B. Who is eligible to have a negative sick leave balance?

All City employees who receive a sick leave benefit will be able to use sick leave that they have not yet earned during 2020 for COVID-19 related issues as outlined below. Additionally, employees may use sick leave if the employee loses childcare due to school closings, daycare closings or other losses of childcare due to COVID-19 related issues.

- *Illness*
- *Illness of a family member*
- *Quarantine*
- *Exhaustion of EPL (illness only)*

C. Do employees have to request running a negative sick leave balance?

No, all employees will automatically be able to run a negative balance.

D. How much unearned sick leave can an employee use?

An employee may not use more sick leave than they would be expected to accrue by December 31, 2020.

E. If an employee leaves City service, do they have to repay a negative sick leave balance?

No, employees who leave City service before December 31, 2020, will not be required to repay a negative sick leave balance.

F. How will the Sick Leave Advance impact employees retiring in 2020?

No impact is anticipated on employees retiring in 2020. Employees will be credited for the amount of sick leave they have in their account at the time of retirement. A negative balance will be considered 0 at that time. For example, if an employee has a positive sick leave balance, and retires in July, they will not be advanced the amount of sick leave they would have otherwise earned through the end of the year.

G. Who can employees contact with specific questions?

Employees can email hr@cityofmadison.com. Please use the email subject “Negative Sick Leave Balance Question” so that the email can be quickly routed to the appropriate person.

Section III: Caring for Children during School and Daycare Closures

A. Can employees work from home to provide care for their children?

Yes, the mayor has authorized teleworking for employees with approval from their supervisors.

B. How can supervisors support employees during school closures?

Supervisors are encouraged to support flexible work schedules, to redistribute tasks, and to permit telework when possible.

The City recognizes that some employees may not be as efficient when teleworking as they are when working with all of their office resources available. However, if employees can no longer substantially meet their position responsibilities as a result of childcare responsibilities, they should use EPL, vacation leave, floating holiday time, comp time, sick leave, and/or AWOP leave.

C. Can employees use Emergency Paid Leave for childcare responsibilities?

Yes, EPL may be used for this purpose as well as to care for children or a family member who have COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms, consistent with the guidance above in Section I, D.

Section IV: Employee Availability

A. What do I do with an employee who shows up to work, but appears to be symptomatic?

If an employee who wants to work appears to be symptomatic, they should be sent home immediately. If they can get a release from their provider within 72 hours indicating they are indeed able to be at work, their time off of work will be compensated as Administrative Leave. If the employee cannot get a release from their provider, they should remain at home,

using their own accrued leave, until they are no longer symptomatic and ready to return to work. It should be stressed that employees need to stay home when sick and if they have any symptoms that could be COVID-19- related, they should follow the DHS guidance before returning to work. Symptomatic people (regardless of a confirmed COVID test), can come off isolation after these 3 things have happened:

- *You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers); and*
- *Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved);and*
- *At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared*

We hope that employees will be hesitant to put others at risk, and will voluntarily take themselves out of work and willingly exhaust their appropriate leave options.

B. Should we allow an employee to work if we have knowledge that they may have come in contact with someone who is symptomatic or has tested positive for COVID-19?

Employees should not be sent home if they are not symptomatic, even if they indicate they may have had incidental contact with someone who is symptomatic. They should also not be sent home if they have had incidental contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. As this virus spreads throughout our community, it is becoming increasingly more challenging to manage the degrees of separation between our employees and suspected or confirmed carriers of this virus.

Since we have community spread the, 'where did you go' line of questioning is no longer relevant. We now consider everyone in Dane County to be 'low risk' assuming that COVID-19 is everywhere. Hence, restrictions on movements/gatherings/social distancing are still the best defense. Ideally, employees who able to telework should do so if there is a medium or high risk level of contact with someone presumed to have COVID-19. Employees unable to telework should monitor themselves closely for any COVID-19-related symptoms, but be allowed to work as long as they are asymptomatic.

C. Now that there is "Community Spread" what are the risk factors for exposure?

With community spread you should assume any time you're in the community there is some risk of exposure to the virus.

Exposure Risk:

Exposure risk is highest when an individual is in less than 6 feet of a symptomatic individual or someone who has been confirmed for COVID-19 for a period of time longer than 10 minutes.

These employees should not be at work. They should self-quarantine and symptom monitor for 14 days. If symptoms develop, they should contact their healthcare provider and pursue testing options and follow provider guidance with recommendations for returning to work.

If an employee has been in contact (within 6 feet) with someone who is suspected of or confirmed with COVID-19, but for less than 10 minutes, they should be requested to monitor

symptoms for 14 days. They can continue working in this scenario; however, if at any time, the individual develops symptoms, they should notify their supervisor, pursue testing, and follow recommendations before returning to work.

D. What if an employee really doesn't want to work due to fear or pre-existing health conditions?

Employees who are not symptomatic, but are concerned about whether they are able to be at work due to pre-existing health conditions and the possibility of making contact with a COVID-19 carrier while working should be allowed to stay at home at their choice. Telework options would be ideal for such situations if possible. If teleworking isn't a possibility, the employee should be able to use their choice of paid leave to cover their shift if telework is not possible – approved AWOP may also be an option. Employees in this scenario would not be put on administrative leave as they are choosing not to work, whereas those on administrative leave are in a position where work is not available and they are being made available for possible reassignment.