

City of Memphis

Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions

Please note – this document will be updated periodically as new information and guidance emerges.

Updated April 9, 2020

City of Memphis is committed to maintaining a respectful, safe, inclusive and equitable workplace. As we move through this challenging time, we want to keep all employees safe as we serve the public.

WHAT TOPICS ARE INCLUDED IN THIS DOCUMENT?

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- [TRAVEL](#)
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GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is Coronavirus?

Information on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) can be found at the website for the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

2. What can be done to prevent the spread of the virus?

- a. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- b. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- c. Stay at home when sick.
- d. Cover cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in trash.
- e. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with disinfectants.
Resource: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-releases-list-disinfectants-use-against-covid-19>
- f. Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
For additional information, see the CDC's website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

3. What can employee do who is feeling anxious about the Coronavirus in general?

CONCERN EAP is available for tele-counseling by calling 901-458-4000. Teletherapy is also available for employees on Blue Cross Blue Shield by calling 1-888-283-6691.

4. What is “close contact” with a person with COVID-19?

Close contact is defined by the CDC as being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for more than 10 minutes; close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on).

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5. What should an employee do if they have had close contact with/been exposed to a person with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 and the employee has symptoms?

The employee should immediately go home to self-isolate and report the exposure to City of Memphis HR by calling benefits at 901-636-6800. Employees will be required to remain out of the workplace for 14 days from the estimated last day of exposure regardless of displayed symptoms. The employee must remain out of the workplace until they receive clearance from a healthcare provider or has negative COVID-19 test result to return to work.

6. How do I know if I have high or medium exposure risk?

Exposure Risk Assessment is based on the CDC's guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html>. An example of high exposure risk would be living or caring for with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

7. What should I do if I think I have been exposed to the virus?

If the employee believes that he/she could have been exposed to COVID-19 and/or begins to develop symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) that employee must immediately contact his/her healthcare provider to get guidance on next steps. The employee is required to notify City of Memphis HR as a public health precaution by calling benefits 1-901-636-6800. The employee must remain out of the workplace until they receive clearance from a healthcare provider or has negative COVID-19 test result to return to work.

8. What if I begin to develop symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) during quarantine?

You must immediately contact your healthcare provider to get guidance on next steps. You are required to notify City of Memphis HR by calling benefits at 1-901-636-6800, as a public health precaution. The employee must remain out of the workplace until his/her symptoms have resolved for at least 72 hours and he/she has negative COVID-19 test result or medical clearance to return to work.

9. I have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Am I required to report a COVID-19 Diagnosis?

As a public health precaution, all City employees are required to report a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or exposure to a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. This includes any employee who: is positively diagnosed with COVID-19; has been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19; is living in the same household as a person diagnosed with COVID-19; is an intimate partner of a person diagnosed with COVID-19; or is caring for a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Employees falling into any of these categories must notify City of Memphis HR of the diagnosis or exposure by calling benefits at 1-901-636-6800. Employees will be required to **remain out of the workplace for 14 days from the estimated last day of exposure regardless of displayed symptoms**. The employee must remain out of the workplace until they receive clearance from a healthcare provider or has negative COVID-19 test result to return to work.

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10. Can I take leave if I have high or medium risk and need to quarantine, have COVID-19 symptoms, been diagnosed with COVID-19 or need to take care of someone with COVID-19 symptoms?

Yes. See the leave options below.

LEAVE OPTIONS

11. What leave options are available?

Congress recently passed and President Trump signed the “Family First Coronavirus Response Act” (FFCRA), which became effective April 1, 2020. There are two primary employment provisions 1) **Emergency Paid Sick Leave** and 2) **Emergency Family and Medical Leave Act**.

12. When did FFCRA go into effect?

April 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020.

13. Am I eligible for FFCRA leave?

Most Full and Part Time employees are eligible. **However, Commissioned employees, Communications employees, PSTs, Recruits and EMS employees within the Police and Fire Divisions are not eligible.**

EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE

14. What is Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)?

Emergency Paid Sick leave is a benefit for an employee’s own COVID-19 related condition/status or for an employee providing COVID-19 related care to someone else.

15. When is an employee eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave? An employee is eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave when he/she is unable to work or telework because the employee is:

Employees needing leave for their own illness or isolation

- a. subject to a quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19,
- b. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns, or
- c. is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis, or

Employees needing leave for the care of another person

- d. caring for an individual who is subject to quarantine or isolation order or has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns; or
- e. caring for their child if their school or day care has been closed, or the child care provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.

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16. What amount will I be paid and for how long for Emergency Paid Sick Leave?

Employees needing leave for their own illness or isolation

- **Full Time employees** are entitled up to 80 hours of paid sick leave at their **regular pay** up to \$511 per day with a cap of \$5,110 over a 10 day/two-week benefit period.
- **Part time** employees are entitled to payment for a number of hours equal to the number of hours that such employee works, on average, over a 2-week period, at their **regular rate of pay**, up to \$511 per day with a cap of \$5,110 over a 10 day/two-week benefit period.

Employees needing leave for the care of another person

- **Full Time employees** are entitled up to 80 hours of paid sick leave at 2/3 of their regular rate of pay, or 2/3 of the applicable minimum wage, whichever is greater, up to \$200 per day with a cap \$2,000 over a 10 day/two-week benefit period.
- **Full Time employees** can elect to use 1/3 of their paid leave PTO to receive full salary.
- **Part Time employees** are entitled to 2/3 of their regular rate of pay or 2/3 of the applicable minimum wage, whichever is greater up to \$200 per day with a cap \$2,000 over a 10 day/two-week benefit period. The remaining 1/3 is unpaid leave.

17. When is Emergency Paid Sick Leave available?

Emergency Paid sick leave is available for immediate use and does not require a waiting period or accrual.

18. Last week I was out sick due to COVID-19 symptoms, can I receive the Emergency Paid Sick Leave benefit?

No, the benefit begins on April 1, 2020 and it is not retroactive.

19. How do I apply for Emergency Paid Sick Leave?

Employees can apply for these benefits online in the **COVID section** at www.totalrewards.memphistn.gov or by sending an email to the leave coordinator at leavecoordinator@memphistn.gov.

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20. I am a Full-Time employee in the Fire or Police Division who is not eligible for FFCRA leave, can I be paid if I experience any of the following situations?

- In quarantine or isolation due to an order related to COVID-19, or
- Advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns, or
- Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis

The City is providing the following options for salary continuity. Full-time Fire and Police Division employees (**High/Medium Exposure Risk/Awaiting Test Results**) may use accrued and donated leaves based on eligibility in the following order:

- Sick Leave
- Donated Leave (for current sick leave bank participants)
- Vacation and Bonus Leave
- Borrowed Sick Leave (up to 80 hours for 8-hour employees and 96-144 hours for 24-hour employees)

21. I am a Part-Time employee in the Fire or Police Division who is not eligible for FFCRA leave, can I be paid if I experience any of the following situations?

- In quarantine or isolation due to an order related to COVID-19, or
- Advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns, or
- Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis

Part-time Fire and Police Division employees (**High/Medium Exposure Risk/Awaiting Test Results**) will be paid for fourteen (14) days after being identified as having high or medium exposure risk. Payment will be based on the part-time employees' monthly average of hours worked and 100% of current wage rate.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

22. What happens when an employee's child's school or caregiver location is closed?

FFCRA eligible employees may use the above FFCRA emergency sick leave and the below emergency FMLA if an employee's child's school is closed by order of a public official for health-related reasons or the child's place of care is closed by order of a public official for a health-related reason. This also applies to the closing of private schools.

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EMERGENCY FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

23. What is Emergency Family Medical Leave (EFMLA)?

Emergency Family Medical Leave is a benefit that allows an employee to care for their son or daughter who is under 18 and whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 related reasons.

24. Am I eligible for the Emergency FMLA benefit?

Most Full and Part-time employees who have been employed by the City of Memphis for 30 calendar days or more are eligible. **However, Commissioned employees, Communications employees, PSTs, Recruits and EMS employees within the Police and Fire Divisions are not eligible.**

25. If approved, how much Emergency FMLA leave can I take? Up to 12 Weeks.

26. How do I apply for Emergency FMLA due to Childcare?

Employees can apply for these benefits online in the **COVID section** at <https://totalrewards.memphistn.gov/> or by sending an email to the leave coordinator at leavecoordinator@memphistn.gov.

27. How long and much will I be paid while on Emergency FMLA?

If approved, an employee is eligible to receive two-thirds (2/3) of regular pay up to \$200/day with a cap \$12,000 over a (12) twelve-week benefit period. The first two weeks/10-day period is unpaid. **However, an employee may use the above Emergency Paid Leave benefit during that period, if available.**

- **Full Time employees** can elect to use 1/3 of their paid leave PTO to receive full salary.
- **Part Time employees** are entitled to 2/3 of their regular rate of pay or 2/3 of the applicable minimum wage, whichever is greater up to \$200 per day with a cap of \$12,000 over a 12-week benefit period. The remaining 1/3 is unpaid leave.

First 10 Days/2 weeks

Employee can use emergency sick leave (see above)

Weeks 3-12

Paid leave at 2/3 pay and capped at \$200/day and \$12,000 total.

Full-time employees may use their own leave to cover the gap and receive full pay.

After 12 weeks

Employee returns to the same or an equivalent position

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TRAVEL

28. What are current high-risk travel areas?

The CDC maintains a list of high risk areas at the <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

29. What should employees do who return from high risk areas?

Any employee traveling to or through an area that is identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with a Level-3 travel health notice or domestic travel advisory, international travel, or a cruise will be required to remain out of the workplace for 14 days from the day the individual returned to Memphis from travel regardless of displayed symptoms.** police and fire employees should use their department protocols.

RETURN TO WORK

30. Is a returning employee required to get medical approval to return?

If an employee has traveled to or through an area that is identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with a Level-3 travel health notice or domestic travel advisory, international travel, or a cruise, the employee will be requested to self-quarantine for 14 days. The employee may return to work after 14 days if no symptoms were displayed during the 14 days. Medical documentation is not required if the employee remained asymptomatic the entire 14 days.

If the employee begins to develop symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) during quarantine, that employee must immediately contact their healthcare provider to get guidance on next steps. The employee must remain out of the workplace for 14 days and may return once he or she can provide a negative Covid-19 test result to or clearance from his or her health care provider to return to work.

RETURN TO WORK – COVID CONFIRMATION

31. What happens if an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19?

If an employee who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, is under investigation for COVID-19, or exposed to a person diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee is required to notify City of Memphis HR of the diagnosis as a public health precaution by calling benefits at 1-901-636-6800. The employee must immediately contact his/her health care provider to get guidance on next steps. The employee should immediately begin at-home isolation, and in the employee should follow guidance from Public Health and the employee's health care provider.

The employee should remain under at-home isolation for 72 hours after their symptoms resolve and a total of 14 days before returning to work. The employee should also start identifying their close contacts (less than 6ft and more than 10 mins). The employee must remain out of the workplace for 14 days and may return once he or she can provide a negative Covid-19 test result or clearance from his or her health care provider to return to work.

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32. I still have questions about these topics. Where can I get additional information?

Visit City of Memphis Total Rewards Covid-19 page at <https://totalrewards.memphistn.gov/>