

## COVID-19 LEAVE POLICY

Original Effective Date March 16, 2020

Revised and Re-Promulgated March 24, 2020

Revised and Re-Promulgated April 1, 2020

To minimize the spread of illness during the COVID-19 City of Columbia emergency declaration signed by the City Manager on March 16, 2020, the City has developed the following enhanced leave provisions for permanent employees. **This policy has been revised effective April 1, 2020.**

**1. City of Columbia COVID-19 Leave.** COVID-19 leave is authorized by the City Manager to use for absences related to COVID -19 during the declared emergency. With the pay period beginning March 22, 2020 each full-time permanent city employee on the annual 2080 hours per year schedule shall be granted 80 hours of COVID-19 leave. Fire emergency services employees on the annual 2912 hours per year schedule shall be granted 136 hours of COVID-19 leave. Part-time permanent employees shall receive a prorated amount of COVID-19 leave based on their FTE status. COVID-19 leave may be used for any absence described in categories 2-8. **COVID-19 LEAVE SHALL NOT BE USED TO CREATE OVERTIME.**

**2. Employees who are or may be sick.** Influenza and other respiratory infections including COVID-19 have similar if not identical signs and symptoms. Employees who feel sick or who develop a cough and/or shortness of breath should take their temperature twice a day to accurately track their temperature. An employee who is sick shall **NOT** report to work. Supervisors may send home employees that report to work sick. "Sick" in this context means the employee has a fever at or above 100.4°. If an employee develops a fever at or above this level, they shall not return to work until after their fever has reduced below this level for 24 hours after they have stopped taking fever reducing medicines. The employee shall use their applicable leave accruals so that the employee can recover and does not cause others to become sick.

Employees should call their physician when they feel that would be appropriate. If the employee does not have any applicable leave accruals, they may request sick leave advance. If the employee's duties can be performed from home and the employee feels able, follow the City's Remote Work Policies to request authorization to work from home.

**3. Employees with pending COVID-19 test results.** An employee who has been tested for COVID-19 shall not report to work while results are pending. In this circumstance, employees shall use their applicable leave accruals. If the employee does not have any applicable leave accruals, they may request sick leave advance. If the employee's duties can be performed from home and the employee feels able, follow the City's Remote Work Policies to request authorization to work from home.

**4. Employees who test positive for COVID-19.** An employee who tests positive for COVID-19 shall not report to work and cannot return to work until the employee has provided a City of Columbia Return to Duty Form completed by a physician authorizing the employee to return to work. The form must state that the employee has had two negative tests for COVID-19 taken at least 24 hours apart. The completed form shall be provided to the employee's immediate supervisor. In this circumstance, employees shall use their available leave accruals. If the employee does not have any available leave accruals, they may request sick leave advance. If the employee's duties can be performed from home and the employee feels able, follow the City's Remote Work Policies to request authorization to work from home.

**5. Employees who test negative for COVID-19.** An employee who tests negative for COVID-19 cannot return to work until their fever has reduced below 100.4° for 24 hours after they have stopped taking fever-reducing medicines. In this circumstance, employees shall use their applicable leave accruals. If the employee does not have any applicable leave accruals, they may request sick leave advance. If the employee's duties can be performed from home and the employee feels able, follow the City's Remote Work Policies to request authorization to work from home.

**6. Employees with an impacted immediate family member as defined in 19-130.** An employee may feel well, but may have an immediate family member who is sick. If an employee has a household member or they are caring for an immediate family member who is sick as defined in categories 3 – 5 above, the employee shall NOT report to work and should follow the instructions applicable to the family member's category in 3 – 5 above. In this circumstance, employees shall use their applicable leave accruals. If the employee does not have any applicable leave accruals, they may request sick leave advance. If the employee's duties can be performed from home and the employee is able, follow the City's Remote Work Policies to request authorization to work from home.

**7. School, daycare, and similar closings due to COVID-19.** In the event of school, daycare, or adult care closings due to COVID-19, an employee may need to be home with their children or their adult child or parent for whom they need to provide care, even if no one is sick. In this circumstance, employees shall use all available leave accruals. If the employee does not have any applicable leave accruals, they may request sick leave advance. If the employee's duties can be performed from home and the employee is able, follow the City's Remote Work Policies to request authorization to work from home.

**8. NEW PROVISION EFFECTIVE as of March 24, 2020: Stay at Home Order Compliance.** An employee who has been ordered to stay home in compliance with the City Manager and Director of Public Health and Human Services shall be entitled to use COVID Leave for any hours not worked during the pay period even if none of the criteria in the policy issued March 16, 2020 apply. If the employee's duties can be performed from home and the employee is able, follow the City's Remote Work Policies to request authorization to work from home. If work (including telework) is available and the employee chooses not to work or refuses to work, the employee must use other applicable leave accruals.

**9. Sick Leave Advance.** Sick leave advance is leave made available to employees without accumulated leave accruals for use in the circumstances identified above. Employees shall repay the advance of sick leave through future accruals of sick leave, vacation leave, and other authorized leave as it is accrued.

**10. FMLA.** COVID-19 absences may be eligible for FMLA. Supervisors shall complete the online FMLA referral form for all absences related to COVID-19.

**11. Use of Leave for COVID-19 Category**

1. City COVID-19 leave must be used first, before other types of leave granted by the City, when the reason for an employee's absence falls under categories 2- 8.
2. If COVID-19 leave is exhausted and the employee still needs to be absent for a reason described in 2-8, the employee can use any applicable accrual to cover the absence according to the City's regular leave policies.

3. If all applicable accruals according to the City's regular leave policies are exhausted and the employee still needs to be absent for a reason described in 2-8, the employee may use sick leave.
4. If an employee exhausts COVID-19 leave and all other applicable accruals, and still needs to be absent for an eligible reason described in 2-8, the employee can request declared emergency sick leave advance. A new form for declared emergency sick leave advance will be available on <https://www.mycolumbiamo.com/> .

**Note:** Federal Emergency Sick Leave may be taken at any time for absences that qualify as described in the Coronavirus Response Leave Policy effective April 1, 2020.

## **12. Use of Leave for Reasons Other Than COVID-19 Category**

1. If the reason for leave is NOT for any of the categories in 2-8 the City's regular leave policies apply.

**13.** Guard against unlawful discrimination and stigma by learning the facts about COVID- 19 from trusted sources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/related-stigma.html>.

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/>.

**14.** Questions regarding this email should be addressed to your supervisor and/or department director. We will monitor the progression of the outbreak and issue additional or different guidance or directives as may become necessary.