
From: Secretary Brennan
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 8:39 PM
Subject: Updated COVID-19 Information

State employee colleagues,

The health and well-being of each and every state employee along with your families is important to Governor Evers and your agency's leadership. We also recognize that Wisconsin citizens rely on our state employees to provide vital services and program. This is a rapidly evolving situation and we have updated the guidance for state agencies and operations. We continue to strongly encourage non-essential employees to work from home and provide space for our public health, safety and mission critical employees. The latest updates include:

- Travel guidance has been updated to include additional information on the wide community spread occurring in the state of Illinois and limiting all in-state business travel
- Public facing state services are being evaluated based on public health recommendations
- Employees, in consultation with their supervisor, are being allowed to use sick leave in order to take care of dependent family members
- Emergency administrative leave provisions have been instituted for those employees without leave
- Overtime, compensatory time and other pay provisions will be clarified to accommodate employees that are working on COVID-19 related efforts or other operational necessity capacities
- Gatherings of 10 or more people have been canceled and we are encouraging the use of conference calls, video conferencing and other means of social distancing

Travel Update

Until further notice, all in-state business travel regardless of location, will be limited to essential operational needs where no reasonable alternative is available. Previously approved travel must be re-submitted for evaluation to determine whether the planned travel should proceed. Regarding personal travel, employees are strongly discouraged from traveling outside their home communities. Documented cases are growing rapidly both domestically and internationally. If employees must travel, they are directed to communicate personal travel plans to their supervisor or to human resources. Employees may face a higher risk of infection, significant delays returning to Wisconsin, and the requirement to self-isolate upon return, all of which could significantly impact professional and personal obligations at great individual expense. This includes both international travel to Level 3 countries with widespread illness and domestic travel to states where CDC deems there is sustained community transmission. As of March 17, 2020, this includes the states of Illinois, Washington, California, and New York. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updates this information daily [here](#) (click the + sign under the map to see a table that reports CDC's assessment of community transmission in the far right column). Employees are reminded to follow CDC and Wisconsin Department of Health Services guidance regarding travel. Employees who travel personally or are required for business purposes to travel to a state that has sustained community transmission, as determined by the CDC, on the date prior to travel, will not be allowed to return to their workplace for 14 calendar days after your return. This travel restriction will remain in place until further notice as we continue to monitor the efficacy of this measure.

This direction does not apply to essential employees who reside out of state and travel to Wisconsin for work.

Emergency Administrative Leave

Governor Evers is working closely with the Wisconsin Congressional delegation in advocating for paid emergency sick leave for both public and private sector employees. We are working diligently to ensure that Wisconsin is prepared to quickly adopt any emergency federal paid sick leave provisions.

We also understand that certain categories of employees are not eligible for leave and that there may be circumstances in which employees have insufficient leave to alleviate the economic impact of staying away from work. Accordingly, the state is authorizing for certain employees the use of up to 80 hours of paid administrative leave to cover pandemic-related time away from work.

Eligible employees include all limited term employees except those limited term employees hired in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and all employees with no available leave balances other than future legal holiday. Employees who are required to telework or be present for operational necessity are ineligible unless the employer directed them home for flu-like symptoms or the employee is under quarantine at the direction of a health care provider or the employer.

Accordingly, effective March 15, 2020, eligible permanent, project, appointed, and limited term employees may record up to a total of 80 hours, or prorated portion thereof, of paid administrative leave during the period of this public health emergency. This leave may be used by eligible employees for any purpose for self or family care in relation to the pandemic, including but not limited to self-quarantine, self-isolation, being sent home with flu-like symptoms, care of an immediate family member, and child care due to school/day care closures.

Additional information will be provided to further describe eligibility requirements, how to access the emergency leave, and to answer expected questions.

Public Health Emergency Order #5

Gov. Tony Evers today directed Department of Health Services (DHS) Secretary-designee Andrea Palm to issue an agency order prohibiting mass gatherings of 10 people or more to slow the spread of COVID-19. The order makes exceptions for transportation, educational institutions, child care, hotels, military, law enforcement, food pantries, hospitals, long-term care facilities, restaurants and bars can only offer take-out or delivery, grocery stores and convenience stores, utility facilities, job centers, and courts. See full order and list of exemptions [here](#). Additionally, schools will be closed for the duration of the public health emergency.



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