

**Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for Wisconsin State Employees  
Regarding Preparation for Potential Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic**

**Note:** This document contains answers to frequently asked questions for state employees and was prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Administration in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. If a pandemic occurs, more specific direction will be developed to reflect the appropriate practices based on the severity of the particular virus and the duration of the pandemic. Responses below are in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements or state administrative code. If you have additional questions, please ask your supervisor.

<b>Section A: General Information about COVID-19 for Employees</b>		
<u>Questions</u>		<u>Answers</u>
1.	What is the novel coronavirus?	A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the <a href="#">coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans</a> and cause mild illness, like the common cold.
2.	Why is the disease now being called COVID-19?	<p>On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization <a href="#">announced</a> an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan, China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, ‘CO’ stands for ‘corona,’ ‘VI’ for ‘virus,’ and ‘D’ for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as “2019 novel coronavirus” or “2019-nCoV”.</p> <p>There are <a href="#">many types</a> of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.</p>
3.	How does COVID-19 spread?	<p>COVID-19 is a new disease and <b>the CDC is still learning how it spreads</b>, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States. Currently, the virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).</li> <li>• Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.</li> <li>• These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.</li> <li>• People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).</li> <li>• Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.</li> <li>• It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020</p>	<p>4.</p>	<p>For what symptoms should I be monitoring?</p>	<p>COVID-19 presents with flu-like symptoms (fever (&gt;100.4°F), cough or sore throat, headache or body aches, and in some cases diarrhea and vomiting) or acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath).</p> <p><a href="#">Click here to learn more about COVID-19 symptoms.</a></p>
	<p>5.</p>	<p>What is my risk of exposure?</p>	<p>At this time, most U.S. workers remain at low risk of exposure. According to the United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration, at this time, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) emphasizes that, while the novel coronavirus, COVID-19 poses a potentially serious public health threat, the risk to individuals is dependent on exposure. For most people in the United States, including most types of workers, the risk of infection with COVID-19 is currently low.</p>
	<p>6.</p>	<p>Who is most at risk of having complications from COVID-19?</p>	<p>Elderly people with chronic conditions are currently the most at risk from complications from COVID-19. Given the vulnerable populations within the State’s care, careful adherence to guidelines issued by Wisconsin Public Health, supervisors, and human resources is essential. Employees with flu-like symptoms need to stay home. <a href="#">Click here to learn more about people who need extra precautions.</a></p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020</p>	<p>7.</p>	<p>What can I do to limit my risk and help prevent of influenza and viruses like COVID-19?</p>	<p>The <a href="#">CDC</a> advises that the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. There are simple everyday actions everyone can take to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid close contact with people who are sick.</li> <li>• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.</li> <li>• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.</li> <li>• Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Click here to learn more about avoiding illness.</a></p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 3/23/2020</p>	<p>9.</p>	<p>What should I do if I’m experiencing flu-like or respiratory illness symptoms?</p>	<p>Employees who are sick are required to stay home. According to the <a href="#">CDC</a>, employees who have flu-like symptoms or symptoms of acute respiratory illness are told to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (&gt;100.4°F), signs of a fever, AND any respiratory symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath) for at least three days (72 hours) without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants) AND seven days have passed since symptoms first appeared. Employees should follow their work unit’s sick leave notification procedures, including notifying their supervisor and staying home if they are sick.</p> <p>If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever (&gt;100.4°F) and/or symptom of respiratory illness, such as a cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider immediately BEFORE going to the clinic or emergency room.</p>
	<p>10.</p>	<p>Are the procedures different if I am a health care provider (or if I work in a health care setting)?</p>	<p>Employees who regularly work in health care settings, including health care providers, support staff, and security staff, must remain home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours. The CDC has provided <a href="#">additional guidance for health care providers who provide direct patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.</a></p>

<p><b>Updated</b> 3/23/2020</p>	<p>11.</p>	<p>What should I do if I recently traveled internationally?</p>	<p>Employees returning from a <a href="#">CDC Level 3 travel advisory area</a> (click link to view current list on CDC website) may not return to the workplace for 14 days. To protect the community, employees are strongly encouraged to self-quarantine for 14 days and monitor for symptoms (fever (&gt;100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath) during this time.</p> <p>For those returning from any international location under a <a href="#">Level 2 CDC Travel Health Notice</a>, employees are advised to self-monitor for 14 days for symptoms (fever (&gt;100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath) but may return to work.</p> <p>Employees who are not permitted to return to the workplace following return from a CDC Level 3 travel advisory area or who develop symptoms while self-monitoring, should notify their supervisor and/or local HR that they will not be into work. For more information, see the <a href="#">CDC's guidance on prevention and treatment</a>.</p> <p>If you become sick with COVID-19 following travel, in addition to the information provided by your healthcare provider, here are <a href="#">steps to take when you are sick</a>.</p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020</p>	<p>12.</p>	<p>What if I have COVID-19 or have a family member with it?</p>	<p><b>Employees who are sick with COVID-19 or suspect they are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19</b> should follow the <a href="#">steps identified by the CDC</a> to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community. Employees will self-quarantine for 14 days and may not return to work until they are free of fever (&gt;100.4°F) AND respiratory symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath) for at least three days (72 hours) without the use of fever-reducing medicine AND seven days have passed since symptoms first appeared. Contact the DHS Division of Public Health or your local health department for more information.</p> <p>The CDC recommends employees who are well but who have a <b>sick family member</b> at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance for <a href="#">how to conduct a risk assessment</a> of their potential exposure.</p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 7/13/2020</p>	<p>14.</p>	<p>Where can I learn more information?</p>	<p>Additional up-to-date resources and information about COVID-19 can be found here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Wisconsin Department of Health Services</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">United States Department of State</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Updated</b> 4/08/2020</p>	<p>15.</p>	<p>What are the current limits for domestic travel (travel within the United States)?</p>	<p>As the COVID-19 virus has reached community spread levels throughout the United States, specific regional travel restrictions are no longer relevant. All in-state business travel, regardless of location, has been limited to essential operational needs where no reasonable alternative is available. Regarding personal travel, all employees should refer to the travel advice available from <a href="#">DHS</a> and the <a href="#">CDC</a>.</p>

			<p>Employees with the following symptoms are typically sick and should contact their health care provider. In most cases, you will be advised to self-isolate by staying home and not coming to work until you are free of fever (&gt;100.4°F), signs of a fever, AND respiratory symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath) for at least three days (72 hours) without the use of fever-reducing medicine AND seven days have passed since symptoms first appeared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Flu-like symptoms [fever of 100.4° F or higher (with an oral thermometer)]</li> <li>• *Cough or sore throat</li> <li>• Headache or body aches</li> <li>• Diarrhea and vomiting</li> <li>• *Symptoms of acute respiratory illness (fever of 100.4° F or higher using an oral thermometer), coughing, shortness of breath</li> </ul> <p><i>*Denotes COVID-19 Symptoms</i></p> <p>This direction is critical to prevent passing the virus to others since people remain contagious even after they are feeling better.</p>
<b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020	16.	What if I ONLY spent time in an airport in a Level 3 country or state with community transmission?	<p>At this time employees are not being asked to self-quarantine if their only time was in an airport. However, employees should still self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.</p> <p>Employees with the following symptoms are typically sick and should contact their health care provider. In most cases, you will be advised to self-isolate by staying home and not coming to work until you are free of fever (&gt;100.4°F), signs of a fever, AND respiratory symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath) for at least three days (72 hours) without the use of fever-reducing medicine AND seven days have passed since symptoms first appeared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Flu-like symptoms [fever of 100.4° F or higher (with an oral thermometer)]</li> <li>• *Cough or sore throat</li> <li>• Headache or body aches</li> <li>• Diarrhea and vomiting</li> <li>• *Symptoms of acute respiratory illness (fever of 100.4° F or higher using an oral thermometer), coughing, shortness of breath</li> </ul> <p><i>*Denotes COVID-19 Symptoms</i></p> <p>This direction is critical to prevent passing the virus to others since people remain contagious even after they are feeling better.</p>
<b>Section B: Reporting to Work</b>			
<b>General Policy:</b> -The Governor’s Safer at Home order effective March 25, 2020, directs that all non-essential state employees shall work from home. State facilities will be limited to those identified by their supervisors or leadership as requiring access.			
<b>Updated</b> 3/26/2020	1.	I am worried about being exposed to the coronavirus at work. Should I still report to work, and will I be protected?	If directed to report to work, you should continue to report to work. As state employees, we have obligations to maintain services to the extent possible during an emergency. We will be making every effort to reduce exposure in our workplaces.

	2.	Will I know if someone at work has COVID-19?	If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, agencies will inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for <a href="#">how to conduct a risk assessment</a> of their potential exposure.
	3.	Am I subject to disciplinary action if I refuse to come to work?	Employees who fail to come to work in a pandemic will be treated just as if they failed to come to work at any other time and may be subject to disciplinary action.
<b>Updated</b> 7/13/2020	4.	May I use vacation leave, sick leave, or any other type of leave in order to avoid working during a pandemic?	<p><b>New:</b> Refer to Section E for more information about using the Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions created under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).</p> <p>Employees may request leave time and it will be reviewed, and approved or denied, in accordance with the leave provisions of their contract or state administrative code. In general, our objective is to ensure the health and safety of our state employees while continuing the State's critical services. At this time, our goal is to encourage employees to report to work. However, based on the virulence of the virus and depending on recommendations from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, discretionary leaves (i.e., non-mandatory leaves) may be considered.</p> <p>While an employee may use any available leave balance when ill, sick leave is generally only available for an employee's illness or that of their immediate family. However, portions of s. ER 18.03(4)(c), Wis. Adm. Code, which governs sick leave, have been modified through an emergency administrative rule to ensure sick leave can be used to provide care for family members, including specifically, child care due to school closures.</p> <p>This means that sick leave can now be used to care for any member of an employee's immediate family who requires their care, regardless of whether sick or not. Sick leave can now also be used to provide any "temporary care . . . for a limited period of time to permit the employee to make other arrangements" and no longer requires prior approval to use sick leave longer than 5 working days for care of family members. This change ends on October 8, 2020 when the emergency rule expires.</p>
	5.	Who is included in the definition of "immediate family"?	<p>"Immediate family" means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents, step-parents, grandparents, foster parents, children, step-children, grandchildren, foster children, brothers and their spouses, sisters and their spouses, of the employee or spouse;</li> <li>• The spouse;</li> <li>• Aunts and uncles, sons-in-law or daughters-in-law of the employee or spouse; and</li> <li>• Other relatives of the employee or spouse providing they reside in the same household of the employee.</li> </ul>

	6.	If my job requires me to work with the public, should I continue to come to work?	Yes, unless directed not to come to work. The State will make efforts to provide the appropriate protective measures to employees assigned to work in a situation that would put them at greater risk of exposure than the typical interactions encountered in conducting usual life activities. These measures include increased hygiene measures, personal protective equipment, social distancing measures, or physical barriers.
	7.	If I am exposed to the COVID-19 virus on the job and become ill, am I eligible for Workers Compensation benefits?	The COVID-19 virus, like Influenza, would most likely not be compensable under Wisconsin Workers Compensation, as it would be very difficult to determine where and when an employee was exposed to the influenza virus.
	8.	What if I am assigned to perform work that isn't normally part of my position, either in my own agency or somewhere else? Can I refuse the assignment?	In times of emergency, we all need to remain flexible to get the work done. It is likely that employees may be asked to do work outside their normal duties. As the effects of a pandemic are realized in Wisconsin, state employees should anticipate that they may be required to assist in performing work for absent or ill co-workers or ensure that the State is able to provide essential services.
	9.	Can I refuse an assignment that would put me at greater risk of being exposed to the COVID-19 virus?	No, employees must work as assigned unless granted leave. As the effects of a pandemic are realized in Wisconsin, state employees should anticipate that they may be required to assist in performing work for absent or ill co-workers to ensure that the State is able to provide essential services. The State will make an effort to provide the appropriate protective measures to employees assigned to work in a situation that would put them at greater risk of exposure than the typical interactions encountered in conducting usual life activities. These measures include increased hygiene measures, personal protective equipment, social distancing measures, or physical barriers.
<b>Updated</b> 7/13/2020	10.	What is social distancing? Will the State implement social distancing in the workplace?	Social distancing measures are measures intended to reduce the spread of a pandemic respiratory virus by reducing direct contact between individuals. Social distancing measures may include minimization of face-to-face meetings, staggered work hours and days, temporary work from home arrangements, spacing of work areas, physical barriers between individuals, or other similar practices. Agencies are required to observe social distancing requirements in their respective agencies/buildings, to the greatest extent possible.
<b>Updated</b> 7/13/2020	11.	What should I do if I believe I may have the COVID-19 virus?	Minimizing the spread of the virus is critical. Employees who are ill should contact their supervisor to report their illness. Employees should not report to work if they believe they are ill. Use of sick or other paid or unpaid leave will be handled pursuant to existing policies, state administrative code, and applicable collective bargaining agreements. Employees should also contact their health provider or local health department. See C.2. below regarding use of sick leave.
<b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020	12.	What if I have been directly exposed to the COVID-19 virus but do not have symptoms?	Depending on the circumstances presented by the particular respiratory virus, employees who have been directly exposed to the virus through actions such as caring for an ill family member may choose to remain at home for a period to ensure they do not carry the virus into the workplace. Documentation of exposure may be required and employees choosing to remain home will be required to use available leave. Employees should also contact their health provider or local health department.

			<p><b>Note: Employees who are sick with COVID-19 or suspect they are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, will self-quarantine for 14 days and may not return to work</b> until the quarantine has concluded and the employee is no longer considered infectious. In addition, employees should follow the <a href="#">steps identified by the CDC</a> to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.</p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020</p>	13.	What if I have been exposed to an individual who has been quarantined?	<p>Individuals who have been quarantined are not necessarily ill; they may have had contact with an infected person and must remain at home until it is clear whether they become ill or not. Thus, exposure to a quarantined person may not mean any exposure at all to the virus. Employees who have been directly exposed to the virus through actions such as caring for a family member who was isolated due to illness at that time (or was subsequently isolated) may choose to remain at home for a period to ensure they do not carry the virus into the workplace. Documentation of exposure may be required and employees choosing to remain home will be required to use available leave.</p> <p><b>Employees who are sick with COVID-19 or suspect they are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, will self-quarantine for 14 days and may not return to work</b> until the quarantine has concluded and the employee is no longer considered infectious. In addition, employees should follow the <a href="#">steps identified by the CDC</a> to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.</p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 7/13/2020</p>	14.	If I have traveled to a location where there are confirmed cases of COVID-19, may I return to work immediately?	<p>Employees who are not exhibiting flu-like symptoms, may return to work. Please be aware that agency policies may vary depending on the nature of your job. However, if you traveled to or from a level 3 country you may need to self-monitor or to self-quarantine. Refer to questions in Section A for more information.</p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020</p>	15.	Can my Employer send me home if I have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus but choose to work?	<p>Employees will not normally be sent home unless exhibiting significant flu-like symptoms. Effective April 1, 2020, employees who are sent home will no longer be required to use available leave balances if the employee has available leave in accordance with the federal Emergency Paid Sick Leave program. Employees who have been exposed to COVID-19 will remain at home until the 14 days for self-monitoring have passed and the employee is symptom free.</p> <p><i>Refer to Section E for more information about using the Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions created under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).</i></p>
	16.	What if I believe a co-worker has the COVID-19 virus or has been exposed to it?	<p>Employee concerns should be discussed with their supervisor or someone in Human Resources. Despite these concerns, employees will be expected to report to work as directed.</p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020</p>	17.	Will the State develop policies and procedures for what state agencies should do if someone becomes ill at work?	<p>Yes, employees may be sent home using appropriate protocols recommended by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Employees who are sent home will be required to use available leave balances.</p>

	18.	What if I am in a group considered to be a "high risk" (i.e., I have a chronic health condition which makes me more susceptible to the COVID-19 virus) and for which authorities are recommending staying at home?	Employees who provide a detailed letter from their medical practitioner may use personal paid or unpaid leave. Sick leave is available only as currently provided in state administrative code or collective bargaining agreements, which typically limit use to periods of actual sickness. See question B.4., above, regarding leave requests.
<i>New</i> 3/13/2020	19.	What direction is available for student interns?	Students at certain universities are being asked to take essential belongings, academic materials, laptops and medications with them for Spring Break and not return to residence halls following Spring Break. We hope that students will return to their permanent residence and complete their coursework remotely.  The State of Wisconsin will release student interns who are able to return to their permanent residence from their government internship obligations. Students who are remaining in local communities may continue working their internship and should follow the guidance provided to all employees.
<i>Updated</i> 3/18/2020	20.	What is the current status of employee travel for state business?	Until further notice, <b>travel on all state business regardless of location will be limited to essential operational needs where no reasonable alternative is available.</b> Previously approved travel will be re-submitted for evaluation to determine whether the planned travel should proceed.
<i>Updated</i> 7/13/2020	21.	What is the current direction related to social distancing or meetings?	As noted in question B. 10, agencies will observe social distancing requirements to the greatest extent possible based on operational needs. Government bodies should continue to follow the Wisconsin Department of Justice's Office of Open Government <a href="#">guidance</a> regarding holding government meetings, and should consult directly with that office regarding specific open meetings questions
<i>Updated</i> 7/13/2020	22.	Can I wear a cloth face covering (mask) to work?	Employees of DOC, DHS, and DVA should follow the specific direction given by the agency and may be required to wear other masks, or personal protective equipment, if available. Effective July 13, 2020 all employees are required to wear a face mask while in state facilities. Refer to the Face Mask FAQs in Section F for additional information.

### Section C: Use of Sick Leave and Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave

**General Policy:** Discretionary leave may be limited. Use of sick leave or FMLA-qualifying leave will be administered in accordance with existing labor agreements and state administrative code, unless application of leave provisions are modified by Executive Order of the Governor or the federal government.

	1.	Is pandemic influenza or COVID-19 an FMLA qualifying condition and will I be able to use FMLA leave?	While influenza is generally not covered by FMLA, complications arising from influenza or COVID-19 may qualify for FMLA leave in relation to the employee's own illness or the illness of a qualifying family member. The usual medical documentation may be required.
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<p><b>Updated</b> 7/13/2020</p>	<p>2.</p>	<p>What if my children's school or day care provider is closed and I have no one else to take care of the kids?</p>	<p><b>New:</b> Refer to Section E for more information about using the Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions created under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).</p> <p>Employees may request to use vacation, personal holiday, comp time, or leave without pay. In addition, portions of s. ER 18.03(4)(c), Wis. Adm. Code, which governs sick leave, have been modified through an emergency administrative rule to ensure sick leave can be used to provide care for family members, including specifically, child care due to school closures.</p> <p>This means that sick leave can be used to care for any member of an employee’s immediate family who requires their care, regardless of whether sick or not. Sick leave can now also be used to provide any “temporary care . . . for a limited period of time to permit the employee to make other arrangements” and no longer requires prior approval to use sick leave longer than 5 working days for care of family members. This change ends on October 8, 2020 when the emergency rule expires.</p> <p>Documentation may be required. Employees should contact their agency payroll office regarding the possible consequences of using leave without pay.</p>
<p><b>Updated</b> 4/05/2020</p>	<p>3.</p>	<p>What if members of my family are sick?</p>	<p><b>New:</b> Refer to Section E for more information about using the Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions created under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).</p> <p>Use of sick leave, FMLA leave, or other discretionary leave will be administered in accordance with applicable labor agreements and state administrative code. See C.2. above regarding use of sick leave under the declared emergency. Use of discretionary leave may be limited. See question B.4., above, regarding leave requests.</p>
	<p>4.</p>	<p>What if members of my family who <i>do not</i> live in the same household as me are sick? May I stay home to care for them?</p>	<p>Use of sick leave, FMLA leave, or other discretionary leave will be administered in accordance with applicable labor agreements and state administrative code. Use of discretionary leave may be limited. See question B.4., above, regarding leave requests.</p>

**Section D: Paid Administrative Leave Usage**

**General Policy:** The state recognizes that employees who do not earn paid leave (LTEs) or those with limited or no available accrued paid leave may have no choice but to work, even if ill, due to the economic impact of staying home. It also recognizes that many state employees may face childcare challenges in light of the school closings resulting from the emergency. This leave was initially intended to help minimize the impact of the current public health emergency for eligible permanent, project, appointed and limited term employees prevented or prohibited from reporting to work and unable to telework for the purpose of self or family care in relation to the pandemic, including but not limited to: self or directed quarantine, self or directed-isolation, care of an immediate family member, or child care issues due to school/day care closures. Due to the Governor’s Safer at Home Order effective March 25, 2020, this policy was extended to non-essential employees who are unable to work remotely. **This program ended May 12, 2020 with the expiration of the Governor’s Safer at Home Order and has been removed from the FAQ list to avoid confusion.**

**Section E: Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)**

**General Policy:** Effective April 1, 2020 the State of Wisconsin has implemented the Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions created under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).

**Emergency Paid Sick Leave:** All state employees, except elected officials and certain health care providers and emergency responders excluded by agencies, are eligible to use emergency sick leave for the following reasons:

1. The employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19. Note: If an employee is exempted from the safer at home order as an essential employee (including healthcare providers and emergency responders), or other applicable order, this reason would not apply.
2. The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
4. The employee is caring for an individual who is subject to an order as described in subparagraph 1. or has been advised as described in subparagraph 2.
5. The employee is caring for a son or daughter of such employee if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, or the child care provider of such son or daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.
6. The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor. (No such conditions have been specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services at the time of this publication).

As permitted by the Act, employees identified as health care providers and emergency responders by their agencies will not be eligible for emergency paid sick leave for the family and child care reasons identified in 4. and 5., above, and future reasons that may be determined under 6., above. However, health care providers and emergency responders will be eligible for emergency paid sick leave for the reasons related to the employee’s own health identified under B. and C., above.

**Expanded Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** The Act creates temporary amendments to the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 which expands the scope of eligible employees, cover child care related to the coronavirus public health emergency, and guarantees paid leave at two-thirds an employee’s regular rate for a certain period. These emergency FMLA provisions apply only through December 31, 2020. The remainder of federal and WI FMLA provisions continue to apply as usual. Except for emergency responders and health care providers, “eligible employee” means an employee who has been employed for at least 30 calendar days by the state.

Also, employees who are laid off, on furlough, or otherwise not permitted to work because of the unavailability of work are excluded from both provisions.

<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	1.	When are these leave programs available?	These programs become effective April 1, 2020 and are available through December 31, 2020.
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	2.	What leave is available under the FFCRA?	<p>The FFCRA provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of emergency paid sick leave when you are unable to work because you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a health care provider)</li> <li>○ Are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis</li> <li>○ Need to care for an individual subject to quarantine (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a health care provider)</li> <li>○ Need to care for a “son or daughter” whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Up to 12 weeks of expanded family medical leave to care for a son or daughter whose school or daycare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.</li> </ul>

<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>3.</p>	<p>How much leave time can I receive under the FFCRA?</p>	<p>Full-time employees are eligible for up to 80 hours of federal emergency sick leave and 12 weeks for care of a son or daughter due to school closure under the expanded FMLA. Please note that these 12 weeks are the standard amount of time permitted for FMLA, no additional time was added under the new law.</p> <p>Part-time employees will receive an amount equal to the average number of hours worked over a two-week period.</p> <p>Health care providers and emergency responders throughout state government are generally excluded from using this provision except for use of the federal emergency sick leave (up to 80 hours) to care for themselves in the event they become ill from COVID-19 or develop symptoms and may need a medical diagnosis.</p>
<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Are all employees eligible for leave under the FFCRA?</p>	<p>As permitted under the FFCRA, employees identified as health care providers and emergency responders by their agencies are eligible for emergency paid sick leave for their own COVID-related illness if unable to work, but are not eligible for emergency paid sick leave for the family and childcare reasons. In addition, employees identified as health care providers and emergency responders by their agencies will not be eligible for expanded FMLA leave. Employees should contact their agency human resources contact to determine whether they are considered a health care provider or emergency responder.</p> <p>Employees must work for the state for 30 days to be eligible for leave under the expanded FMLA. A new employee is not initially eligible for expanded FMLA benefits, but once employed for 30 days, the employee becomes eligible.</p> <p>Elected officials are not eligible for the emergency paid sick leave.</p>
<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>5.</p>	<p>Who is a “health care provider”?</p>	<p>For the purposes of determining which employees may be exempted from emergency paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave, per the Department of Labor, a health care provider is “anyone employed at any doctor’s office, hospital, health care center, clinic, post-secondary educational institution offering health care instruction, medical school, local health department or agency, nursing facility, retirement facility, nursing home, home health care provider, any facility that performs laboratory or medical testing, pharmacy, or any similar institution, employer, or entity. This includes any permanent or temporary institution, facility, location, or site where medical services are provided that are similar to such institutions.”</p> <p>This definition also includes “any individual employed by an entity that contracts with any of the above institutions, employers, or entities institutions to provide services or to maintain the operation of the facility. This also includes anyone employed by any entity that provides medical services, produces medical products, or is otherwise involved in the making of COVID-19 related medical equipment, tests, drugs, vaccines, diagnostic vehicles, or treatments.”</p> <p>Finally, the Secretary or Agency Head, is also able to make an individual determination to identify an employee as a health care provider essential to our response to COVID-19. Agencies are in the process of making these determinations now and will communicate directly with agency staff regarding who is included as a health care provider at each agency.</p>

<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>6.</p>	<p>Who is an “emergency responder”?</p>	<p>For the purposes of determining which employees may be exempted from emergency paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave, per the Department of Labor, an emergency responder is “an employee who is necessary for the provision of transport, care, health care, comfort, and nutrition of such patients, or whose services are otherwise needed to limit the spread of COVID-19. This includes but is not limited to military or national guard, law enforcement officers, correctional institution personnel, fire fighters, emergency medical services personnel, physicians, nurses, public health personnel, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, emergency management personnel, 911 operators, public works personnel, and persons with skills or training in operating specialized equipment or other skills needed to provide aid in a declared emergency as well as individuals who work for such facilities employing these individuals and whose work is necessary to maintain the operation of the facility.”</p> <p>Finally, the Secretary, or Agency Head, is also able to make an individual determination to identify an employee as a health care provider essential to our response to COVID-19. Agencies are in the process of making these determinations now and will communicate directly with agency staff regarding who is included as a health care provider at each agency.</p>
<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>7.</p>	<p>How much do I get paid if I use leave under these programs?</p>	<p><u>Under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave program:</u> Employees will receive their regular rate of pay, subject to a daily maximum of \$511, if the employee is unable to work or telework because they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19</li> <li>• Have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19</li> <li>• Are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and are seeking medical diagnosis</li> </ul> <p>Employees will receive 2/3 of their regular rate of pay, subject to a daily maximum of \$200, if the employee is unable to work or telework because they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring for an individual who is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 or an individual who has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19</li> <li>• Caring for your son or daughter whose school or place of care is closed, or childcare provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 related reasons</li> </ul> <p>**Employees who are receiving 2/3 pay when using the emergency paid sick leave may choose to supplement the additional one-third of their pay by using their own available state leave, but not state-provided paid administrative leave.</p> <p><u>Under the Expanded FMLA program:</u> The first 10 days of expanded family and medical leave for childcare, due to school or day care closure are unpaid. Employees may substitute any available state leave (e.g., vacation, personal leave, sick leave) or emergency paid sick leave. For the following ten weeks, employees will be paid 2/3 of their regular pay rate, subject to a daily maximum of \$200. Paid FMLA for weeks 3-12 cannot be supplemented.</p>

<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	8.	Do I have to use other leave before using either federal leave type?	No. Employees are not required to use their own accrued leave prior to accessing the available federal leave balances.
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	9.	Is all leave under the FMLA now paid leave?	No. Only weeks 3-12 of leave for childcare due to school or day care closure is paid for eligible employees.
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	10.	Are the federal emergency paid sick leave and expanded FMLA retroactive?	No. The provisions are effective beginning April 1, 2020.
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	11.	What documents are needed to request federal emergency paid sick leave or expanded FMLA?	<p>Employees will be asked to fill out a short form to access either leave program. This is primarily to ensure usage is accurately tracked and submitted to the HR/payroll teams. Additional information* may be required as follows:</p> <p>If the employee has been advised by a health care provider** to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The employee’s name</li> <li>• The name of health care provider who advised</li> <li>• A statement that the employee is unable to work, including telework, for that reason</li> <li>• The date(s) for which leave is requested</li> </ul> <p>If employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The employee’s name</li> <li>• The name of health care provider who has been contacted</li> <li>• A statement that the employee is unable to work, including telework, for that reason</li> <li>• The date(s) for which leave is requested</li> </ul> <p>If the employee is caring for a sick family member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee’s name</li> <li>• The name of the individual the employee is caring for</li> <li>• The applicable order (e.g. safer at home order) or name of health care provider** who ordered the individual being cared for to self -quarantine (depending on the reason)</li> <li>• A statement that the employee is unable to work, including telework, for that reason</li> <li>• The date(s) for which leave is requested is all that is required.</li> </ul> <p>If the employee is caring for a son or daughter because the school or place of care has been closed, or the childcare provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The employee’s name</li> <li>• The name of son or daughter and name of the school or day care that is closed.</li> </ul> <p><i>*Note: Medical Coordinators, or supervisors when appropriate, are authorized to request further documentation of the information provided in each scenario listed above when needed.</i></p> <p><i>** “Health care provider” for purposes of determining individuals whose advice to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19 can be relied on as a qualifying reason for emergency paid sick leave, means a licensed doctor of medicine, nurse practitioner, or other health care provider permitted to issue a certification for purposes of the FMLA.</i></p>

<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	13.	Will I continue to earn benefits (health insurance, vacation, etc.) while using the federal programs?	<p>Permanent and project employees will continue to earn continuous service, WRS contributions (by both the employee and employer) and creditable service, annual leave, and sick leave when using the paid emergency sick leave or expanded family and medical leave.</p> <p>For limited term employees, there will be no benefit accrual except as qualifying hours for initial WRS eligibility or creditable service for LTEs who are already WRS-eligible.</p>
<b>New</b> 7/13/2020	14.	Can I use my sick leave or other state paid leave and FFCRA paid sick leave or expanded FMLA concurrently for the same hours?	<p>Employees who are receiving 2/3 pay when using the emergency paid sick leave may choose to supplement the additional one-third of their pay by using their own available state leave, but not state-provided paid administrative leave. For example, a full-time employee could receive eight hours of emergency paid sick leave at the two-thirds rate of pay and also use two and two-thirds hours of vacation or sick leave to receive a full paycheck for eight hours at the employee's regular rate of pay.</p> <p>Employee's cannot use other leave to supplement the 2/3 pay received for weeks three through 12 of expanded FMLA for childcare due to school or day care closure. However, employees can use their own leave as substitute while using expanded FMLA.</p>
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	15.	Who is considered a son or daughter?	<p>Under the FFCRA, a "son or daughter" is your own child, which includes your biological, adopted, or foster child, your stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom you are standing in loco parentis—someone with day-to-day responsibilities to care for or financially support a child. Son or daughter also includes an adult son or daughter (i.e., one who is 18 years of age or older), who (1) has a mental or physical disability, and (2) is incapable of self-care because of that disability. For additional information about in loco parentis or requirements relating to an adult son or daughter, see DOL <a href="#">Fact Sheet #28B</a> or <a href="#">Fact Sheet #28K</a> respectively.</p>
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	16.	What does it mean to be unable to work, including telework for COVID-19 related reasons?	<p>You are unable to work if your employer has work for you and one of the COVID-19 qualifying reasons set forth in the FFCRA prevents you from being able to perform that work, either under normal circumstances at your normal worksite or by means of telework.</p> <p>If you and your employer agree that you will work your normal number of hours, but outside of your normally scheduled hours (for instance early in the morning or late at night), then you are able to work and leave is not necessary unless a COVID-19 qualifying reason prevents you from working that schedule.</p>

<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>17.</p>	<p>If I am or become unable to telework, am I entitled to paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave?</p>	<p>If you have been approved to telework and you are unable to perform those tasks or work the required hours because of one of the qualifying reasons for emergency paid sick leave, then you are entitled to take emergency paid sick leave.</p> <p>Similarly, if you are unable to perform those teleworking tasks or work the required teleworking hours because you need to care for your son or daughter whose school or place of care is closed, or child care provider is unavailable, because of COVID-19 related reasons, then you are entitled to take expanded family and medical leave. Of course, to the extent you are able to telework while caring for your son or daughter, emergency paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave is not available.</p>
<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>18.</p>	<p>How do I record these leave times in STAR?</p>	<p>The federal leave codes will not be available in STAR until the week beginning April 6, 2020. Employees and supervisors will be notified when this function is available. Job aids, along with additional instructions and information will be provided at that time.</p>
<p><b>New</b> 4/03/2020</p>	<p>19.</p>	<p>May I take my emergency paid sick leave intermittently while working at my usual worksite (as opposed to teleworking)?</p>	<p>It depends on why you are taking emergency paid sick leave and whether your employer agrees. In general, unless you are teleworking, emergency paid sick leave for qualifying reasons related to COVID-19 must be taken in full-day increments. It cannot be taken intermittently if the leave is being taken because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 other than the safer at home order</li> <li>• You have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19</li> <li>• You are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis</li> <li>• You are caring for an individual who either is subject to a quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 or has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19</li> </ul> <p>Unless you are teleworking, once you begin taking emergency paid sick leave for one or more of these qualifying reasons, you must continue to take emergency paid sick leave each day until you either (1) use the full amount of emergency paid sick leave or (2) no longer have a qualifying reason for taking emergency paid sick leave. This limit is imposed because if you are sick or possibly sick with COVID-19, or caring for an individual who is sick or possibly sick with COVID-19, the intent of FFCRA is to provide such emergency paid sick leave as necessary to keep you from spreading the virus to others. For employees who are subject to the safer at home order, have been deemed nonessential by their agency and do not have the ability to telework, subject to agreement between the employee and supervisor, emergency paid sick leave may be taken intermittently.</p> <p>If you no longer have a qualifying reason for taking emergency paid sick leave before you exhaust your emergency paid sick leave, you may take any remaining emergency paid sick leave at a later time, until December 31, 2020, if another qualifying reason occurs.</p> <p>In contrast, if you and your supervisor agree, you may take emergency paid sick leave intermittently if you are taking emergency paid sick leave to care for your son or daughter whose school or place of care is closed, or whose child care provider is unavailable, because of COVID-19 related reasons. For example, if your son or daughter is at home because his or her school or place of care is closed, or</p>

			child care provider is unavailable, because of COVID-19 related reasons, you may take emergency paid sick leave on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays to care for your son or daughter, but work at your normal worksite on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	20.	May I take my emergency paid sick leave intermittently while teleworking?	If you are teleworking and become unable to do so for qualifying reasons related to COVID-19 (i.e. you feel unwell enough to work or are required to care for another), emergency paid sick leave must be taken in full-day increments. However, the leave may be taken intermittently over the course of your normally scheduled days.
<b>New</b> 4/03/2020	21.	May I take my expanded family and medical leave intermittently while my child's school or place of care is closed, or childcare provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 related reasons, if I am not teleworking?	Yes, but only with your supervisor's permission. Intermittent expanded family and medical leave should be permitted only when you and your employer agree upon such a schedule. For example, if your employer and you agree, you may take expanded family and medical leave on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, but work Tuesdays and Thursdays, while your son or daughter is at home because their school or place of care is closed, or child care provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 related reasons, for the duration of your leave.

### Section F: Face Mask Expectations and Usage

**General Policy: Beginning July 13, 2020 all state employees are required to wear face masks at all times while indoors in state facilities. This requirement applies to:**

- All indoors spaces including common spaces, restrooms, break rooms, elevators, cubicles, offices, and conference rooms regardless of the number of additional people present or physical space between individuals
- Times in which employees may be waiting in line to enter the building
- Occasions in which employees are visiting enclosed buildings, while on business for the State

Employees will also continue to adhere to agency direction if additional or different personal protective equipment has been provided by the agency. Employees who are unable to wear a mask should be directed to human resources for further assistance. These reasons may include a medical or mental health condition, disability, or job duties in which wearing a face covering would cause a health or safety risk.

<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	1.	Why are face masks required in state facilities?	<p>Cloth face coverings (or face masks) are recommended by the CDC and DHS Public Health as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the cloth face covering coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice.</p> <p>Returning more staff to the workforce, increased interaction with the public, the limited ability to ensure necessary space between employees at all times, and the increasing community transmission rates throughout Wisconsin all factored into the decision to require masks. Masks are a critical measure in slowing and preventing the spread of COVID-19 virus.</p>
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	2.	Do I need to wear a mask indoors even if I can physical distance at all times?	Yes, masks are required at all times to help control the spread of COVID-19 within the worksite and the communities in which we live.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	3.	If I already had COVID-19 or tested negative do I have to wear a mask?	Yes. Everyone must wear a face mask.



<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	4.	Where do I get a face mask?	Each agency has a supply of face masks available for employees. You may wear your own work appropriate mask if you prefer.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	5.	Is a space that has some open walls considered an outdoor space?	No, a space must be completely open on all sides to be outdoors. Opening windows does not create an outdoor space.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	6.	If I am alone in an enclosed office with a door do I need to wear a mask?	Yes, all employees are required to wear masks when in cubicles, offices, and common areas. Although you might be in a cubicle or office alone, if you are not wearing a mask you are depositing respiratory droplets when you talk, cough, sneeze, etc. This creates exposure to others, including the cleaning staff, who may later touch those same surfaces. Because other staff could enter your office before you have put your mask on or properly cleaned your office, masks are required in offices.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	7.	How do I wear a mask while I'm eating or drinking?	Employees are permitted to remove masks while eating and drinking but should wear them when retrieving food from the refrigerator, vending machine, reheating or otherwise preparing food.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	8.	I am not able to wear a mask due to a medical condition, mental health reason, or disability. What should I do?	Employees who are unable to wear a mask due to a medical or mental health condition, or disability, should contact their human resources representative (e.g., medical, or reasonable accommodation coordinator) to complete a reasonable accommodation request.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	9.	I am not able to wear a mask for medical condition, mental health reason, or disability. Do I need medical documentation about why I cannot wear a mask?	Not necessarily. Employees should talk to human resources and follow the reasonable accommodation process. Employees who need to provide medical documentation will be advised during that process.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	10.	I am not able to wear a mask based on a religious belief. What should I do?	Employees who are unable to wear a mask based on a religious belief should contact their human resources representative to discuss accommodation.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	11.	Can I wear a face shield instead of a face mask?	No. According to the <a href="#">Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</a> , it is not known if face shields provide protection to others from the spray of respiratory particles. CDC does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings.  However, a face shield may be permitted for staff who have difficulty breathing through a mask. In this instance, the employee should discuss their concerns with human resources.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	12.	Communication is an essential part of my job and I'm concerned that if I can't communicate clearly because of the face covering then I will not have effectively done my job. What should I do?	While all employees communicate on a regular basis, there are some instances when the effectiveness of the communication could be affected by wearing a mask. Employees may remove their mask in this instance when at least six feet from the other person and where other alternatives will not work, e.g. written communication, etc. Masks may also be removed to improve communication with others who rely on lip-reading, etc. for communication. Employees may also wish to consider a clear mask to assist with communication issues.  There may be other instances when a face mask may impede in one's ability to effectively do one's job. If you have such concerns, we encourage you to consult with your supervisor or human resources.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	13.	My goggles or glasses fog up when I wear a mask. What can I do?	<a href="#">Here are some tips.</a>

<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	14.	What do I do if I see someone not wearing a mask, even though they should be?	Nothing. Some people have conditions or circumstances that would make wearing a cloth face covering difficult or dangerous. Just wear your mask and stay six feet away. If you remain concerned, you can talk to your supervisor or human resources.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	15.	Are there any other exceptions to the mask requirement?	Employees who work in a setting where cloth face coverings may increase the risk of <a href="#">heat-related illness</a> or cause safety concerns due to introduction of a hazard (for instance, straps getting caught in equipment) may consult with an occupational safety and health professional to determine the appropriate face covering for their setting.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	16.	My job is indoors and outdoors, what should I do?	Employees are required to wear masks when indoors but may remove the mask when outdoors and when social distancing is possible.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	17.	If I participate in the state's van pool (ride share), do I need to wear a mask while in the vehicle?	Yes, you must wear a mask.
<b>New</b> 7/11/2020	18.	If a member of the public is not wearing a mask, can I deny them service?	No, although members of the public are encouraged to wear a mask, the State will not deny service for this reason. Members of the public should follow their local health department's guidance regarding the use of masks. Part of the reason to require employees to wear masks is to ensure the employee's personal protection. Masks will be available to members of the public doing business with the State.