



## **Stafford Township School District's COVID-19 Information from Human Resources**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. What happens if an employee exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, but has not been tested?**

If an employee exhibits symptoms of COVID while at work (shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, coughing, fever, chills, body aches, sore throat, etc.) the employee will be sent home immediately.

According to current [CDC Guidance](#), the employee must remain at home until they have been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medications (e.g. cough suppressants) AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

#### **A. Will an employee get paid in this scenario?**

Through the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) an employee is entitled to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State or Local government order or advice of a health care provider) and/or experiencing symptoms of COVID and seeking a medical diagnosis.

Upon consultation with the staff member, Human Resources will report these 10 days in AESOP as EPSLA. If the employee remains out of work beyond the 10 days, the employee will be required to use their available sick time.

An employee is eligible for payment up to \$511 per day or a total of \$5,110 for the 10 days covered by the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act.

The employee is required to provide a note from their health care provider. If no note is received, the employee will be required to use their available sick time.

## **2. What happens if an employee tests positive for COVID-19?**

According to current [CDC Guidance](#), an employee who tests positive will be directed by their health care provider to self-quarantine for a 10 day period. Employees may return to work 10 days after the test results have been received provided that their health care provider clears them to return AND they remain symptom-free.

Employees are required to provide medical documentation.

### **A. Will an employee get paid in this scenario?**

Through the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) an employee is entitled to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate\* of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State or Local government order or advice of a health care provider) and/or experiencing symptoms of COVID and seeking a medical diagnosis.

Upon consultation with the staff member, Human Resources will report these 10 days in AESOP as EPSLA. If the employee remains out of work beyond the 10 days, the employee will be required to use their available sick time.

The employee is required to provide a note from their health care provider. If no note is received, the employee will be required to use their available sick time.

\*An employee is eligible for payment up to \$511 per day or a total of \$5,110 for the 10 days covered by the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act.

## **3. What happens if an employee has close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19?**

According to current [CDC Guidance](#), employees who have come in close contact (within 6 feet for a prolonged period of time of 10 minutes or more) with an individual that has tested positive for COVID- 19 will be required to quarantine for a 14 day period. The 14 day quarantine will begin as of the last date of close contact with that

individual. The employee should also contact their health care provider for guidance and documentation.

If an employee learns that they have been in close contact with an individual who has tested positive outside of work, the employee should contact their administrator or supervisor immediately.

Pursuant to contact tracing protocols, individuals (co-workers, students, visitors, etc.) who may have had close contact with the employee/individual will be contacted if the employee/individual tests positive.

**A. Will an employee get paid in this scenario?**

Through the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) an employee is entitled to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State or Local government order or advice of a health care provider) and/or experiencing symptoms of COVID and seeking a medical diagnosis.

If the employee is quarantined and upon consultation with the staff member, Human Resources will report up to 10 days in AESOP as EPSLA.

If the employee remains out of work beyond the 10 days, the employee will be required to use their available sick time.

An employee is eligible for payment up to \$511 per day or a total of \$5,110 for the 10 days covered by the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act.

The employee is required to provide a note from their health care provider. If no note is received, the employee will be required to use their available sick time.

**4. Will an employee continue to receive ten (10) days of paid sick leave under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act if they have to take multiple leaves?**

No. You may take up to two weeks total of EPSLA for any combination of qualifying reasons. Any time beyond the ten days would be available sick, personal or vacation time that must be used.

**5. Does an employee qualify for a leave if he/she is anxious to go to work due to COVID-19 risk?**

No. Reluctance to work due to fear of contracting COVID-19 virus does not entitle the employee to leave under any state or federal leave acts.

## 6. Who is considered high risk for COVID-19?

People of any age with certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

People with the following conditions or attributes are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID- 19:

- Individuals over the age of 65
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (BMI of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

People with the following conditions might be at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19:

- Asthma (moderate to severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions such as dementia
- Liver disease
- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary fibrosis (damaged or scarred lung tissue)
- Smoking
- Thalassemia (blood disorder)
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus

The information in this question is subject to change and is available on the [CDC](#) web site.

**7. What is our obligation if an employee states that they cannot return to work physically due to being high risk for severe illness from COVID-19?**

The employee is required to provide documentation from their health care provider indicating that they are high risk and how this condition prevents them from working in person. Depending on their position, Human Resources will evaluate if there are accommodations available to the employee.

**8. Is an employee eligible for leave if they cannot work due to unavailable child care?**

The employee can receive two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave through the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work (or telework) due to the need to care for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

If the employee has been employed for at least 30 days, the employee would then qualify for an additional 10 weeks of paid expanded family and medical leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay where an employee is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

The total amount of leave available is 12 weeks. As the leave qualifies for both the EPSLA and EFMLEA, the total maximum amount paid is up to \$200/day or up to a total of \$12,000.

Documentation is required including the name of the child(ren) being cared for, the name of the school, place of care or child care provider that has closed or become unavailable, a statement that they are the primary care giver for the child(ren) and a statement from the employee that no other suitable person is available to care for the child(ren).

**9. If an employee's child(ren)'s school moves to online instruction or to another model in which children are expected or required to complete assignments at home, is that considered closed?**

Yes. If the physical location is closed, the school or place of care is closed for purposes of paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave.

**10. Does an employee qualify for leave for a COVID-19 related reason if they have already used some or all of their leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?**

It depends how much leave the employee has already taken during the 12-month period for FMLA leave. An employee can take a total of 12 weeks for FMLA or expanded family and medical leave during a 12-month period.

If the employee has already taken 12 weeks of FMLA during the 12-month period, they may not take additional expanded family and medical leave. If they have taken less than 12 weeks, the employee may take the remaining portion of leave available.

**11. Can an employee take the Expanded Family and Medical Leave Act or Family and Medical Leave Act if a covered family member is self-quarantining or has been diagnosed with COVID?**

No. The fact that an employee or covered family member under FMLA is self-quarantining due to exposure to coronavirus does not qualify for the Expanded FMLA or FMLA. In addition, diagnosis of COVID-19 to a covered family member does not qualify unless the virus turns into a serious health condition.

**12. Is an employee entitled to unemployment benefits if they quit or refuse suitable work due to COVID-19?**

In most cases, an employee cannot collect unemployment if they voluntarily quit or refuse suitable work. However, exceptions occur if work poses a high degree of risk to the health and safety of the employee. This would be that there were 'unsafe, unhealthful and dangerous working conditions that were so intolerable that the claimant had no choice but to leave employment'. The burden of proof is on the employee.