

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## COVID-19 RESPONSE: TEMPORARY EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE PAID LEAVE POLICY



12/16/20

**Q: For what purpose can employees use this administrative paid leave?**

**A:** This administrative paid leave may be used in the case of self-quarantine, quarantine or care of an immediate family member, childcare resulting from school and daycare closures, or other COVID-19 related scenarios.

**Q: Who does this administrative paid leave apply to?**

**A:** All faculty and staff on all NU campuses. This includes all regular, temporary, on-call and student staff. Part-time employees will be eligible for a prorated amount of time based on hours they are normally scheduled to work.

**Q: Is the paid emergency administrative leave available to student workers?**

**A:** Yes. Students may take paid emergency administrative leave if they are willing and able to work and no other work is available in their unit.

**Q: I've already used paid administrative leave so my current balance is less than 160 hours. Will my balance be restored to 160 hours on January 1, 2021, with the extension of the leave policy?**

**A:** No. Your remaining balance will carry over and you only will be able to use the difference between your original balance of 160 hours and what you already have used.

**Q: I've exhausted the full balance of 160 hours of paid emergency administrative leave. What other leave options are available to me?**

**A:** Employees in leave-eligible positions may request to use any other leave options available to them, including any available vacation, sick leave and crisis leave. Employees are encouraged to contact Human Resources to discuss their options for addressing COVID-19 related absences through the use of these other leaves.

**Q: I'd like to contribute some of my vacation hours to the crisis leave bank. How do I do that?**

**A:** Please contact your campus human resources office, and they can provide you with the appropriate documents.

**Q: I've reached the 280-hour cap on vacation leave. Can I now earn additional hours beyond 280?**

**A:** No. Once you reach the 280-hour limit, vacation hours cease to accrue.

**Q: I'm a supervisor and I'm working with a team member to develop alternative work or worksite options. I have questions about what our options are. Who should I contact?**

**A:** Please contact your campus human resources office and we will discuss your options.



**Q: No one knows how long the pandemic will go on or how long my child's school will use remote learning. Will the University keep extending the emergency administrative leave policy?**

**A:** We know this is a quickly evolving challenge. We want to do everything we can to take care of our employees, and we'll continue to evaluate our policies and options. We'll communicate any policy changes with you as soon as possible.

**Q: What is the process and what is required to work remotely (alternative worksite, work from home, telecommute, etc.)?**

**A:** Employees will work with their immediate supervisor to develop a plan if applicable. Campus procedures and guidelines are available from campus Human Resources. The NU alternative worksite policy is available at <https://nebraska.edu/-/media/unca/docs/offices-and-policies/policies/policies/hr-03-alternative-worksite-policy.pdf>.

**Q: What if an employee needs to be absent for an eligible COVID-19 related reason and is not in a position that is eligible for paid leave?**

**A:** This administrative paid leave may be used by all employees, including those employees who are in a non-leave eligible position.

**Q: How does an employee request use of this administrative paid leave due to COVID-19?**

**A:** Employees should follow their normal process of reporting an absence and requesting time off.

**Q: How do employees report a COVID-19 related absence for timekeeping purposes?**

**A:** Administrative paid leave will be used. Campus payroll departments will be in communication with employees and unit payroll contacts soon regarding payroll coding and processes to use.

**Q: Can employees use this administrative paid leave due to a child's school or daycare closure?**

**A:** Yes. When possible, units are encouraged to allow employees to work at alternative worksites and be flexible with work arrangements. If that is not possible, employees may use this administrative paid leave.

**Q: Can employees use this administrative paid leave to care for a family member who has contracted COVID-19 or is being quarantined?**

**A:** Yes. When possible, units are encouraged to allow employees to work at alternative worksites and be flexible with work arrangements. If that is not possible, employees may use this administrative paid leave.

**Q: Can employees use this administrative paid leave if they are directed to stay home (leave campus) by a supervisor due to illness that is or may be related to COVID-19?**

**A:** Yes. When possible, units are encouraged to allow employees to work at alternative worksites and be flexible with work arrangements. If that is not possible, employees may use this administrative paid leave before using other paid leave options. NOTE: Supervisors must refer to the guidance memo from their campus human resources office regarding the process of directing an employee to leave campus due to illness.

**Q: If an employee is advised by a healthcare provider to stay home or self-isolate/quarantine due to a health condition that would be a potential concern related to COVID-19, can the employee use this administrative paid leave if they are unable to work at home?**

**A:** Yes. When possible, units are encouraged to allow employees to work at alternative worksites and be flexible

with work arrangements. If that is not possible, employees may use this administrative paid leave

**Q: Can employees use this administrative paid leave if there is a lack of work and no alternative work or worksite is available?**

**A:** Students may use this administrative paid leave in this circumstance. All other employees will work with their supervisors to determine alternative work and/or worksite options. Any questions regarding lack of work should be directed to campus Human Resources.

**Q: What does “other related scenarios” mean for eligible reasons to use this administrative paid leave?**

**A:** It is difficult to determine and communicate all potential “other related scenarios” that might be eligible for use. Please contact the campus HR office with questions about using this administrative paid leave if the reason is not directly related to “self-quarantine, quarantine or care of an immediate family member, childcare resulting from school and daycare closures.”

**Q: Can employees use this administrative paid leave to care for an immediate family member who does not live with the employee?**

**A:** Yes. When possible, units are encouraged to allow employees to work at alternative worksites and be flexible with work arrangements. If that is not possible, employees may use this administrative paid leave.

**Q: What if an employee’s individual circumstances require more than this administrative paid leave allotment?**

**A:** At this time, the expectation is that the employee would use the university’s current paid leave policies and processes. The university is reviewing current paid leave policies to determine any necessary changes to remain flexible during this time and will communicate any changes going forward.

**Q: What is the status of the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act?**

**A:** The FFCRA, which provides additional paid leave options for employees related to COVID-19, is set to expire on Dec. 31, 2020. At this time, Congress has not yet extended the act.

**Q: I’ve exhausted all my leave options and I need to access the University’s crisis leave bank. How do I do that?**

**A:** You may contact your campus human resources office.

**Q: Is employment impacted if an employee is absent due to a COVID-19 related absence?**

**A:** No adverse employment action will be taken due to absences in response to the COVID-19 virus. All absences related to COVID-19 virus response, as listed above, are considered authorized and excused.

**Q: Will the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) apply to employee absences due to the COVID19 virus?**

**A:** Available FMLA leave will not be used or exhausted while on Administrative Leave. Employees will not experience or be subject to adverse employment action due to COVID-19 virus response related absences. Employees do not need to submit an FMLA request or physician’s certification while on Administrative Leave.

**Q: Do employees need to provide a doctor’s note to justify an absence due to the COVID-19 virus?**

**A:** No. Employees are only required to follow the normal unit absence notification policy.



**Q: Do employees need to provide a doctor's release to return to work after an illness or quarantine due to this COVID-19 virus?**

**A:** Yes. For the employee's safety and the safety of the University community, employees will be required to provide a note from a healthcare provider before returning to work.

**Q: Does the University's health plan cover testing for the COVID-19 virus?**

**A:** Yes, if medically warranted.

**Q: Where can employees find the most updated information on the COVID-19 virus and what my campus is doing?**

**A:** The CDC website maintains accurate and up-to-date information. Each campus also has established COVID-19 planning websites.

**Q: What if employees need help dealing with the overall stress or concerned feelings they are having because of COVID-19?**

**A:** Campus counseling services are available to all faculty, staff and students.

**Q: How is the University supporting employees who are anxious being in the workplace during the COVID-19 outbreak?**

**A:** Employees are encouraged to take advantage of campus counseling services. Units are encouraged to support remote work when possible. Employees who are unable to work remotely, and are anxious about remaining in the workplace, may use the current paid or unpaid leave options, but this emergency administrative leave is not eligible for this type of absence.

**Q: Who does an employee contact with questions not listed in this FAQ?**

**A:** You may contact your campus Human Resources office.

