

UA COVID-19 UPDATE



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA

April 1, 2020

TO: UA employees

FROM: CHRO Steve Patin

RE: Updated UA leave policies and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act

I hope this note finds everyone doing well and adjusting to some new ways of serving our university community.

Today, the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act goes into effect. This new nationwide legislation will require us to use different approaches to managing employee leave during our COVID-19 response.

The act allows the university to provide two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid emergency sick leave to health plan-eligible employees for various COVID-19 related reasons, such as if they are required to quarantine, they have COVID-19 symptoms and are seeking diagnosis, or they are caring for an individual in quarantine or isolation.

All regular and extended temporary employees with active appointments are eligible for this emergency sick leave. Employees will not need to use their own annual or sick leave. The emergency sick leave is in addition to existing university leave options.

The act also stipulates that we offer expanded family medical leave of up to 12 weeks for employees who need to provide care for a child whose school or daycare is closed due to COVID-19. The expanded family medical leave will be available, by request, to employees with at least 30 days service based on their regularly scheduled hours.

To implement the FFCRA, UA has put the following steps in place:

Administrative leave

The earning code 467 COVID-19 Administrative Leave will only be used when an employee has an active job and is unable to work on site due to COVID-19 closures, but they are unable to telework. As of April 1, employees will use one of two new earning codes to report and track leave for providing child care or the emergency sick leave mandated by the act.

Emergency sick leave

A new emergency sick leave earning code will be used to track two weeks (up to 80 hours) of emergency sick leave for the reasons required in the FFCRA. The new code will be available in time to submit timesheets on April 13. As of April 1, this new code is to be used when the employee:

- is subject to a federal, state or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
- has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
- is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
- is caring for an individual (doesn't have to be a family member) who is subject to the conditions above;
- is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed, or their child care provider is unavailable, for reasons related to COVID-19; or
- is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Expanded emergency family leave

Up to 12 weeks of expanded emergency family leave will be available April 1 for benefits-eligible employees who need to care for a child whose school or place of care is closed or childcare provider is unavailable due to COVID-19 related reasons. The first two weeks of this leave are unpaid, however employees can use emergency sick leave or other accrued leave for the first two weeks. The remaining 10 weeks are paid at 2/3 of the employee's regular rate of pay, up to \$10,000. The expanded family medical leave must be requested like any other FML event, using a unique form that is currently under development. A new earning code for the emergency family medical leave is being developed and will be available by April 24.

Additional FAQs on these new leave options, as well as a quick-reference guide to using the new earning codes, will be posted on the [UA Coronavirus information website](#). If you have questions you may contact ua-hr@alaska.edu or call 907-450-8200.

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Text UACOV19 to 226787 to receive text alerts about the university's response to COVID-19.

Please do not respond directly to this outreach message.