



Riverside County Office of Education
Division of Personnel Services

Returning to Work Safely
During the COVID-19 Pandemic

August, 2020
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I have an underlying health condition, do I have to report to work?

A: If you have a medical note saying that you cannot report to work you may be able to work remotely depending on the essential functions of your job description. When RCOE receives a medical note describing a work limitation we engage in what is called the “Interactive Process”. In this process RCOE reviews the limitation with the employee and determines if accommodations can be made. Employees have the right to have a union representative with them in meetings related to the interactive process. If remote work is not an option, you may be able to use two weeks of Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) based on eligibility and then you may use available sick leave.

Q: If I reside with someone with an underlying health condition related to COVID-19, do I have to report to work?

A: If a medical doctor has determined that a household should quarantine to protect a household member, the employee may request FFCRA leave by completing the required forms. Additionally, RCOE will determine if remote work can be assigned. If remote work cannot be assigned, the employee may request to use the FFCRA leave, Personal Leave in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement, and/or unpaid leave.

Q: If I don't have an underlying health condition or reside with someone who does, but I still don't feel safe reporting to work, what leave can I take?

A: Those that choose to self-quarantine may request the following subject to approval:

- Request personal leave;
- Request unpaid leave.

Employees who wish to pursue these options should contact their Division Head.

Q: If I am potentially exposed to COVID 19 at work and am directed by RCOE to quarantine, will my days in quarantine be counted as absences?

A: If RCOE directs you to quarantine, you *may* be assigned remote work. If that is the case, the time working remotely in quarantine will be counted as regular work.

If you are not assigned remote work, you may have access to leave under FFCRA. If your quarantine goes beyond that leave, you can request that personal leave be used.

Q: If I contract COVID-19 at work, will I have additional leave available to me?

A: If you believe you contracted COVID-19 at work, you should file a Workers' Compensation claim. An approved Workers' Compensation claim has additional Industrial Leave up to 60 days that would apply to the absence before using the employee's sick leave. Please contact Risk Management immediately if you believe you have been exposed to COVID-19 at work.

Q: Will I be required to test for COVID-19 in order to report to work?

A: We are all essential workers and are encouraged to voluntarily be tested periodically. It is possible that the RCOE may ask that an employee be tested. The employee will be able to decline testing. However, if taking the test would have shortened a quarantine time, the employee may need to use leave for the time by which refusal to test extends the quarantine. If you are interested in being tested, you can contact your healthcare provider or click on the following link to schedule an appointment at a testing site near you: <https://www.rivcoph.org/coronavirus/testing>

Q: Under what circumstances would an employee be asked to test for COVID-19?

A: If an employee is determined to have been exposed to COVID-19 at work, or outside of work, they are likely to be asked to take the test for COVID-19.

Q: Will RCOE be conducting testing for COVID-19?

A: RCOE does not currently have plans to do our own testing. However, all employees are encouraged to seek testing through the County of Riverside.

All employees will be required to participate in an online training on COVID-19 Awareness. Employees will be required to complete a self-screening, including a temperature check, before reporting to work each day.

Q: Will I be required to wear a facial covering while at work?

A: Yes, when you are unable to social distance and are within close proximity of six (6) feet or closer to others.

Q: Will RCOE provide face coverings?

A: RCOE will provide reusable fabric face coverings for all employees.

Q: Can an employee be medically exempt from wearing a mask at work?

A: If an employee submits a medical note stating that for medical reasons they cannot wear a mask, RCOE will engage in the interactive process. In this process, RCOE will determine if there is an appropriate work assignment that would not require a mask. If RCOE is not able to find a safe and appropriate mask-free work assignment for an employee, the employee would be able to use applicable sick leave.

Q: How do employees participate in the daily self-screening?

A: The self-screening consists of a two-step process, temperature and a questionnaire.

Temperature:

Employees may take their own temperature before arriving to work. If the employee has a temperature above 100.4F, the employee is to remain at home and contact their supervisor.

If the employee does not have a thermometer at home, contactless thermometers will be available at selected entry points of work sites.

Employees may complete the self-screening survey at home or upon arriving at work.

Self-screening:

All employees will be required to take their temperature upon arriving at the work site. Contactless thermometers will be available at selected entry points. If they do not have a temperature above 100.4F they are to proceed to their work station. If they did not complete the self-screening at home, they are to complete the self-screening upon starting work. If the employee has a temperature reading above 100.4F or answered yes to any of the questions of the self-screening, the employee is to return home and contact their supervisor.

In all instances where the employee stays home or returns home, the employee is to contact their supervisor and complete a Request/Verification of Attendance (VOA) form. If this is the first time the employee had a temperature above 100.4F or answered yes to any of the questions of the self-screening, the employee should write "self-screening" on the VOA. The employee's leave will not be utilized for the first day such conditions occur. Sick leave should be checked for any subsequent absences. The employee should contact Risk Management regarding eligibility for FFCRA.

Q: What are the questions in the self-screening?

A: The self-screening of the following questions:

1. Name
2. What is your work email address?
3. What is the best phone number to reach you?
4. Have you had any signs or symptoms of a fever in the past 24 hours such as chills, sweats, felt "feverish" or had a temperature that is elevated for you or 100.4F or greater?
Yes/No
5. Do you have any of the following symptoms: sore throat; new or worsening cough; new respiratory illness; new loss of taste or smell; new or worsening shortness of breath; fatigue; muscle or body aches; severe headache; diarrhea; nausea or vomiting; non-allergy congestion or runny nose.
Yes/No
6. Have you had close contact with any person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days? (Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes with a person or having direct contact with infectious fluids from a person with confirmed COVID-19, e.g. being coughed or sneezed on.)
Yes/No
7. Have you taken any medication in the last three days that might mask symptoms of COVID-19 or symptoms of any respiratory illness?
Yes/No
8. Have you tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 14 days?
Yes/No
9. Have you been tested for COVID-19 and the results are pending?
Yes/No

If you answered YES to any of questions 3 to 8 and the symptoms are not the result of a chronic or known, non-COVID-19 condition, please stay home or return home/do not report to work today. Notify your supervisor that you will not be working today and complete a VOA indicating "Self-screening." Please consider contacting your health care provider.

Thank you, and have a healthy and safe day.

The self-screening can be accessed at the following link: www.rcoe.us/screening

Q: What do I do if I am unable to work due to child care issues?

A: Child Care Closures - If a child care facility is closed due to COVID-19, employees may be eligible for FFCRA leave; which expires on December 31, 2020. They may contact the Personnel Analysts for further information.

Personnel Analyst Contact Information:

Katie Knezic
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951-826-6644

Geneen Barreras
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951-826-6506

Subsidized child care for Essential Workers (EW) may be available for employees required to report to their physical work site, but not for working remotely. The Essential Worker child care is for children ages 0-12 years old. Contact RCOE Early Care and Education (ECE) to request services through email at cclupdates@rcoe.us, or if email is not available, call (800) 443-4927. Identify yourself as an “**RCOE Essential Worker**” in the email request or via phone call. Link to ECE website: [ECE: Child Care Essential Workers](#) and [Child Care Essential Workers Flyer](#).

Families First Coronavirus Response Act

All employees in California have access to a one-time grant of up to two weeks of emergency paid sick leave for absences related to COVID-19 through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) The FFCRA expires on December 31, 2020. FFCRA may be used for the following:

1. The employee is subject to a quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 by federal, state, or local government; or
2. The employee has been advised to self-quarantine related to COVID-19 by a healthcare provider; or
3. The employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking medical diagnosis; or
4. The employee is caring for an individual who is subject to (1) or (2); or
5. The employee is caring for a dependent child (under 18) whose school or place of care is closed or whose caregiver is unavailable due to COVID-19 precautions; or
6. The employee is experiencing “substantially similar condition” as specified by certain federal guidelines.
 - Reasons 1-3 allow up to two weeks days of fully paid emergency sick leave (capped at \$511/day)
 - Reasons 4-6 allow up to two weeks of 2/3 paid emergency sick leave (capped at \$200/day)

**To request the required forms for FFCRA,
please contact Risk Management at (951) 826-6824 or benefits@rcoe.us**

If for any reason, you are unable to return to work at the conclusion of the FFCRA leave, you must notify the Personnel Analysts prior to the return date and request an extension to your leave. This will require you to provide a new certification verifying this information. If you exhaust leave under FFCRA and are off of work because you are caring for a child (under 18) whose school or place of care is closed, please contact our office for additional leaves that may be available to you.

<i>Personnel Analyst Contact Information</i>		<i>Risk Management Contact Information</i>
Katie Knezic kknezic@rcoe.us (951) 826-6644	Geneen Barreras gbarreras@rcoe.us (951) 826-6506	Email: benefits@rcoe.us Phone: (951) 826-6824