



## Coronavirus COVID-19

### HR FAQs for Faculty and Staff: What You Need to Know

#### **Protect the FAMUly**

*The guidance below is provided as of July 26, 2020 and will be updated as needed.*

Please review the below Frequently Asked Questions for guidance in making consistent decisions that are in the best interest of the University, department operations, and the well-being of faculty and staff.

#### **What is the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)?**

The FFCRA provides certain employees with paid leave benefits for specific reasons relating to COVID-19. The new provisions are effective through the duration of the qualifying reason, and expires on December 31, 2020. Health care providers and emergency responders are excluded from both leave options under the FFCRA. These extensive provisions in response to COVID-19, including two new leave benefits for eligible employees described in detail below.

##### **Emergency Paid Sick Leave**

Employees may be provided up to 80 hours (prorated for part-time) at their normal compensation rate if there are unable to work because they are quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a health care provider), and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis.

Employees may be provided up to 80 hours (prorated for part-time) at two thirds their compensation rate if they are unable to work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a health care provider), or to care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

Employees are only eligible to take a total of up to 80 hours regardless of the number of qualifying reasons. Qualifying employees should submit the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Form and any supporting medical documentation or School/Childcare Certification form to [HR-FMLA@famu.edu](mailto:HR-FMLA@famu.edu).

### **Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion**

This expansion of FMLA is for employees who need to care for a child due to either school or childcare provider closure for reasons related to COVID-19. Eligibility is contingent upon determination by the supervisor that the employee is unable to perform their job duties remotely because of the nature of the duties or because the employee is unable to perform their duties due to having to care for a child for reasons related to COVID-19.

Eligible employees who have been employed for at least 30 days are provided with 12 weeks of expanded family and medical leave. The first two weeks are unpaid and up to an additional 10 week are paid at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay. Eligible employees must complete the appropriate FMLA form, obtain approval from their supervisor and department head, and submit to [HR-FMLA@famu.edu](mailto:HR-FMLA@famu.edu).

### **How will the University accommodate parents that choose the Leon County Digital Academy (LCDA) for educating their children as oppose to sending them to school?**

The decision to choose LCDA for educating children is separate from and is not an operational decision made by the University. It is a personal decision made by the parent/employee regarding modality of education for their children.

The Telecommuting Policy will remain in effect until further notice. Any requests to continue to work remotely will be driven by operational needs of the department, and whether or not that work can be performed remotely; and must be recommended by the Supervisor and approved by the VP.

### **I have been told to report back to campus as part of the Phased Plan, but I have childcare issues. What are my options?**

Departments should follow the instructions outlined in the University Phased Re-opening Plan. For employees that are assigned to return to on-campus ditties but have childcare issues, supervisors should examine the employee's specific concern and direct the employee appropriately. Supervisors can allow employees to work a rotating on-campus and remote schedule, or fully remote schedule. If a rotating or fully remote schedule cannot be accommodated, employees may also be eligible for leave under the Families First Coronavirus Act (FFCRA).

**I have been told to report back to campus, but I am high risk. What are my options?**

The Telecommuting Policy will remain in effect until further notice.

Supervisors are asked to assess operational needs and other guidelines within the policy, when making recommendations to the VP for employees to work remotely. Approval will be driven by operational needs; not age.

Employees, no matter the age, with underlying medical conditions who have concerns about returning to work due to COVID-19 should consult with the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, regarding accommodations that may be available to them upon their return to work.

Also, our current leave policies (including the temporary expansion of FMLA and Paid Sick Leave for eligible employees) are available for employees with a need to take time off from work upon eligibility and approval of the supervisor.

**I'm not sick, but I don't want to come to work for fear of becoming ill. Is my supervisor required to approve my request for time off?**

You may request to take Annual Leave; however, your supervisor is not required to approve your time-off request, especially if your department is short staffed. It is important to educate yourself about the virus and it's transmission via the resources provided on the [FAMU COVID-19 web page](#).

**Are workers 65 years and over allowed to further telecommute from their homes upon their supervisor's approval?**

The Telecommuting Policy will remain in effect until further notice.

Supervisors are asked to assess operational needs and other guidelines within the policy, when making recommendations to the VP for employees to work remotely. Approval will be driven by operational needs; not age.

Employees, no matter the age, with underlying medical conditions who have concerns about returning to work due to COVID-19 should consult with the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, regarding accommodations that may be available to them upon their return to work.

Also, our current leave policies (including the temporary expansion of FMLA and Paid Sick Leave for eligible employees) are available for employees with a need to take time off from work upon eligibility and approval of the supervisor.

## **Do I have to wear a face covering on campus?**

Yes. Face coverings are required on campus.

## **Are employees restricted from traveling?**

FAMU has suspended all university-related international travel for the foreseeable future. All students, faculty and staff are strongly urge to reconsider plans for personal international travel. All university-related domestic travel is prohibited unless approved by the divisional vice president or President Robinson.

Students, staff and faculty involved in Study Abroad programs should contact the Office of International Education and Development (OIED) at 850-599-3295 immediately for more information.

## **Got Questions?**

**Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** Brandi Koonce at [HR-FMLA@famuc.edu](mailto:HR-FMLA@famuc.edu)

**Time & Attendance:** Lakeisha Brooks at [lakeisha.brooks@famuc.edu](mailto:lakeisha.brooks@famuc.edu) or Tasha Ingram at [tasha.ingram@famuc.edu](mailto:tasha.ingram@famuc.edu).

**Employee Relations and Resources for Living (Employee Assistance Program):** Sandi Smith Anderson at [sandi.anderson@famuc.edu](mailto:sandi.anderson@famuc.edu) or Tia Lloyd at [tia.lloyd@famuc.edu](mailto:tia.lloyd@famuc.edu)

Additional resources are available online at [U.S. Department of Labor - Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#).

### **For More Information:**

- [FAMU COVID-19 web page](#)
- [Florida Department of Health](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Aetna Resources for Living](#)