

Highland Rim Economic Corporation COVID-19 Policies and Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish procedures for employees, students, and visitors on returning to school/work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Definitions

COVID-19: A human disease condition caused by novel coronavirus. People with COVID-19 have a wide range of symptoms ranging from no observable symptoms, mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified the following symptoms as possible indications of COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose

Other less common symptoms have been reported including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. This list does not include all possible symptoms and may be updated by the CDC.

“Acute” respiratory illness is an infection of the upper or lower respiratory tract that may interfere with normal breathing, such as COVID-19. “Acute” means of recent onset (for example, for a few days), and is used to distinguish from chronic respiratory illnesses like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Are allergy symptoms considered an acute respiratory illness?

No. Allergy symptoms are not considered an acute respiratory illness. However, there is some overlap between common seasonal allergy symptoms and some of the symptoms that have been reported by people with COVID-19 (e.g., headache, sneezing, cough). It is important to take into account whether an individual’s symptoms are compatible with the usual symptoms and timing for allergy in that person.

❖ Vulnerable/High Risk Groups

Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. To protect those at higher risk, it's important that everyone practices healthy hygiene behaviors. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

- ❖ If you have staff members or teachers age 65 or older, or with serious underlying health conditions, encourage them to talk to their healthcare provider to assess their risk and to determine if they should stay home. Information about COVID-19 in children is somewhat limited, but the information that is available suggests that many children have mild symptoms. However, a small percentage of children have been reported to have more severe illness.
- ❖ If you have children with underlying health conditions, talk to their parents about their risk. Follow children's care plans for underlying health conditions such as an asthma action plan.
- ❖ If you have children with disabilities, talk to their parents about how their children can continue to receive the support they need.

Procedures

I. COVID-19 Guidelines for Employees

- A.** Highland Rim is committed to providing employees, students, clients, and visitors a safe environment despite the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, Highland Rim will monitor, to the extent possible, on-site activities to ensure the safety and wellbeing of individuals.
- B.** Employees must take personal responsibility in following the recommended CDC COVID-19 guidelines.
- C.** Employees must be free of any COVID-19 related symptoms to be in offices or classrooms.
- D.** An employee displaying any COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to leave immediately and seek medical care and must have COVID-19 testing as soon as reasonably possible. Failure to seek medical care or COVID-19 testing may impact an employee's ability to receive leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Depending on the employee's specific circumstances, the employee may telework (where applicable, pending approval from Executive Director) or utilize leave as established under Families First Coronavirus Response Act, annual or sick leave, or unpaid leave.
- E.** An employee displaying symptoms will be required to self-quarantine as outlined in the CDC guidelines and will return to work according to CDC guidelines.

- CDC guidelines for Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID -19 Not in Healthcare Settings can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>.
- CDC guidelines for managing symptoms can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/10Things.pdf>.
- CDC guidelines for business response can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>.

Depending on the employee's specific circumstances, the employee may telework (where applicable) or utilize leave as established under Families First Coronavirus Response Act, annual or sick leave, or unpaid leave.

F. Check Point Procedure-

1. Employees:

are encouraged to wear a face mask and stop at the checkpoint when entering or re-entering the building. An employee must take his/her temperature to ensure it is below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. A questionnaire will then be completed if there is no temperature. Then staff member will wash their hands for 20 seconds. Staff may then be permitted to sign in and go to their assigned work area. Mask are to be worn when around people, however, is not necessary while sitting at your desk alone. Employees will respect social distancing and maintain 6 feet apart. When going into someone else's work space you will need to put on your mask. Employees are to make use of hand sanitizer and disinfectant that is provided to them. Employees are to do their best not to touch their mouth or nose as well as making sure they cover their coughs and sneezes. Employees are to wash hands often to minimize the spreading of germs. If an employee knows or suspects they have been around someone with Covid-19, please let your supervisor know.

2. Clients/Visitors:

Must wear a face mask and stop at the checkpoint when entering or re-entering the building. Clients/Visitors temperatures will be taken before entering the building to ensure it is below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. A questionnaire will then be completed if no temperature.

G. Highland Rim will operate as normal until a positive case is reported.

- H. Employees who have been within six (6) feet or less for fifteen (15) minutes or more of an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 or has been in direct contact with infectious secretions of a positive COVID-19 (e.g. being coughed on) case must follow the mandatory CDC recommended quarantine period. Depending on the employee's specific circumstances, the employee may telework (where applicable, pending Executive Director approval) or utilize leave as established under Families First Coronavirus Response Act, annual or sick leave, or unpaid leave. (CDC Guidelines are ever changing. If CDC guidelines change HREC will follow the new guidelines set forth.)
- I. Employees who are critical infrastructure workers may continue to work if exposed to a positive COVID-19 case. Employees will follow CDC guidelines on implementing safety practices for critical infrastructure workers who may have had exposure to a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
 - (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>)
- J. Employees must truthfully respond to any prescreening questions, as defined by the State of Tennessee or CDC guidelines, upon arrival to campus. An employee who answers "yes" to any of the prescreening questions will be required to leave premises immediately. Depending on the employee's specific circumstances, the employee may telework (where applicable) or utilize leave as established under Families First Coronavirus Response Act, annual or sick leave, or unpaid leave.

III. COVID-19 Guidelines Applicable to Employees and Visitors

- A. Employees, clients, visitors, and contractors are encouraged to wear a face shield, cloth face mask, disposable face mask, or face covering following the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in closed areas where social distancing is difficult, such as classrooms, kitchens, and offices. Large interior areas and outdoor areas are excluded unless people are within six feet of each other. The face covering need to be worn over the nose and mouth. Vendors, clients, and visitors who do not have masks will be offered a paper mask to wear while on Highland Rim property, in accordance with the guidelines for wearing face masks. In an effort to keep our community safe, these masks should be worn for the duration of the visit.
- B. Remote meetings are to be utilized as much as possible to reduce physical interaction.
- C. For business that cannot be conducted remotely, visitors must schedule appointments with the appropriate department prior to visiting classrooms and/or offices.

IV: Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA or Act) requires certain employers to provide employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The Department of Labor's (Department) Wage and Hour Division (WHD) administers and enforces the new law's paid leave requirements. These provisions will apply from the effective date through December 31, 2020.

B. Generally, the Act provides that employees of covered employers are eligible for:

- 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 COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis; or
- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is 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, and/or the employee is experiencing a substantially similar condition as specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretaries of the Treasury and Labor; and
- Up to an additional 10 weeks of paid expanded family and medical leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay where an employee, who has been employed for at least 30 calendar days, is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

C. Covered Employers: The paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave provisions of the FFCRA apply to certain public employers, and private employers with fewer than 500 employees.[1] Most employees of the federal government are covered by Title II of the Family and Medical Leave Act, which was not amended by this Act, and are therefore not covered by the expanded family and medical leave provisions of the FFCRA. However, federal employees covered by Title II of the Family and Medical Leave Act are covered by the paid sick leave provision.

D. Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees may qualify for exemption from the requirement to provide leave due to school closings or child care unavailability if the leave requirements would jeopardize the viability of the business as a going concern.

- E. Eligible Employees:** All employees of covered employers are eligible for two weeks of paid sick time for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Employees employed for at least 30 days are eligible for up to an additional 10 weeks of paid family leave to care for a child under certain circumstances related to COVID-19.[2]

Notice: Where leave is foreseeable, an employee should provide notice of leave to the employer as is practicable. After the first workday of paid sick time, an employer may require employees to follow reasonable notice procedures in order to continue receiving paid sick time.

F. Qualifying Reasons for Leave:

Under the FFCRA, an employee qualifies for paid sick time if the employee is unable to work (or unable to telework) due to a need for leave because the employee:

1. is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
3. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
4. is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2);
5. is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19; or
6. is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretaries of Labor and Treasury.

Under the FFCRA, an employee qualifies for expanded family leave if the employee is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19.

G. Duration of Leave:

1. For reasons (1)-(4) and (6): A full-time employee is eligible for 80 hours of leave, and a part-time employee is eligible for the number of hours of leave that the employee works on average over a two-week period.
2. For reason (5): A full-time employee is eligible for up to 12 weeks of leave (two weeks of paid sick leave followed by up to 10 weeks of paid expanded family & medical leave) at 40 hours a week, and a part-time employee is eligible for leave for the number of hours that the employee is normally scheduled to work over that period.

H. Calculation of Pay:

1. For leave reasons (1), (2), or (3): employees taking leave are entitled to pay at either their regular rate or the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher, up to \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate (over a 2-week period).
2. For leave reasons (4) or (6): employees taking leave are entitled to pay at 2/3 their regular rate or 2/3 the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher, up to \$200 per day and \$2,000 in the aggregate (over a 2-week period).
3. For leave reason (5): employees taking leave are entitled to pay at 2/3 their regular rate or 2/3 the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher, up to \$200 per day and \$12,000 in the aggregate (over a 12-week period).

Notice:

[1] Certain provisions may not apply to certain employers with fewer than 50 employees. See Department FFCRA regulations (expected April 2020).

[2] Under the Act, special rules apply for Health Care Providers and Emergency Responders.

[3] Paid sick time provided under this Act does not carryover from one year to the next. Employees are not entitled to reimbursement for unused leave upon termination, resignation, retirement, or other separation from employment.

[4] An employee may elect to substitute any accrued vacation leave, personal leave, or medical or sick leave for the first two weeks of partial paid leave under this section.