



OFFICE OF PERSONNEL & LABOR RELATIONS

CITY OF SYRACUSE, MAYOR BEN WALSH

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Director

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Updated COVID-19 Leave Policy for Public Safety and Public Works Employees

After reviewing employees' leave utilization since the onset of the pandemic, and to ensure compliance with New York State's Paid Leave for COVID-19, the City is adopting a revised policy related to paid leaves for COVID-related absences.

Essential employees (including, but not limited to, Firefighters, Sworn Police Officers, Sanitation, Water and Sewer, Snow and Ice) who are asymptomatic and have tested negative for the COVID-19 virus may continue to work under most government-issued quarantine and isolation orders. Therefore, all requests for leave will be evaluated to determine if the leave is necessary under applicable public health guidelines. ***Essential employees who are free of symptoms and have tested negative will be required to return to work as allowed by the government-issued order.***

Guidelines for COVID-related leave requests include:

1. **Government-Issued Quarantine Order:** Administrative Leave of up to two (2) weeks will be considered only when an employee is subject to a mandatory or precautionary order of quarantine or isolation issued to the employee by the state of New York, the NYS Department of Health, or the Onondaga County Department of Health, or another authorized government entity, and is unable to work remotely. *Employees who receive such an order must immediately provide a copy to Human Resources and their direct supervisor.* Administrative Leave will be considered only for the period mandated on the order, not to exceed two weeks. Additional time will be charged to Sick Time or another Paid Time Off accrual. As noted above, essential employees who are asymptomatic and have tested negative will be required to return to work, as permitted by the order.

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 and are subject to a government-issued isolation order will be required to submit official documentation clearing them to return to work. If the employee's absence extends beyond the isolation order, additional days will be charged to Sick Time or another Paid Time Off accrual.

2. **Healthcare Provider Quarantine Instructions & Employees Seeking COVID Diagnosis:** If a healthcare provider (e.g. Doctor, Nurse Practitioner, Physician's Assistant) instructs the employee to be absent from work, or if the employee is seeking a test or waiting on the results of a test, the absence will be charged to Sick Time or another

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Paid Time Off accrual. Please note, however, that under public health guidelines, employees voluntarily seeking a COVID test without symptoms are not subject to quarantine, and therefore, will be expected to report to work while awaiting results.

- 3. Travel-Related Quarantine:** Quarantine or isolation required as a result of voluntary travel outside of New York State will not be considered for Administrative Leave, and must be charged to Sick Time or another Paid Time Off accrual.

Questions about the COVID-19 Leave Policy and requests for leave should be directed to the employee's direct supervisor **and** the Human Resources Department at 315-448-8780 or mchajka@syrgov.net or jgorsuch@syrgov.net. Employees who require an extended medical leave related to a COVID-19 illness should consult with the Human Resources Department regarding their available leave benefits during their illness.

Employees who require a reasonable accommodation for a disability may also seek information or submit a request, consistent with the City's Policy on Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability, by contacting the Human Resources Department at 315-448-8781 or btearney@syrgov.net.

FIRE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES: Any Syracuse Fire Department employee who has any COVID-19 related issue, on or off-duty, shall notify their Company officer/immediate supervisor. The company officer/immediate supervisor shall notify their District Chief or Deputy Chief supervisor. The District Chief shall notify the Duty Deputy and the Safety Officer in all COVID-related instances. This procedure shall ensure that off-duty sick employees do not show up for work and that on duty employees who become sick limit possible exposures to other employees.

References:

<https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/covid19>,

<http://www.ongov.net/communications/press/documents/COVID19/LO6.pdf>