July 16, 2020

Updated Paid COVID-19 Leave policy beginning July 22

The State of Minnesota’s Paid COVID-19 Leave policy is changing next week. In March, the state implemented the original policy to help state employees manage through the pandemic as schools shut down, daycare centers closed, and people infected by the virus or fearful of their vulnerability to it were advised to quarantine for lengthy periods of time.

Thank you for supporting each other during the pandemic’s early days as we all managed public service duties with personal responsibilities. We were able to work through individual situations on a case-by-case basis, connect employees to alternative daycare options in their communities, and adjust some shift schedules to help everyone get by as best as possible.

The new policy will more closely align with the federal policy that took effect in April. Beginning July 22, eligible employees can access up to 80 hours of Paid COVID-19 Leave in the following ways:

**Health Leave.** If an employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis of COVID-19, or if a health care provider has advised the employee to self-quarantine based on the provider’s belief that the employee has COVID-19. Health Leave is compensated at 100% of pay up to $511 per day. For employees who test positive for COVID-19 during DOC’s employee testing effort, this leave is available and appropriate.

**Care Leave.** If an employee must care for a family member who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis of COVID-19, or if a health care provider has advised the individual being cared for to self-quarantine based on the provider’s belief that the individual has COVID-19 (and the employee providing care is exposed to the individual under their care). Care Leave is compensated at 2/3 of regular pay up to $200 per day.

As we approach the fall, and the beginning of a new school year, we will issue additional guidance should COVID-19 impact school schedules. The updated Paid COVID-19 Leave policy does include school leave as an eligible use of FMLA but, as a Priority 1 critical service agency, we will designate a process for determining if and how School Leave might be available without impacting the agency’s operations. We strongly encourage employees with young children to seek potential care alternatives this fall as a backup plan.

Please connect with your Human Resources colleagues if you have specific questions about the updated Paid COVID-19 Leave policy. Thank you so much for your commitment to the protocols in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and for your perseverance through these incredibly challenging times.

Stay safe, and stay healthy.

Marcus Schmit
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