

# LAKE WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

## EMERGENCY HEALTH LEAVE

### FAQs and Process for – COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 virus, the District has developed Emergency Health Leave accessible for staff who have been diagnosed with the illness, have been quarantined by a Public Health official, or the employee's personal physician. The process to access this leave is identified below. Also identified are other various leaves available to staff should the Emergency Health Leave not be appropriate.

**What is "Emergency Health" Leave?** Emergency Health Leave is available for LWSD staff that are directed by the CDC, health department, or other health officials to be quarantined for 14 days because of close contact with an COVID-19 infected person or recent travel from the four Level 3 countries. Some Emergency Health Leave is paid, and some Emergency Health Leave is contingent on the employees' availability of sick, annual, or vacation leave. The District also allows this limited use of Emergency Health Leave for employees in high-risk categories with a doctor's note directing them to stay home.

**How many days of "Emergency Health" Leave are available to employees who qualify?** Staff who are directed to be quarantined for 14 calendar days. The use of the leave is limited to the workdays that fall into this 14-day period. The District is extending this type of leave to other employee types, as outlined below, but will keep with the general 14-day period. That means that if you are quarantined or decide to self-quarantine due to close contact with an individual that has tested positive for COVID-19, the first day of work that you miss is day one (1). The fourteenth (14) day would be fourteen calendar days later, including weekends, or any holidays that may fall during this period. Here's an example:

*Ashley was directed by her licensed health care provider to be quarantined. On Friday, March 6, Ashley does not go to work and is advised by her doctor that she should stay home. Ashley will enter a sick day for March 6 (day 1). Saturday, March 7 (day 2) and Sunday, March 8 (day 3) are weekends. Ashley will enter sick days for March 9 (day 4) and March 10 (day 5). For March 11-13 (days 6, 7, and 8) Ashley will enter the Emergency Health type in AESOP (once available in AESOP). Saturday, March 14 and Sunday, 15 (days 9 and 10) are weekends. On March 16-19 (days 11-14), Ashley will enter the Emergency Health Leave in AESOP or Employee Access. If Ashley's healthcare provider directs her to continue to stay home, Ashley will enter sick, annual or vacation leave for any remaining days that she must be home.*

**I am in one of the "high-risk" categories (60 years or older, pregnant, weakened/compromised immune system, underlying health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes). What should I do?** Public Health officials have recommended (but not required) that people falling into these categories stay home and away from large groups of people. If you fall into one of these categories, you may choose to self-quarantine. If you provide a note from your doctor, you should enter three (3) days of sick leave and the remaining workdays falling in the 14-day quarantine period as "Emergency Health" leave into AESOP or Employee Access (this will be available in the system sometime next week). If you do not provide a doctor's note, you should enter sick, personal or vacation leave for the days missed.

*Please Note: We understand that securing a doctor's note may take some time. A visit to the doctor is not necessarily required. A note may be requested over the phone or in some cases online or via email. Please contact your healthcare provider for more information on how to secure documentation.*

To access this type of leave, please submit the appropriate leave paperwork to Human Resources along with your doctor's note. Please mark the "other" category on the leave form and enter "Emergency Health Leave" for the type. If your leave will go beyond the 14-day quarantine limit, your leave will be converted to a medical leave.

**I am over 60, do I really have to submit a doctor's note to use the emergency leave?** Yes. Public Health officials recommend that people over 60 stay home. It is not required. Emergency Health Leave was established to assist employees in greatest need; therefore, the District is requesting that the need to stay home be documented by a healthcare provider. A visit to the doctor is not necessarily required. A note may be requested over the phone or in some cases online or via email. Please contact your healthcare provider for more information on how to secure documentation.

**I recently returned from Italy, Iran, China, or South Korea. Should I come to work?** No. If you have recently returned from any of the Level 3 countries listed above, you should stay home and quarantine for 14 days. If you are able to provide proof of travel, you should enter three (3) days of sick leave in AESOP/Employee Access. The remaining workdays that fall within the allowed 14 days will be recorded as Emergency Health Leave (this will be available in the system sometime next week). If you do not provide proof of travel, you should enter sick, personal or vacation leave for the days missed. If you require a substitute to cover your position while out, you should also enter the substitute request in AESOP.

**I am exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, but I am not in a high-risk population, and my doctor told me to stay home. What should I do?** If you are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath), and your doctor tells you to stay home, you should stay home and enter sick, personal, or vacation leave into the appropriate system. If you provide a note from your doctor, you should enter three (3) days of sick leave and the remaining workdays falling in the 14-day quarantine period as "Emergency Health" Leave into AESOP or Employee Access (this will be available in the system sometime next week). Employees requiring substitutes should also enter the substitute request in the AESOP. This is treated just as any other circumstances when an employee is sick.

**What if I later get tested and am confirmed to have COVID-19?** If you later have a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19, you should enter three (3) days of sick leave in AESOP/Employee Access. The remaining workdays that fall within the allowed 14 days will be recorded as Emergency Health (this will be available in the system sometime next week). Documentation will be required in order to access the emergency paid leave. If no documentation is provided, you should enter sick, personal or vacation leave for the days missed.

**What if I am sick or high risk and need to stay home beyond the 14 days?** If you have been able to access the emergency leave, but continue to be sick or high risk beyond the allowable use of the emergency sick leave, you should enter sick, vacation, or personal leave into the system for illness or self-quarantining.

**What if I have no sick, personal, or vacation leave remaining?** If employees have exhausted their sick leave, they should enter unpaid leave into in AESOP/Employee Access for the first three (3) days and the remaining workdays falling in the 14-day quarantine period as “Emergency Health” Leave into AESOP or Employee Access (this will be available in the system sometime next week).

**Do I qualify for Washington State’s Paid Family Medical Leave related to COVID-19?** As with any illness, to be eligible for paid medical leave, a healthcare provider must certify that you are unable to work due to a serious health condition. If your healthcare provider certifies your illness meets the definition of “serious health condition” and you have the qualifying hours, you may be able to apply for Paid Family and Medical Leave for COVID-19 cases. This is a state program and is not determined by the district.

**Can I flex my schedule to avoid close contact with crowds if I fall into the high-risk categories and my job is conducive to a flexible schedule (e.g., I work to fix computers in classrooms during the day, but would prefer to come in after schools close to avoid the crowds)?** This should be discussed with your supervisor. We are asking all supervisors to be flexible and accommodating to staff during this uncertain time.

**Can I work from home if I am not showing symptoms but need to be quarantined?** While employees are quarantined with documentation to support the quarantine, they may be able to work from home. Permission to work from home shall be determined by your supervisor. The supervisor may request deliverables be submitted to show that you were working while at home. HR also recommends that employees working from home logon to Skype and/or Teams so that employees can be reached easily by supervisors or others who may have questions or need assistance. Employees must be available by phone and email during work hours.

**Do I need to enter sick time if I work from home?** The hours worked from home can replace sick leave while on quarantine. For example, if you work for four hours on a project or deliverable, you will only need to submit the remaining time from your workday as sick, personal, or vacation leave for the first three (3) days.

**Processing and Procedure:** Employees requesting the Emergency Health Leave should:

- Complete the District’s current Request for Leave (Form 6059) and check the “Other” box for Type of Request;
- Write in “Emergency Health Leave”;
- Identify the number of days (in most cases this will be fourteen (14) calendar days);
- Attach a doctor’s note stating the employee is quarantined;
- Submit this to the employee’s supervisor who will initial and date the form and forward to HR; and
- HR will determine the appropriate department to process the request and respond to the employee

**Should you have any questions regarding the use of leave, please address them to your immediate supervisor for assistance.**