

Memorandum



To: Mayor and Town Council

From: Ryan Spitzer

Date: 1/8/2021

Re: COVID-19 Leave Policy

Overview:

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, did not extend employee's entitlement to FFCRA leave beyond Dec. 31, 2020, meaning employers will no longer be legally required to provide such leave. As COVID-19 cases rise in the area the Town is going to see more employees have to go out on leave for exposure or positive tests.

Since FFCRA was not extended by the federal government, employees fall back under the Town's Personnel Policy for sick leave (have to use their leave and short-term disability if they have to quarantine). Since this is a policy in the Personnel Manual, a change requires a vote by Council if you wish to extend the benefit for employees.

Current CDC and MCPH Guidance:

WHO Needs to Quarantine After Exposure to COVID-19?

Anyone who was in close contact to a person with COVID-19 should quarantine to prevent further spread in the community.

- A close contact is any individual who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes total during a 24 hour period starting from 2 days before the person with COVID-19 got sick (or 2 days before they tested positive if the person doesn't have symptoms), regardless of whether masks were worn.
- Close contacts should quarantine by staying home, avoiding close contact with others, and monitoring for symptoms.

HOW Long Should I Quarantine After Exposure to COVID-19

The recommended quarantine period is 14 days.

- o This timeframe results in the lowest risk for spread of COVID-19.
- o 14-day quarantine should still always be used in congregate living facilities, including nursing homes, residential care facilities, shelters, and correctional facilities

WHAT are Other Options for Ending Home Quarantine?

Two other options to end the home quarantine may be considered ONLY IF you are able to follow strict precautions at ALL times:

- o 10 days of quarantine have been completed AND you do not have any symptoms
 - You are still at risk for developing and spreading COVID and must still follow the precautions below, including through the end of the 14-day quarantine period.
- o 7 days of quarantine have been completed AND you do not have any symptoms AND you have had a negative test no earlier than day 5 after last contact with the person who tested positive.
 - A negative test does not rule out COVID infection.
 - You are still at risk for developing and spreading COVID and must still follow the precautions below, including through the end of the 14-day quarantine period.
 - PCR tests are more accurate tests. Healthcare providers should prioritize rapid tests for symptomatic patients or testing as part of an outbreak investigation.

Strict precautions include:

- o Monitoring closely for symptoms and isolate immediately if any symptoms develop
- o Wearing a face covering at all times in public settings
- o Practicing social distancing

Recommendation:

Extend the leave benefit until March 31, 2021 and make it retroactive to January 1, 2021.

Costs:

Salary of individual for time off. This cost is not reimbursable.

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