**COVID-19 FAQ**

**Per Gov. Walz’s orders, state agencies are responsible for adopting the COVID-19 Leave policy. If you have concerns, please contact your**[**MAPE steward**](https://mape.org/locals/find-your-steward)**.**

**We will continue to update this Q&A as more information becomes available.**

**Stay at Home order**

**What does the stay at home executive order mean for my job?**
All state agency employees who are able and authorized to telework must do so by 11:59 p.m. on March 27. For employees who cannot or are not authorized to telework or must continue to travel to work to perform certain critical jobs, your supervisor will be in contact with you.

**Do essential workers need any special documentation to legally drive or transit into work?**
No. State employees are not required to carry any documentation, letter or any other type of paperwork when traveling to and from their place of employment or anywhere else. All Minnesotans are urged to voluntarily comply with this Executive Order. This holds true for Wisconsin residents as well.

**What if I cannot telework during the Stay at Home order?**
Employees who perform Priority 3 and 4 services who cannot telework and cannot be redeployed may use Paid COVID-19 Leave to cover their absences during the Stay at Home Order (March 28-April 10).

**COVID-19 Leave**

**Is COVID-19 Leave a paid leave? What happens to my accruals on COVID-19 leave?**
Yes, it is a paid leave. You will **not** accrue sick or vacation while on COVID-19 leave.

**Must I exhaust my sick and/or vacation leave before I can take COVID-19 leave?**
No. MAPE urged MMB to ensure that accrued vacation and sick time will stay intact, and they listened.

**How do I submit my request/documentation for COVID-19 Leave?**
Your agency should have a clear process for requesting COVID-19 leave; follow that. You should submit the leave request to your supervisor and include [this form](https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/hr-toolbox/covid-19-enterprise-leave-request-form.pdf). If you are denied, please contact MAPE.

**What if my child is older than 12, but I need to be at home with them?**
If they are older than 12, but incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability as defined by the ADA, you may use COVID-19 Leave.

Otherwise, you can get COVID-19 School Leave Type 2. Paid COVID-19 School Leave is available to care for the employee’s children who are all over age 12 and under age 18. This will count against FMLA time and be at 2/3 pay rate. You can supplement the last 1/3 with accrued vacation or accrued compensatory time.

**Can I use COVID-19 Leave to care for a non-family member?**Members can get COVID-19 Care leave when caring for a non-family member for up to 80 hours at 2/3 pay rate. The remaining 1/3 pay can be supplemented by accrued vacation or accrued compensatory time.

**If I am vulnerable to COVID-19 and need to stay home, but am unable to work from home, can I use COVID-19 Leave?**
Yes. The Policy states that you can use COVID-19 Leave if a health care provider has determined that the employee’s presence in the workplace may jeopardize the employee’s health because the employee’s underlying health condition renders the employee at greater risk of serious illness if exposed to COVID-19. Review the CDC’s high-risk list [here](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html).

**Can COVID-19 leave be used intermittently if I need to balance my time between caregiving and teleworking?**
Yes, you may use partial COVID-19 Leave with reduced telecommuting hours.

**Are “non-traditional” employees - like temporary unclassified, part time, Connect700 or probationary - eligible for COVID-19 Leave and telework provisions?**
Yes.

**How does COVID leave interact with FMLA, Paid Parental Leave, or other existing leave categories?**
Nothing contained in this policy interferes with an employee’s right to take leave as provided by the FMLA or ADA/Minnesota Human Rights Act.
If you are coming back from FMLA or Paid Parental Leave and your daycare is closed, you will qualify for COVID-19 leave if you have a dependent under the age of 12 or met one of the other qualifications.

COVID-19 School Leave Type 2. Paid COVID-19 School Leave will count against FMLA. This is available to care for the employee’s children who are all over age 12 and under age 18. This will be at 2/3 pay rate. You can supplement the last 1/3 with accrued vacation or accrued compensatory time.

**Teleworking**

**What if I can complete my work via telework, but my supervisor denies my request?**
Try to work with your supervisor and make sure to put this request in writing. Situations are changing daily. If you have concerns or continue to be denied, please contact your [MAPE steward.](https://mape.org/locals/find-your-steward)

**If my job is not conducive to teleworking, is my supervisor responsible to find work I could do via teleworking?**
No.

**What telework accommodations and resources are state agencies required to provide?**
If the agency requires/requests telework, employees should put their technology needs in writing and the employer is responsible for meeting them. If the employee is requesting telework that is not required, they need to get prior approval of personal expenses.

**What if my childcare facility is not closed, but I prefer to keep my child home in the best interest of social distancing precautions – am I eligible for COVID leave?**
MMB has advised agency HR that an employee choosing to have their children home but, not connected to daycare closure can explore telework options, which now allows dependents to be at home, or utilize other leave options. If the child is high risk due to a health condition then COVID leave is applicable.

**Workplace Safety**

**How will I be informed if someone in my worksite has been exposed to or tested positive for COVID-19?**
This is being handled at the agency level. You should be notified by phone if there’s a possibility of exposure. Please also see current [contract language](https://mape.org/mapes-contract-working/appendix-g-supplemental-agreements) for DHS and DOC which addresses infectious and contagious diseases.

**I work in a job that has a lot of public contact but isn’t an “emergency” position. What can MAPE do advocate for member safety in the workplace during COVID-19?**
First, be sure to document any safety concerns in writing to your supervisor. If you think you need special equipment or changed work rules, ask for them. If you feel like you're still being put at risk unnecessarily, then contact your [MAPE steward.](https://mape.org/locals/find-your-steward)

**MMB says employees may be redeployed to different work sites. What does this mean?**
MMB will only redeploy workers if necessary. It is our understanding this could mean within and across state agencies. If you are being asked to be redeployed and have concerns, please contact your [MAPE steward.](https://mape.org/locals/find-your-steward) If you are being asked to re-deploy, please let us know by sending an email to action@mape.org so that we can keep track of it.

**Benefits, etc.**

**What if an employee just started and is not on insurance yet?**
If a new employee began work before the executive order was signed and needs health insurance, SEGIP will waive the 35-day waiting period. Contact [SEGIP](https://mn.gov/mmb/segip/) directly.

**Has there been any discussion with MMB about increasing vacation rollover limits given the denial or inability to take vacation during COVID-19?**
Yes, MMB said they will give us an answer in early April. They feel this is a lower priority issue compared to other things on their plate. We have asked them to remove the cap on vacation given these unique circumstances.

**What if I want to change my Dependent Care (daycare) Expense Account contributions now that daycares are closed?**
Employees can change their pre-tax contributions to their Dependent Care Expense Account if there is a change in how they use this care. To make changes, employees must complete [this 121 Benefits form](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDAzMjYuMTkzNTM3NjEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwOi8vMjhib3hqMXAyZzlwMjM5Y25iM3o3MzJwLXdwZW5naW5lLm5ldGRuYS1zc2wuY29tL3dwLWNvbnRlbnQvdXBsb2Fkcy8yMDIwLzAxLzIwMjAtU09NLWZsZXhpYmxlX2JlbmVmaXRzX2NoYW5nZV9pbl9wYXJ0aWNpcGF0aW9uLWZpbGxhYmxlLnBkZi4ifQ.6ik14Z1F8KdgrRQlT5z9mRkgPn1SKKyEvCXInNjirr0/br/76671857403-l) and email it to mmb@state.mn.us. It may take up to two pay periods for changes to go into effect, depending on when an employee submits the form.

**What about my** **Transit Expense Accounts contributions or paid parking costs?**
Throughout the year, employees can change their pre-tax contributions to transit expense accounts that help cover parking, bus pass, or vanpool costs. To make changes, employees must complete [this 121 Benefits form](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDAzMjYuMTkzNTM3NjEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwOi8vMjhib3hqMXAyZzlwMjM5Y25iM3o3MzJwLXdwZW5naW5lLm5ldGRuYS1zc2wuY29tL3dwLWNvbnRlbnQvdXBsb2Fkcy8yMDIwLzAyLzIwMjAtU09NLVRyYW5zaXQtQ2hhbmdlLUZvcm0ucGRmIn0.GR1fM9r-XdXIPHiGEYMVcb25BOWP7qGfeosXWCfWgMU/br/76671857403-l)and email it to mmb@state.mn.us. (This is not for parking or transit passes purchased through the Dept of Admin or your agency.) If you are telecommuting and no longer needing parking for work, ask your agency or private parking lot to put a hold on your parking services/charges.

**What access do I have to tele-medicine services?**
Members should go to their medical plan’s website to find out which tele-medicine company is covered by your plan. Tele-medicine is covered 100% if you use the approved vendor.

**Other**

* [MMB FAQ](https://mn.gov/mmb/be-ready-mn/infectious-diseases/covid-19-faqs.jsp)
* [Stay Home MN FAQ](https://mn.gov/governor/covid-19/faq.jsp)