



Board of Supervisors Memorandum

February 15, 2022

Extension and Expansion of Pandemic Outbreak Leave

Background

On March 17, 2020, the Board of Supervisors declared a State of Emergency related to the COVID-19 outbreak. An important element in the County's response to the pandemic was and continues to be the implementation of a variety of policies and procedures designed to ensure the health and safety of all Pima County employees and the public whom we serve. As we approach the two-year mark of the pandemic in Pima County, it is appropriate to revisit and evaluate the assistance provided to employees.

Pandemic Outbreak Leave

Pandemic Outbreak Leave II

In March 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved Pima County Pandemic Outbreak Leave to assist employees and their families in meeting the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time the policy was enacted, it was believed that these hours would be adequate to ensure that all employees would have access to paid leave if they or a person for whom they provide care might be exposed to or become symptomatic for COVID-19. We did not, at that time, foresee the virus continuing to thrive almost two years later. As employees have responded to outbreaks in the workplace and school environments, many have used all the Pandemic Outbreak Leave originally provided. To ensure that employees protect themselves and the community they serve, we encourage those who may have been exposed or are symptomatic to stay at home and stay safe. To mitigate the continued risk related to COVID-19, I propose that full-time employees receive an additional 80 hours of County paid Pandemic Outbreak Leave, and part-time employees receive a prorated amount of hours based on their regular work schedule. The use of these additional Pandemic Outbreak Leave hours (Pandemic Outbreak Leave II) would follow the guidelines outlined in Administrative Procedure 23-58. These additional hours would not be eligible for a payout at termination from County employment nor conversion to another type of leave. There would be no additional cost to the County as these salaries and benefits are included in the annual budget.

Payment of Balances of Pandemic Outbreak Leave I

As of pay period ending January 29, 2022, there are 2,291 employees who have not used all of their Pandemic Outbreak Leave provided in 2020. While these individuals are fortunate to have not been impacted by the virus, they have in many instances been the employees who have remained in the workplace providing critical services to the people of Pima County. I propose that their efforts and dedication be acknowledged by allowing these individuals to choose to be paid their remaining Pandemic-Vacation leave balances no later than March 11, 2022, or at the time of their separation from Pima County. The total financial impact of this payout is estimated to be approximately \$4.4 million, which represents \$3.6 million in salaries and \$800,000 in employee related expenses.

The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

Re: **Extension and Expansion of Pandemic Outbreak Leave**

February 15, 2022

Page 2

Additional Leave for Previously Furloughed Employees

A total of 261 current employees were furloughed during the COVID-19 State of Emergency. Many of these individuals used all or a large part of their accrued leave banks during that time, which has resulted in these individuals having little or no leave time left to take vacations necessary for rest, recuperation and general health and well-being. I propose that the 83 full-time employees who were furloughed be granted 40 hours of vacation leave, the 16 part-time employees who were furloughed be granted 20 hours of leave, and the remaining 162 intermittent employees who were furloughed be granted 20 hours of leave.

Conclusion

In March 2020, Pima County established policies and procedures related to the assistance provided Pima County employees to ensure that they and the public they serve remained healthy and safe. It was not anticipated that these benefits would still be needed almost 24 months later. It is appropriate, therefore to extend and expand the hours of Pandemic Outbreak Leave available, to recognize those individuals who have continued to serve the public throughout the pandemic, and to allow formerly furloughed employees an opportunity to take time away from the workplace.

Recommendation

I recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve an additional 80 hours of Pandemic Outbreak Leave II for full-time employees and a prorated amount of hours for part-time employees, allow employees to be compensated for currently accrued Pandemic Outbreak Leave I, and provide additional leave as outlined above to all formerly furloughed employees.

Sincerely,



Jan Lesher
Acting County Administrator

JKL/mp – January 31, 2022

Attachment

- c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services
Cathy Bohland, Director, Human Resources
Michelle Campagne, Director, Finance and Risk Management
Regina Kelly, Director, Grants Management and Innovation
Ellen Moulton, Director, Analytics and Data Governance

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



Procedure Number: 23-58

Effective Date: 02/15/2022

Revision Date: NEW

DRAFT

County Administrator

SUBJECT: **COVID-19 PRACTICES**

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE: **All County Departments**

I. PURPOSE

The spread and mutation of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is ongoing and will continue into the foreseeable future. Pima County supports widespread vaccination against COVID-19 as well as efforts that promote and protect the health and safety of County employees in the workplace. This procedure will describe efforts the County will undertake to effectuate its position and memorializes current processes in effect. This procedure will remain in effect until County Administration determines its components are no longer necessary.

II. ONGOING PROCESSES

A. Vaccination

1. All new employees and promoted employees are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19.
2. Any employee who works with vulnerable populations, as defined by their Appointing Authority, is required to be vaccinated against COVID-19.
3. Only employees who are vaccinated are permitted to participate in in-person meetings, trainings, and events; this includes riding in County vehicles together.
4. Employees may use up to 90 minutes of County paid time to receive the COVID-19 vaccination and booster (no more than 180 minutes per employee/per year, contingent upon the brand of vaccine and its dosage requirement). This paid work time is only available if the vaccination appointment is during the employee's regular work hours and where the employee would otherwise have been at work during the appointment time.
5. If an employee's vaccination appointment is during their scheduled work hours, the employee must get pre-approval from their supervisor to be away from the worksite.

B. Temperature Screening

1. An Appointing Authority may require their Department's employees and visitors to undergo temperature screening to enter/remain at the Department's worksite.

C. Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)/Federal Emergency Paid Sick Time (FEPST)

In April 2020, full-time employees were provided 80 hours of FEPST as required under FFCRA. Part-time employees were provided FEPST based on the number of hours they worked in a work week. In April 2021, FFCRA was no longer mandated by the Federal government but could be voluntarily continued by an employer.

1. FEPST is only available to County employees who were hired before April 1, 2021.
2. Employees may use any remaining balance of FFCRA/FEPST leave for a qualifying reason for the duration of the pandemic in Pima County, as determined by County Administration. FEPST is not paid out to the employee upon separation from the County.
3. Employees must submit the appropriate form for approval for this leave to their Department Personnel Representative and provide required information to demonstrate the qualifying reason for this leave.
4. Frequently Asked Questions related to this leave are available on the COVID-19 Employee Resource website.

III. COUNTY PANDEMIC OUTBREAK LEAVE**A. County Pandemic Outbreak Leave I – 2020**

In March 2020, the County provided 80 hours to full time employees (prorated hours for part-time employees) of County Pandemic Outbreak Leave. This leave could be used when an employee was experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, for periods of quarantine or isolation for self or to care for another individual, for caretaking due to closure of schools or day care, or, to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination.

1. For employees hired on or before June 30, 2020, and who had remaining County Pandemic Outbreak Leave from 2020, this leave was converted to "Pandemic-Vacation" leave in the time-keeping system. Pandemic-Vacation leave can be used in the same manner as vacation time/annual leave.
2. Employees who have remaining Pandemic-Vacation leave, may either choose to be paid any remaining balance at any time prior to or at the time of their separation from Pima County. The balance will be paid out in a full lump sum; no partial payments permitted.
3. Full-time employees who were previously furloughed will receive 40 hours of additional vacation leave, part-time and intermittent employees who were furloughed will receive 20 hours of additional leave.

B. County Pandemic Outbreak Leave II – 2022

Effective February 20, 2022, all full time employees will receive an additional 80 hours of County paid Pandemic Outbreak Leave (County Pandemic Outbreak Leave II). Part-time employees will receive a prorated amount of hours based on their regular work schedule. The uses for County Pandemic Outbreak Leave II are the same as outlined in III(A) above.

1. County Pandemic Outbreak Leave II is available to all current employees and those whose date of hire is on or before June 30, 2022.
2. County Pandemic Outbreak Leave II is available to employees for the duration of the pandemic in Pima County, as determined by County Administration.
3. Employees are not permitted to use the leave for occurrences outside of the above outlined provisions in section III(A) above. Use of leave is prohibited for:
 - a. Supplementing vacation leave;
 - b. Time off because of work stress;
 - c. Any illness not related to a diagnostically-verified COVID-19 infection.
4. Employees who use the leave for unauthorized reasons will be required to re-pay any amounts received for its unauthorized use and may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.
5. Supervisors are required to ensure that any employee use of County Pandemic Leave is for a legitimate reason as outlined in this Administrative Procedure. Supervisors do not have the authority to grant use of County Pandemic Leave beyond what is in this Administrative Procedure. A supervisor's failure to monitor County Pandemic Leave usage may result in discipline, up to and including termination.
6. Any unused County Pandemic Outbreak Leave II will not be paid out to an employee upon separation from County employment, nor converted to sick or vacation leave.

IV. QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION TIME PERIODS

A. Symptomatic Employees Are Not Permitted in the Workplace

Employees who experience COVID-19 symptoms are not permitted in the workplace. Supervisors are permitted to inquire whether an employee has any of the symptoms of COVID-19 as outlined in Board of Supervisors Policy D 23.20, *Attendance Policy During Influenza or Other Viral Pandemic Outbreak*. For employees experiencing symptoms, they are to follow the County guidelines and may not return to the workplace absent meeting the criteria listed.

For employees who are required to be out of the workplace due to symptoms, quarantine, or isolation periods and have exhausted all FEPST and County Pandemic Outbreak Leave II leave, they are required to use leave in the following order: sick leave, compensatory time, vacation leave, and unpaid leave.

Probationary employees are permitted to use any accrued time for COVID-19 related purposes for the duration of the pandemic in Pima County, as determined by County Administration.

B. Current Quarantine and Isolation Time Periods

Quarantine and isolation time periods can change frequently, therefore, always check the Employee Resource Page [COVID-19 Employee Resources \(pima.gov\)](https://www.pima.gov/employees/COVID-19-employee-resources) for the most recent guidelines. As of February 1, 2022, the guidelines are:

1. For employees who are “boosted” or within six (6) months (but more than two (2) weeks) of full vaccination:

Symptoms	Isolate 10 days. May return to work earlier with a negative test and symptom-free 48 hours.
Positive Test & Symptoms	Isolate 10 days. Must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to return.
Positive Test & No Symptoms	Isolate 10 days. May return to work on or after day 6 with negative test on or after day 5. Strict mask use and daily monitoring through day 10.
Exposure	No quarantine. Strict mask use and daily monitoring through day 10. Test on day 5 if possible.

2. For employees who are unvaccinated or those vaccinated less than two (2) weeks or more than six (6) months ago*:

Symptoms	Isolate 10 days. May return to work on day 6 with a negative test on day 5 and symptom-free 48 hours.
Positive Test & Symptoms	Isolate 10 days. Must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to return.
Positive Test & No Symptoms	Isolate 10 days. May return to work on or after day 6 with negative test on or after day 5. Strict mask use and daily monitoring through day 10.
Exposure	Quarantine 5 days. Upon return to work, strict mask use and daily monitoring through day 10. Test on day 5 if possible.

* Two (2) months for J&J. Exceptions apply for employees who had COVID-19 within the preceding 90 days.

3. Additional guidance:
 - a. Day zero (0) is date of symptom onset, or if no symptoms, the date of test. For exposures, day zero (0) is the last date of exposure.
 - b. Test can be either an antigen or PCR test; however, self-administered tests are not accepted to return to work.
 - c. All returns to work require being symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours.
4. Pima County Health Department may provide a differing isolation/quarantine time period as they are providing standards for the general community. Human

Resources guidance is provided as an employer to its employees. Employers are permitted to have stricter guidelines as they are responsible to provide employees with a safe workplace and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

V. TRAVEL GUIDANCE

A. Non-Essential Travel

1. Vaccinated employees may return to work after conclusion of non-essential travel or attendance at high risk events, so long as the traveling employee has experienced no symptoms.
2. Unvaccinated employees may not return to work after conclusion of non-essential travel or attendance at high risk events and are required to quarantine for 10 days, during which time they are not permitted to telecommute and must use vacation accruals, and if no vacation accruals are available, will go unpaid. Employees may return to work on or after day seven (7) where they received a negative COVID-19 test no sooner than day five (5) after date of return from travel. Tests may be antigen or PCR, but not home/self-administered test.

B. Essential Travel

1. Vaccinated employees may return to work after conclusion of essential travel, so long as the traveling employee has experienced no symptoms.
2. Unvaccinated employees may not return to work after conclusion of essential travel and are required to quarantine for 10 days. However, the employee will be permitted to telecommute during the quarantine time period. Employees may return to work on or after day seven (7) where they received a negative COVID-19 test no sooner than day five (5) after date of return from travel. Tests may be antigen or PCR, but not home/self-administered test.

C. Work Travel

1. Vaccinated employees may engage in work travel and are permitted to return to work after conclusion of work travel, so long as the traveling employee has experienced no symptoms.
2. Unvaccinated employees may not engage in work travel.

VI. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Unvaccinated employees are not permitted to engage in outside or off-duty employment that requires the employee to work outside of their home or have in-person contact with individuals as part of that employment. Such activity poses an unnecessary risk for other Pima County employees and creates a potential direct threat. Outside employment must be reviewed and approved by Appointing Authorities.

VII. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

An employee may request an exemption from any part(s) of this procedure via a request for reasonable accommodation on the basis of disability or religious practice/observance. Reasonable Accommodation request forms are available on the Human Resources intranet.

VIII. REFERENCES

Board of Supervisors Policy D 23.20, *Attendance Policy During Influenza or Other Viral Pandemic Outbreak*
Personnel Policy 8-111, *Outside Employment*
Administrative Procedure 23-29, *Reasonable Accommodation of Applicants and Employees with Disabilities*
Administrative Procedure 23-30, *Employee Benefits and Wellness Program ("BeWell")*

