

## COVID LEAVE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

On September 17, 2021, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed by participating collective bargaining agreements to provide up to a maximum of 80 hours of COVID Leave for employees. This new leave applies to all participating unions, as well as non-represented employees.

### Q. Who is eligible to receive COVID Leave?

COVID leave is available to all eligible employees who are non-represented or represented by a union who has signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). A list of participating agencies and unions can be found at [Accessing leave during COVID-19 - King County](#).

### Q. What is “COVID Leave”?

Covid Leave is a new benefit which provides all eligible employees with leave to use for COVID reasons as listed in the MOA. It does not interact with other types of covid leave that were previously available. The maximum amount of COVID leave is 80 hours for each employee.

### Q. How do I apply for COVID Leave?

Employees interested in this benefit can apply for COVID Leave by completing the COVID Leave Request Form and providing it along with appropriate documentation to their agency human resource professional. All forms and information can be found online [Accessing leave during COVID-19 - King County](#)

### Q. What reasons qualify under this new COVID Leave?

Eligible employees may use COVID Leave in the following situations

| Maximum Hours  | COVID Leave Reasons  | Who is Eligible   |
|--|--|---|
| Up to one regularly scheduled shift (or a total of one partial shift) <b>per</b> COVID vaccine or COVID booster shot | <p>A. Side effects from COVID vaccine or COVID booster which renders the employee unable to work within 48 hours of receiving the shot.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> Proof of COVID vaccine or COVID booster showing the date <b>(HR Professional should only view the proof of vaccine or booster. Do not keep a copy)</b></p>  | All comprehensive leave eligible employees and short-term temporary employees/interns |
| Up to a maximum of 80 hours of COVID Leave can be used for one of these two reasons:                                 | <p>B. Employee has tested positive for COVID and is unable to telecommute.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> Proof of positive COVID test (e.g., results from a test site, medical office, or a screenshot of a home-based test) <b>(HR Professional should only view the test result. Do not keep a copy)</b></p> <p><b>*Home based COVID tests were only eligible after 12/24/21.</b></p>                                 | All comprehensive leave eligible employees  |
|  | <p>C. Employee is subject to quarantine under health guidance and County policy and is unable to telecommute. This includes employees who have symptoms and must be out of the workplace.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> See <a href="#">Temporary Leave and Telecommuting Policy</a>.</p>   | All comprehensive leave eligible employees  |
| Up to a maximum of 40 total hours of COVID Leave can be used for these reasons:                                      | <p>D. Employee needs to provide care for an immediate family member who has tested positive for COVID and has provided proof of a positive COVID test and is unable to telecommute.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> Proof of positive COVID test (e.g., results from a test site, medical office, or a screenshot of a home-based test) <b>(HR Professional should only view the test result. Do not keep a copy)</b></p> | All comprehensive leave eligible employees  |

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|--|--|---|
|  | <p>E. Employee’s child cannot attend school or childcare center due to COVID (including when child must quarantine due to school/childcare center policies and/or awaiting COVID test results) and because of this, the employee is unable to work or telecommute and has provided school/childcare center COVID policy.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> Proof of positive COVID test, school/childcare center COVID and quarantine policy. A screenshot of a home-based test is also acceptable effective 12/25/21 (<b>HR Professional should only view the test result. Do not keep a copy of the test results</b>)</p> | <p>All comprehensive leave eligible employees</p> |
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**Q. What documentation must be provided by the employee to their agency?**

- Employee’s own positive COVID test: COVID test results\*
- Immediate family member positive COVID test: COVID test results\*
- Child’s school or childcare closure/quarantine: Information of closure/quarantine requirement from school or childcare center (may also include school/childcare center quarantine policy and/or awaiting COVID test results of child).
- Employee’s vaccine side effect: Proof of receiving vaccine within 48 hours of side effect
- **Note:** Remember to quickly take a picture of any home COVID test results as they will be required for documentation purposes and often can disappear quickly.

\* Effective 12/25/21, a screenshot of a home-based COVID test is also acceptable. No pay periods prior to 12/25/21 can be adjusted. Test results should be viewed but not kept as a record.

**Q. What do employees need to provide for documentation related to COVID leave for hours already paid in prior pay periods?**

If an employee is eligible to receive COVID leave for a prior pay period, then hours already coded could be eligible to be recoded using the new COVID leave. Employees should show that a previous sick day or other use of paid accrual did in fact qualify under one of the eligibility reasons for new COVID leave and appropriate documentation is provided.

**Q. How will I know when COVID leave has been awarded?**

Once an employee has completed the request form and been approved for COVID Leave their agency human resource professional will work with the agency timekeeping professional to load the hours onto your timesheet. Awarded hours will then be visible and be available for use.

**Q. When does the new COVID Leave become effective?**

Non-represented employees and most unions who have signed the MOA will have an effective date of August 10, 2021. Some unions may have a signed MOA with a later effective date. To view the effective date of your union please visit [Accessing leave during COVID-19 - King County](#)

**Q. Does COVID Leave also cover reactions from COVID boosters?**

Yes, COVID Leave may be used for reactions related to a COVID booster or COVID vaccine for up to one regularly scheduled shift per shot.

**Q. Are COVID Leave hours for COVID vaccine and booster side effects part of the total 80 hours of COVID leave?**

Yes. All eligible employees may use COVID Leave for side effects from the COVID vaccine or COVID booster for a total of one regularly scheduled shift per shot.

**Q. When must eligible employees use awarded COVID leave hours?**

Eligible employees must use awarded hours between Aug. 10, 2021, and Dec. 31, 2022.

**Q. Can COVID Leave be used to care for my child who is quarantining and/or awaiting COVID test results and is unable to attend school or childcare center due to the schools/childcare center COVID policy?**

Yes. If an employee is unable to telecommute and is home taking care of a child who cannot attend school/childcare center due to their quarantine policy and/or is awaiting a COVID test can use up to a maximum of 40 hours of COVID Leave.

**Q. Are self-administered home COVID tests acceptable for documentation purposes?**

Yes. As of Dec. 25, 2021, a photo of a home-based COVID test result may be used as documentation of a positive COVID test result for the employee or immediate family member. Common home tests include antigen tests or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests. Test results should only be viewed and should not be kept. As a reminder, home-based test results may disappear quickly, so employees should take photos immediately for proof of a positive test. Home tests that don't include the date or name of the user are still accepted as proof of test results.

**Q. Should agency human resource professionals keep copies of vaccination records, vaccination cards or COVID test results?**

No. Agency human resource professionals should only view these items for eligibility but should not keep records or copies of them.

**Q. Are employees eligible to receive COVID Leave if they were exposed to COVID 19 and “must be out of the workplace” as defined in the *Temporary COVID-19 Personnel Policy*?**

If an employee is displaying COVID-19 symptoms, they should be directed to go home and follow the guidelines set forth in the COVID-19 personnel policy. The employee would be eligible to receive and use COVID Leave under reason “C” on the COVID Leave Form even if their initial COVID test is negative.

**Q. If an employee “must be out of the workplace” for COVID like symptoms using COVID Leave but tests negative for COVID 19, will they be required to convert their COVID Leave time to sick leave or other type of paid accrual?**

No. If an employee was out of the workplace for COVID like symptoms, the guidelines set forth in the Temporary COVID-19 Personnel Policy and tests negative for COVID-19 then they would not be required to re-code their COVID time with a type of paid accrual or unpaid time.

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**Q. Can employees on continuous protected leave (i.e., PPL, FMLA, KCFML, PFML, etc.) use COVID Leave?**

No. Employees on continuous protected leave cannot use COVID Leave.

**Q. Can FLSA-exempt employees use COVID Leave in partial day increments?**

No, FLSA-exempt employees must use COVID leave in full day increments.