

RWU Coronavirus Emergency Sick Leave Policy

5.16.22

To All Staff

As the University continues to monitor the local, national and worldwide incidents of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff members are asked to review the following workplace policies and guidance. RWU's priority in setting these revised workplace policies is to maintain a safe and healthy workplace, including minimizing the transmission of contagious disease; the following temporary sick leave policy changes are **effective May 16, 2022**.

1. At this time, we share this clear statement: We ask those employees who can work remotely to do so when the Administration provides that recommendation. All employees need to review this with their managers for approval since some positions dictate that work be done on campus. Managers are asked to be as flexible as possible when considering remote work requests, while also ensuring that their department fulfills its responsibilities. Non-exempt (hourly) employees should log into ADP and accurately code their hours of work. Please note that there is an ADP mobile App that can be used for remote login. Any requests to work overtime must be submitted via email to supervisors for approval in advance. In addition, the standard meal and break periods should be adhered to.
2. In this pandemic circumstance, we know there are conditions directly related to the COVID-19 virus where employees should not be working but may run up against sick time challenges per normal policy. At this time, employees may be granted up to 5 consecutive work days of paid sick leave in a fiscal year before being required to utilize accrued sick leave to account for their absences from work. Once this allotment of sick days has been exhausted, employees must use accrued sick leave to account for their absences from work. Please note that the COVID sick leave is based on the following parameters only. This policy change will apply to employees whose job functions do not allow them to work from home and meet one of these conditions:
 - When the employee is required to care for oneself or a family member when it has been determined by the health authorities or by the health care provider that the employee's or family member's presence in the community may jeopardize the health of others due to exposure to COVID-19, (this includes whether an employee or family member has actually contracted COVID-19 or not);
 - When providing care for oneself or for an immediate family member or a household member with COVID-19;
 - When required to care for a child whose school or place of care has been closed by order of a public official due to COVID-19, or where other care arrangements have broken down (i.e., day care closures);
 - When employees themselves have an underlying health condition which would be exacerbated by heightened exposure to COVID-19 related risks in the workplace;
 - When the employee is required to quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19 or a positive test result for COVID-19;
 - When employees become sick as a result of the effects of the COVID vaccination.

Other non COVID-19-related absences will continue to be subject to normal time-away policies. Please note that all paid sick leaves of absences referenced above may be counted concurrently with FMLA and other State and Federal Leave laws, to include the RI Healthy and Safe Families and Workplaces Act, in accordance with applicable requirements.

3. Employees who have exhausted the above-referenced 5 consecutive work days of sick leave for and do not have any regular accrued sick leave may use up to 5 unearned sick days (they may accrue negative sick leave balances of up to 5 days) for COVID-19 related absences. RWU will review the threshold periodically as conditions change. RWU reserves the right to recoup the 5 unearned sick days provided by the University from the final paycheck of employees who terminate before they rebuild their accrued sick time. Employees who need to access this unearned sick leave must provide written or electronic approval that this deduction will be made if needed. RWU may require reasonable validation of the circumstances enabling leave usage hereunder, consistent with existing policies and law.
4. Employees reporting to work on our campuses may not bring third-parties, including but not limited to family members, for any reason absent advance approval from Human Resources.
5. Remember the Employee Assistance Program is available to you and your family members at no cost if you need help with feelings of stress or anxiety related to COVID-19. Counselors are available at 800-828-6025.

If there are any questions relating to this communication, please contact Human Resources at 401-254-3138.

Thank you for your patience as we move through this health crisis together. Please follow guidance on preventive measures to keep you and your family safe.

REVISED May 16, 2022