



# COVID-Related Work & Leave Options

## General Principles:

- Any employee who is sick with COVID-19 like symptoms must stay home and should consult the BC COVID-19 self-assessment tool to determine if COVID-19 testing is needed or contact 811 or their healthcare provider for medical advice as necessary.
- Employee's with COVID-19 like symptoms should stay home until they are well.
- How an employee's absence is treated needs to be assessed on a case by case basis, and the various options that are available are detailed below.
- The approach that is applicable to a particular employee should be discussed between the employee and the manager, with advice from Human Resources as required.

## Diagnosed with COVID-19 or Directed to Self-Isolate:

If the employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 or has been directed to self-isolate by public health, the following options for time away from the workplace may be available, dependent on the particular provisions of the applicable Collective Agreement or Terms and Conditions of Employment:

1. Utilization of paid sick leave credits (earned but unused);
2. Utilization of advanced paid sick leave credits (advancement on unearned leave credits or access to Central sick leave bank, if applicable, as per relevant Collective Agreement and/or Terms and Conditions of Employment);
3. At the Employer's discretion, and on a without prejudice and without precedent basis, up to 3 days paid COVID-19 Leave, in accordance with section 52.121 of the BC Employment Standards Act (ESA). This paid leave would be granted on a one-time basis and is only available up to December 31, 2021;
4. Unpaid leave / leave without pay (note: the employee can pursue medical EI, or other government programs such as the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit currently available until October 23, 2021);
5. Utilization of paid vacation leave (as per of the relevant Collective Agreement and/or Terms and Conditions of Employment, and may be subject to various conditions);
6. Working from home for a short period if:
  - Medical limitations and restrictions do not preclude the employee from working but prevent the employee from working on-site / interacting face-to-face;
  - AND
  - Nature of work/operational requirements support remote work;
7. For employees required to self-isolate compassionate leave may be applicable subject to the terms of the relevant Collective Agreement and/or Terms and Conditions of Employment.

## Unwell, but the employee has a negative COVID-19 test:

If an employee is unwell, but it is not COVID-19 then the normal sick leave provisions of the applicable agreement or terms and conditions would apply. In addition depending on the nature of the employee's work, the ability to work from home for a short period may be available (in this circumstance the employee must confirm that they are well enough to work, but want to avoid infecting others).

## Care of Family Member:

If the employee has a family member that is diagnosed with COVID-19 or the family member is required by public health to self-isolate, and the employee is required to be at home to provide care for their family member, then the following options could be considered:

1. Paid sick leave credits to care for illness of an immediate family member (if applicable, as per relevant Collective Agreement and/or Term and Conditions of Employment);
2. Compassionate or Family Illness Leave (if applicable, as per relevant Collective Agreement and/or Terms and Conditions of Employment)
3. Unpaid leave / Leave without pay (note: the employee can pursue compensation through relevant government programs (e.g. Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit currently available until October 23, 2021);
4. Paid vacation leave (as per collective agreement and/or Terms and Conditions of Employment, and may be subject to various conditions);
5. Work from home if the nature of the work/operational requirements support remote work; however caring for others at the same time as working from home may not be reasonable and may need to be balanced with other approaches.

## Notes:

- ESA Paid COVID-19 Leave is not available to individuals that are not ill or not personally required to self-isolate and are only caring for others that are ill.
- Employees may be eligible to file a WorkSafe BC Injury on Duty report / injury claim if the illness is a result work-related exposure to COVID-19. This is particularly likely if we have a declared outbreak at the College. Sick leave would be used to support the absence until the claim has been adjudicated.
- WSBC Injury on Duty Leave is not available for employees that are not sick and are only required to self-isolate.