

TO: STAFF
FROM: Dr. Ryan Sherman
DATE: August 20, 2024
RE: Paid COVID Leave

In anticipation of your questions regarding COVID leave this school year, we wanted to share the following information with you.

Paid COVID sick leave remains available in New York State. All employees are entitled to up to three rounds of paid COVID leave. Under the law, you are eligible for paid COVID leave if: (1) you submit proof of a positive PCR test and (2) demonstrate you are subject to an order of isolation issued by a governmental entity.

Each employee is only eligible for up to three rounds of paid COVID leave. Each round provides for up to 10 work days of paid leave for testing positive for COVID-19 and can only be taken for the employee him or herself (it does not extend to dependents). This law was created at a time where the period of isolation was 10 days. Since that time, the guidance was amended to decrease the period of isolation to 5 days and, most recently, the guidance does not provide a "set" period of isolation for employees who test positive for COVID-19 and instead, it varies among people depending on their symptoms. Therefore, of the 10 work days that are available, you will realistically use only 1-2 days, as the current CDC recommendation provides that people stay home and away from others until their symptoms are improving and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours.

To be eligible for paid covid leave, you must submit proof of a positive PCR test and submit an affirmation that you did, in fact, isolate during the period of time you request paid COVID leave. If you did not isolate as recommended by the CDC, you are not eligible for paid COVID leave. Furthermore, if you do not submit a PCR test, you are also not eligible for paid COVID leave. Rapid tests will not be accepted.

Unused days from each eligible round of COVID leave do not carry over to the next round. If you cannot meet the eligibility criteria for COVID leave or, in the event you previously exhausted all three rounds of paid leave, you may utilize your own sick leave accruals.

Items to note:

1. PCR tests are only available by testing locations and/or doctors' offices. The District will not be providing PCR tests.
2. The maximum number of rounds of paid COVID leave is 3, going back to 2020. Employees who have previously exhausted all 3 rounds, will not be eligible for paid COVID leave.
3. If an employee does not test, is not feeling well, and is absent from work, they will have to use their accrued sick leave and manage their health accordingly.
4. Last, anyone found to have misrepresented their status or who submits false information will be subject to discipline.

If you have any questions as it relates to the use of COVID leave in the 2024-25 school year, please contact Lauren Leahy.