

**COVID -19 BENEFITS FAQ:
INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS**
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EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL OR DISTRICT COVID-19 RELATED BENEFITS INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION 1 – FEDERAL BENEFITS – FAMILIES FIRST COVID RELIEF ACT (FFCRA)

Effective 4/1/20 – 12/31/20 - (No longer available at this time)

Q1.1: WHAT BENEFITS DID THE FFCRA REQUIRE EMPLOYERS TO GIVE TO EMPLOYEES FROM 4/1/21 -12/31/20?

A: Employees were entitled to up to 10 total federal COVID-19 sick days for any combination of the following reasons related to COVID-19:

- Employees testing Positive for COVID-19 (paid at 100% of salary)
- Employees quarantined due to contact with a COVID-19 positive individual as deemed necessary by a medical provider or local health authority (paid at 100% of salary)
- Employees exhibiting specific symptoms of COVID-19 while seeking a diagnosis (paid at 100%)
- Employees required to care for a quarantined or isolated person (paid at 2/3% of salary)

Employees were entitled to up to 12 weeks of extended FMLA paid at 2/3% of salary to care for a child under 18 whose child's school (or day care facility) was closed or went totally virtual due to COVID-19 related reasons. This benefit is dependent upon the amount of FMLA the employee has used in the previous 12 months.

Q1.2: HAVE THE FFCRA BENEFITS EXPIRED?

A: Yes, the FFCRA benefits expired December 31, 2020. See Section II below for additional information. If the federal government passes any new legislation, the district will advise employees of any changes to benefits.

SECTION 2 – FFCRA COVERAGE EXTENDED BY THE DISTRICT – (Available at this time)

Q2.1: WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF AN EMPLOYEE NEEDS TO BE ABSENT AFTER 12/31/20 FOR A REASON THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY COVERED BY THE FFCRA?

A: The District has voluntarily decided to allow any employee with unused FFCRA benefits to be granted his/her unused benefit retroactively from January 4, 2021, through June 30, 2021.

Q2.2: WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN UNUSED FFCRA SICK DAY?

A: Unused FFCRA sick days are any of the 10 days given under the FFCRA that an employee didn't use prior to 12/31/20.

Q2.3: IF AN EMPLOYEE IS OUT DUE TO A COVID-19 RELATED REASON AND THE DATES OVERLAP WITH A DISTRICT HOLIDAY OR EXCUSED STORM DAY, DOES THE DAY COUNT AGAINST THE EMPLOYEE'S FFCRA SICK DAY BALANCE?

A: No. FFCRA sick days are only applied to dates of absence that the employee would have been expected to report to work.

Q2.4: IF AN EMPLOYEE WAS ALLOWED TO WORK FROM HOME DUE TO A REASON COVERED UNDER FFCRA, DO THESE DAYS COUNT AGAINST THE EMPLOYEE'S FFCRA SICK DAY USAGE?

A: No. If an employee had permission from his/her principal/supervisor to work from home for a reason covered by FFCRA and the employee performed his/her work from home, the employee would **not** be charged an FFCRA sick day for the day. All employees sanctioned to work from home earn their normal salary for work performed at home. The principal/supervisor determines whether an employee is eligible to receive a "work from home" status. This is determined on a case by case basis. The HR Leave Department verifies the employee's work from home status with the principal/supervisor. Effective 1/4/21, employees are not required to notify the HR Leave Department that they are working from home.

Q2.5 IF AN EMPLOYEE WAS NOT APPROVED TO WORK FROM HOME DUE TO A REASON COVERED UNDER FFCRA, DO THESE DAYS COUNT AGAINST THE EMPLOYEE'S FFCRA SICK DAY USAGE?

A. Yes.

**SECTION 3 – NEW 10 DAY COVID-19 RELATED BENEFIT GIVEN BY THE DISTRICT
Effective 1/4/21**

Q3.1: WHAT IS THE NEW BENEFIT GIVEN BY THE DISTRICT?

A: The District wanted to provide an extra benefit for employees who are impacted by district-mandated quarantines and who would otherwise have been required to take unpaid leave. Effective January 4, 2021, through June 30, 2021, employees impacted by quarantines may qualify for an additional district benefit if they have exhausted all FFCRA leave and regular sick leave. This benefit provides for a maximum of 10 excused days.

Q3.2: WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA AN EMPLOYEE MUST MEET TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ANY OF THE 10 ADDITIONAL DISTRICT COVID EXCUSED SICK DAYS?

- An employee must be quarantined by the school nurse due to contact at the workplace with an individual who has been identified by the school nurse as positive or symptomatic for COVID-19
- OR
- An employee must have a child under 18 who has been quarantined by the child's school
- AND
- The employee must be **unable to work from home** as established by the employee's principal/supervisor
- The employee must have used all of his/her FFCRA sick days
- The employee must have used all of his/her regular/accumulated sick leave days
- The employee then qualifies for up to 10 of the District Excused Covid Sick Leave days to cover the remainder of his/her quarantine period.

Q3.3: CAN AN EMPLOYEE APPLY THE DISTRICT COVID EXCUSED DAYS TO A PERIOD OF QUALIFYING ABSENCE THAT OCCURRED PRIOR TO JANUARY 4, 2021?

A: No. Employees are not eligible to apply any District Covid Excused Sick Days retroactively to any period prior to 1/4/21.

Q3.4: DOES THIS MEAN THAT THE DISTRICT IS GIVING ALL EMPLOYEES ANOTHER 10 DAYS OF EXCUSED SICK LEAVE FOR ALL REASONS PREVIOUSLY COVERED BY FFCRA?

A: No. The District is only giving the District Covid Excused Sick Day benefit to employees who meet the criteria outlined in Q3.3 above.

Q3.5: WHAT IF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PASSES AN EXTENDED VERSION OR A NEW VERSION OF THE FFCRA BENEFIT PACKAGE MANDATING ADDITIONAL FEDERAL SICK DAYS?

A: The District reserves the right to take a credit for any District Covid Excused Sick Days granted voluntarily to employees against any new days that may be granted by the federal government mandated to be applied at any time during the period 1/1/21 through 6/30/21. The District would provide updated information to employees if and when any new legislation is enacted.

SECTION 4 – HOW THE DISTRICT GRANTS COVID-19 RELATED BENEFITS

Q4.1: HOW DOES THE DISTRICT IDENTIFY EMPLOYEES WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR COVID-19 RELATED BENEFITS?

A: Once the school nurse enters an employee case into the District Covid Tracker, the Human Resources Leave department is able to access the record. The 3 types of circumstances that are entered into the District Covid Tracker are:

- Employees testing Covid-19 positive
- Employees sent home to quarantine by the school nurse
- Employees presenting with symptoms sent to be tested by the school nurse

All employees granted permission to work from home will be coded by the school timekeeper as “Covid Work from Home.” Employees working from home do not need to contact the Human Resources Leave department. The Human Resources Leave department has access to the information entered into the District Covid Tracker. Employees qualifying for unused FFCRA benefits and District Covid Excused sick days can be identified from the Tracker. The benefits are calculated by the Human Resources Leave department. The information is sent to the Payroll department to be processed.

Employees **do not** need to contact the HR Leave department. If additional information is needed, a Human Resources Leave technician will contact the employee.

Employees whose child is quarantined or whose child’s school is closed/all virtual will need to contact the HR Leave department directly to obtain benefits. **These two types of circumstances are NOT placed into the District Covid Tracker by school nurses.**

See Section 5 below for instructions relating to each specific circumstance.

Q4.2: IS AN EMPLOYEE’S COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

A: Yes. Information is kept strictly confidential. The only personnel that may access your information are those necessary to process your benefits.

SECTION 5 – INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES
By Type of COVID-19 Related Circumstances

Q5.1. WHAT ARE EMPLOYEES REQUIRED TO SUBMIT TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES LEAVE DEPARTMENT WHEN THE EMPLOYEE’S CHILD UNDER 18 HAS BEEN QUARANTINED BY THE CHILD’S SCHOOL? WHAT BENEFITS WILL EMPLOYEES RECEIVE?

A. The employee must submit a written notification to the HR Leave Department stating that his/her child has been quarantined by his/her school. The written notice should also contain the following information:

- The name of the employee
- The name of the school or department where the **employee works**
- The name of the **child's school**
- Whether or not the employee was given permission by the principal/supervisor to work from home

A copy of the letter sent by the child's school containing the dates of the child's quarantine must be submitted with the written request. The employee's name (not the child's name) should be written on the copy of the letter from the child's school in order to match the letter to the proper employee in case the papers become separated.

A copy of the same information must be sent by the employee to his/her principal/supervisor. The principal/supervisor must send an email to an HR Leave Technician stating the employee has been granted permission to work from home.

This information can be faxed to 504-349-7778 or 504-349-7726 or emailed to your Leave Technician.

Email to Toni.Feirn@jpschools.org if your last name begins with the letter A-K.

Email to Lahkyn.Billiot-Fish@jpschools.org if your last name begins with the letter L-Z.

Employees granted permission to work from home will receive their regular salary.

Employees not granted permission to work from home will receive any unused FFCRA benefit at 2/3 daily rate of pay first. Then, the employee will be required to use any remaining Regular sick leave paid at 100% daily rate of pay. Once regular sick leave is exhausted, the employee is eligible to receive up to 10 District Covid Excused days at 2/3 daily rate of pay. Once the 10 days of District Covid Excused days are exhausted, the employee will be docked 100% of daily rate of pay for each additional day of absence during the child's quarantine.

Q5.2. WHAT ARE EMPLOYEES REQUIRED TO SUBMIT TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES LEAVE DEPARTMENT WHEN THE EMPLOYEE HAS A CHILD WHOSE SCHOOL HAS CLOSED OR GONE ALL VIRTUAL AND/OR WHOSE CHILD'S DAY CARE CENTER HAS CLOSED (OR GONE PART TIME) DUE TO COVID-19 RELATED REASONS?

A. The employee must submit a written notification to the HR Leave Department stating that his/her child's school or day care center has closed or converted to all virtual learning for all students. The written notice should also contain the following information:

- The name of the employee
- The name of the school or department where the **employee works**
- The name of the **child's school**
- Whether or not the employee is requesting permission to work from home

A copy of the letter sent by the child's school must be submitted with the written request. The employee's name (not the child's name) should be written by the employee on the copy of the letter from the child's school. In the case of a day care center closure, the employee must submit the original notice from the center. The letter from the center must contain the name, address, and phone number of the center. The employee should write his/her name on the letter from the day care center.

This information can be faxed to 504-349-7778 or 504-349-7726 or emailed to your Leave Technician.

Email to Toni.Feirn@jpschools.org if your last name begins with the letter A-K.

Email to Lahkyn.Billiot-Fish@jpschools.org if your last name begins with the letter L-Z.

Due to the potential for this type of leave to be lengthy, the employee's principal/supervisor must contact the Director of Workers' Compensation and Leaves before granting permission to work from home. The ability, effectiveness, and duration of any arrangement to work from home will need to be determined before such permission is granted.

Employees granted permission to work from home will receive their regular salary.

Employees not granted permission to work from home are eligible for up to 12 weeks of expanded FMLA benefits at 2/3% of salary. Any prior use of FMLA benefits granted for any reason in the previous 12 months will be subtracted from the 12 weeks available to the employee.

Q5.3. WHAT ARE EMPLOYEES WHO ARE COVID-19 POSITIVE, QUARANTINED, OR SYMPTOMATIC AND WORKING FROM HOME REQUIRED TO SEND TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES LEAVE DEPARTMENT?

- A. Nothing. Employees granted permission by their principal/supervisor to work from home do not need to contact the HR Leave department.

The absence code for "Covid Work from Home" has been given to the school/department timekeepers and will be applied to the employee's timesheet at the school/department level. The principal/supervisor has the sole authority to grant permission to work from home for all cases entered into the District Covid Tracker. This information should be shared by the principal to the nurse, the timekeeper, and the employee.

If an employee is working from home while COVID-19 positive and becomes too ill to work from home at any time is required to notify his/her principal and school/department timekeeper. The protocols and benefits for employees unable to work from home are contained in this publication below and will apply instead to any such absences.

Q5.4. WHAT ARE EMPLOYEES WHO TEST COVID POSITIVE REQUIRED TO SEND TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT IF THEY ARE NOT WORKING FROM HOME? HOW ARE BENEFITS APPLIED IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE?

- A. Employees do not need to contact the HR Leave department if they have enough unused FFCRA days and/or regular sick days to cover all absences while recovering from COVID-19.

The employee must contact the school nurse so his/her information can be placed into the District Covid Tracker.

The employee NOT Working from Home will be granted benefits in the following order:

1. **Unused FFCRA sick days** at 100% of salary. Employee does not need to contact HR.
 2. **Regular/accumulated sick leave** benefits at 100% of salary. After an employee uses all FFCRA days, the employee will be granted regular sick leave until regular/accumulated days are all used.
 3. An employee would then use **extended sick leave benefits** at 65% of his/her salary until all are used.
- If the employee still has unused Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) benefit protection, the employee would be placed **on FMLA Leave Without Pay** at 0% of salary.
 - o escrow will be cashed out
 - o employees can maintain benefits at active employee rates, but are responsible for paying their premiums

- If and when all FMLA LWOP benefits are exhausted, the employee would be placed on **Regular Leave Without Pay** at 0% of salary.
 - o escrow will be cashed out, if not previously done
 - o employees can maintain benefits at leave rates, but are responsible for paying their premiums

Q5.5. WHAT IS AN EMPLOYEE REQUIRED TO SEND TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES LEAVE DEPARTMENT WHEN QUARANTINED DUE TO CONTACT WITH POSITIVE INDIVIDUAL OUTSIDE OF THE WORK PLACE EFFECTIVE 1/4/21 AND DO NOT HAVE PERMISSION TO WORK FROM HOME? HOW WILL BENEFITS BE GRANTED IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE?

- A. The employee does not need to contact the Human Resources Leave department. If additional information is needed, the Human Resources Leave department will contact the employee.

The employee should contact the school nurse so his/her information can be placed into the District Covid Tracker.

The employee will be granted benefits in the following order:

1. Unused FFCRA sick days at 100% of salary
2. Regular/accumulated sick leave benefits at 100% of salary for the duration of the quarantine or until all are used, then
3. 100% dock of daily rate of pay for each additional absence for the remainder of the duration of the quarantine period
4. Not eligible for extended sick leave
5. Not eligible for DCE Sick Days

If the employee becomes positive for COVID-19 while under quarantine, the employee should notify the Human Resources Leave department and the school nurse. The protocols and benefits for employees testing positive for COVID-19 found in Q5.4 above would then apply to the employee instead.

Q5.6. WHAT IS AN EMPLOYEE REQUIRED TO SEND TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES LEAVE DEPARTMENT WHEN QUARANTINED DUE TO CONTACT WITH A POSITIVE INDIVIDUAL AT THE WORK PLACE AND DOES NOT HAVE PERMISSION TO WORK FROM HOME? HOW WILL BENEFITS BE GRANTED IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE?

- A. The employee does not need to do anything unless they are contacted by a Human Resources Leave department Technician.

The employee will be granted benefits in the following order:

1. Unused FFCRA sick days at 100% of salary.
2. Regular/accumulated sick leave benefits at 100% of salary for the duration of the quarantine or until all are used, then
3. Up to 10 District Covid Excused Sick Days at 100% of salary for the remaining duration of the quarantine, and, if needed,
4. Once all District Covid Excused days are exhausted the employee will be docked 100% of his/her daily rate of pay for each additional absence for the remainder of the duration of the quarantine period.
5. Not eligible for extended sick leave

If the employee becomes positive for COVID-19 during the quarantine period, the employee must notify the Human Resources Leave department and the school nurse. The protocols and benefits for employees testing positive for COVID-19 found in Q5.4 above would then apply to the employee instead.

Q5.7. WHAT IS AN EMPLOYEE REQUIRED TO SEND TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES LEAVE DEPARTMENT IF THE EMPLOYEE IS EXHIBITING SYMPTOMS THAT COULD BE COVID-19 AND IS SENT HOME BY THE SCHOOL NURSE WHILE SEEKING A DIAGNOSIS?

- A. The employee does not need to contact the Human Resources Leave department. Any information needed will be requested on a case by case basis as needed by the Human Resources Leave department.

An employee exhibiting symptoms that could be COVID-19 should contact the school nurse. The nurse will determine if symptoms warrant testing. If the employee is sent for testing, the nurse will enter the information into the District Covid Tracker.

The employee will be granted unused FFCRA sick days for the time period beginning when he/she is tested through to date his/her negative test results are made available. Once a negative test result is obtained, if the employee is too sick to return to duty, the employee should be charged regular/accumulated sick leave.

If the employee has no regular/accumulated sick leave days remaining, the employee may submit an **Application for Extended Sick Leave** within 3 work days of returning to duty. Information from a physician is required to be submitted for the application to be considered complete.

If the employee becomes positive for COVID-19, the employee is required to notify the Human Resources Leave department and the school nurse. The protocols and benefits for employees testing positive for COVID-19 found in Q5.4 above would then apply to the employee instead.

Once a positive result is received, the principal/supervisor may then make a decision whether or not to grant permission to work from home to an employee whose job classification enables the employee to work from home.

SECTION 6 - WORK FROM HOME FOR NON-COVID RELATED REASON

Q.6.1 CAN PERMISSION TO WORK FROM HOME BE GRANTED BY A PRINCIPAL/SUPERVISOR FOR A NON-COVID-19 RELATED REASON?

- A. No.