



## **COVID-19 Guidance for Leave Administration**

### **As of March 14, 2020:**

The leave process for employees was not in effect for employees who needed to be quarantined as a direct result of COVID-19 related circumstances (exposure, symptoms). This guidance was shared with Human Resources Business Partners and published to the University's COVID-19 website.

Paid Special Leave or other time off was not required until further notice unless the employee contracted COVID-19.

The leave process for employees who had contracted COVID-19 was to request Paid Special Leave for (up to 10 business days). FMLA protection would run concurrently upon submission of sufficient medical certification.

If an employee's circumstances did not qualify for FMLA, a Personal Leave of Absence could be requested.

### **As of April 18, 2020:**

- Leave entitlements were modified for essential employees required to work onsite and based on operational needs of the department. This update was shared with HR Business Partners and published online at the University's COVID-19 website.
- Employees who test positive for COVID-19 would remain entitled to request a Paid Special Leave (up to 10 business days) in Workday for the days in which they are instructed by a medical provider. FMLA runs concurrently for these employees upon submission of sufficient medical certification.
- For non-salaried employees: regular hours will need to be submitted if they are on a Paid Special Leave status. If the employee remains unable to return to work upon the expiration of their Paid Special Leave they may be eligible for continued leave under the FMLA and may use accrued sick/vacation time off to remain paid.
- Medical notes must be provided for time out of work and prior to returning to work.

As shared since April 18, 2020, employees in need of time out of work for reasons not listed above may be eligible for a Personal Leave of Absence if they do not qualify for a leave under the FMLA and have exhausted their time off for a Paid Special Leave. Employees on a Personal Leave of Absence can use accrued sick or vacation time to remain paid.

### **Steps to Request a Paid Special Leave of Absence:**

**Important Note: Hourly employees must submit time by entering REGULAR HOURS during the Paid Special Leave period (10 business days).**

Employee must request a Leave of Absence in Workday (<http://brown.edu/go/requestloa>)

- Employee should select Leave type:
  - *Administrative (Paid)*
- Employee should select leave reason:
  - *Special Leave (paid): Self*
  - *Special Leave (paid): Dependent/household member (not applicable after May 29, 2020<sup>1</sup>)*
- Select: Submit

**As of April 28, 2020:**

**Helpful Reminders when an employee has contracted COVID-19:**

To protect the privacy rights and the health and safety of every employee, no electronic or communication should be shared with others when an employee has contracted COVID-19.

In accordance with state guidance, employees should maintain a daily journal of contact with other colleagues, visitors, students, or other members of the University community to submit to their healthcare provider if they contract COVID-19.

As with any other situation that requires a leave of absence, a supervisor, the department's Human Resources Business Partner, or an employee will directly contact University Human Resources to address their need for time off to address their own illness in accordance with University leave administrative processes.

University Human Resources will communicate with an employee and the department's HR Business Partner while they are on a leave to address their own illness due to COVID-19 and until the employee's health condition has improved. Their health status must be verified by medical documentation to successfully return to work.

As stated in the University's communication issued on March 20, 2020, the University's protocol to inform others who may have been exposed to an employee who has contracted COVID-19 will be left to the public health experts at the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH).

The RIDOH will take the steps to perform contact tracing and inform anyone who may have been exposed. Individuals at risk of exposure will discuss with their supervisor the need for time off as instructed by the RIDOH.

**As of May 20, 2020**

**Additional Helpful Reminders when an employee has contracted COVID-19:**

An employee should contact University Human Resources (UHR) Leave Administration at [leave\\_admin@brown.edu](mailto:leave_admin@brown.edu) to discuss time off or request a paid special leave as soon as possible or call UHR-Leave Administration at 401-441-4765.

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<sup>1</sup> Telecommuting remains under discussion to be extended and updates will be announced as information is received.

All email communications should be sent secure using Virtru (<https://it.brown.edu/services/type/email-encryption-virtru>) and should not include any personal identifying information.

In accordance to CDC's guidelines for illness and recovery time periods Paid Special Leave may only be requested once and the time is to be used in a consecutive manner.

If deemed medically necessary, testing for COVID-19, for those employees enrolled in Brown's health insurance plans, is conducted at no cost to an employee.

### **Leave Administration:**

Employees will need to submit medical documentation clearing them to return to work to UHR-Leave Administration at [leave\\_admin@brown.edu](mailto:leave_admin@brown.edu) or call UHR-Leave Administration at 401-441-4765 before they can safely return to work. The return note should be remitted with as much advance notice as possible and at a minimum of 24 hours prior to their return.

- A return to work clearance note is documented on the treating provider's letterhead and includes the following information: employee's name, date in which the provider has seen the employee, date employee is cleared to return to work, restrictions (if applicable), and the medical provider's signature.
- UHR-Leave Administration will confirm with the employee's supervisor that sufficient documentation to return to work has been received. Employees that do not provide UHR-Leave Administration with a sufficient return to work on the day of their return, should be sent home, by their manager, until they can provide a return to work note.

Employees are not required to provide a copy of their COVID-19 test result. Documentation of this nature will not be collected.

In absence of an employee being told to quarantine or testing positive for COVID-19 an employee may use their accrued sick/vacation time off to remain paid. If documentation is produced indicating quarantine or positive test results, paid special leave may be reinstated retroactively.

### **Workplace Logistics:**

Supervisors should notify their property manager (FM or other) and EHS, so appropriate facility cleaning and disinfecting can be coordinated. The identity of anyone testing positive must be kept confidential. No personal identifying information can be shared, only that there is a positive case in an office, floor or building so that preparations can be made to clean the facility as recommended by CDC. If closing of spaces is necessary, critical access can be handled on a case-by-case basis with assistance from EHS. For additional information on steps to take when an employee has contracted COVID-19, please visit: <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/human-resources/health-wellbeing>.