



## Administrative Practice Manual

**Subject: COVID-19 Policy**

There is a novel type of coronavirus (COVID-19) that has spread to over 100 countries. The first case was confirmed in the US in Washington on January 21, 2020. There are over a hundred thousand cases worldwide and thousands of deaths. The World Health Organization declared it a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Governor Evers declared this a Public Health Emergency in Wisconsin on March 12, 2020. County Executive Parisi declared a County Emergency on March 16, 2020.

This APM sets a number of policies designed to continue county operations during this public health emergency.

### 1. General Provisions

- a. County Government will continue to function during this crisis. This situation is not similar to a snowstorm where County government can close for a few days. This is expected to be a prolonged crisis and we need to continue serving the public during this time.
- b. Each County Department will determine how best to use their staff and make a plan for a prolonged suspension of normal operations.
  - i. When possible, the public will be able to access County services online and via telephone.
  - ii. Staff who are able to work from home, will be able to do so. Supervisors will provide specific guidance about how to work from home. Work from Home Guidelines are described in item #3 of this policy.
  - iii. Some staff, like the Sheriff's Office, 911, Badger Prairie, Consolidated Foods, airport, zoo keepers, etc., will still need to come to work.
  - iv. Some County services will be reduced or completely suspended. Employees whose job duties are reduced or suspended may be reassigned. Employees whose duties are reduced or suspended and are not reassigned will continue to receive regular pay.
  - v. Non-essential workplace travel and Department events are canceled or postponed. Travel to restricted areas (whether for work or personal reasons) may trigger a 14-day requirement to self-quarantine.
- c. All County Employees will follow proper precautions:
  - i. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - ii. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - iii. Please cover your cough with your elbow – not your hands.
  - iv. Maintain distance (approximately 6 feet) from others when possible.
  - v. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects. Encourage employees to clean and disinfect their workstation. While Facilities Management will be focusing on disinfecting common surfaces, additional cleaning can help.
  - vi. If space permits, work at least six feet from others. If you have an office, keep your door closed.



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- d. All employees should keep in mind the symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath). If employees are experiencing symptoms, they should call their doctor. Please see the CDC's website for more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html>

### 2. Communications

- a. Dane County is centralizing information to the public about the availability of county services at the following website: <https://countyofdane.com/coronavirus>
- b. Dane County is centralizing essential communication to employees at the following website: <https://www.connect2dane.com/coronavirus>
- c. All employees should monitor their official county email
- d. All employees should monitor Public Health Madison & Dane County's website for more information: <https://www.publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus>
- e. Follow Public Health Madison & Dane County on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/publichealthmdc>) and on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/PublicHealthMDC>).
- f. Follow Dane County Executive Joe Parisi on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/danecojoie>) for additional updates.

### 3. Work from Home Guidelines

The following are general guidelines for how to work from home. Departments are allowed to develop specific, departmental work from home rules.

- a. Managers and Supervisors should setup a schedule with employees who work from home. Given the circumstances of the public health emergency with many schools and child cares closed, managers and supervisors should allow for maximum flexibility (starting work early; working later into the evening).
- b. Managers and supervisors should establish a plan that outlines specific tasks and projects to be performed from home.
- c. Employees should keep their managers and supervisors up to date with their progress on projects.
- d. Managers/Supervisors should ensure that their employees have the necessary equipment in order to work from home.
- e. Employees need to be available and respond appropriately to emails, skype messages, and phone calls.

### 4. Exception Time Reports/Punch Cards

- a. Department Heads should work with Payroll Clerks to make sure they have the necessary equipment and system access to process the bi-weekly payroll if they are working from home.
- b. Regular full time and part time County employees (but not LTE's) who do not submit an ETR, or who do not submit one in a timely manner, will be paid their regular hours for that pay period. Existing deadlines for submitting ETR's will be observed.



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- c. Payroll Clerks should establish revised procedures for receiving ETR's. ETR's submitted online do not have to be signed as long as they are approved/funneled through the supervisor. An email or other informally documented accounting of the employee's hours, forwarded by the supervisor, will also be accepted by the Payroll Clerk for processing. ETR's signed by the employee and approved by the supervisor can be forwarded directly to the Payroll Clerk.
- d. Supervisors should make an extra effort to obtain ETR's, or other time worked documentation, from LTE's every pay period. They will not be paid unless hours worked are proactively entered into the payroll system. This also applies to LTE's in departments with time clocks who do not punch in/out for any reason.
- e. Department of Administration payroll staff will work directly with Payroll Clerks to address any issues related to payroll keying/processing.

### **5. Attendance Policy**

Dane County is not waiving its attendance policy at this time. Certain county services are vital to the community and we need county employees to continue serving the public during this emergency.

### **6. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

- a. Dane County is waiving the health certification requirement for regular FMLA. This will allow employees who are sick with the illness or isolated due to exposure to use FMLA and other paid time off.
- b. Additional information about the new Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act is in Item #11.
- c. Employees who are ill and need FMLA, should file for regular FMLA – not the emergency FMLA.

### **7. Compensation Time**

- a. The County is not providing compensation time for employees who must come to work on-site during this crisis. Past practices provide for the suspension of operations for a short period of duration (approximately 3 days). This is an on-going crisis that may last for a prolonged period of time.
- b. The County does not have the ability to issue an indefinite amount of compensation time for necessary services.
- c. The County will continue to pay overtime for employees who earn it.

### **8. Changes to Sick Leave**

- a. As Dane County employees, you should never have to choose between working and taking care of yourself or your family when in crisis.
- b. All County Employees will be able to use the sick leave that they would have earned in 2020 immediately.
- c. The Department of Administration will provide payroll clerks instructions on how to implement this policy. Employees will be permitted to go negative up to what they would earn in the payroll year 2020.



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- d. Additionally, sick leave and supplemental sick leave can now be used to cover your time away from work while taking care of your children in the absence of childcare.

### 9. COVID-19 Temporary Exception (Travel to States with more than 10 cases or community spread)

- a. **All non-essential travel is strongly discouraged by the County Executive and the Department of Administration.**
- b. Employees who had approval from their supervisor prior to March 10, 2020, AND who embarked on the travel on or after March 10, 2020, AND who traveled to a location that had ten (10) or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 on March 10, 2020 or traveled to a state identified as having community transmission prior to their departure, are required to be quarantined at home for 14 calendar days starting the day after returning from the travel.
- c. Two temporary exceptions to the Employee Benefit Handbook have been issued regarding travel restrictions for COVID-19. Those exceptions are still in effect and are posted at: <https://admin.countyofdane.com/employee-relations/employee-resources>
- d. Following the terms of the Temporary Exceptions, employees subject to the 14 day quarantine period who cannot work from home will be allowed to use a new payroll leave bank established for this situation. The form to apply for this payroll bank will be available on <https://www.connect2dane.com/coronavirus>

### 10. COVID-19 Emergency Leave

- a. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, signed by President Trump on March 18, 2020 provides that employers with an existing sick leave policy create an Emergency Leave benefit to their employees in addition to what is already provided.
- b. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act exempts Emergency Responders and Health Care providers from receiving this leave. While all County Employees will be eligible to receive this leave, employees who are emergency responders and health care providers are put on notice that their Department may deny the use of this leave.
- c. County Employees will receive 10 days (80 hours) of COVID-19 Emergency Leave, effective April 2, 2020.
- d. For employees who work less than 1.0 FTE, this amount will be calculated based on the average number of hours worked in the prior six months.
- e. **This emergency leave is available to LTEs** – Provided that they have worked for Dane County for the previous 30 days.
- f. Employees can use this leave if any of the following apply:
  - i. The employee has a COVID-19 diagnosis or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and is seeking a medical diagnosis.
  - ii. The employee is quarantined (including self-imposed quarantine), at the instruction of a health care provider, employer, or government official in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
  - iii. The employee is caring for an immediate family member who has COVID-19 or is under a quarantine related to COVID-19.



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- iv. The employee is caring for their child or other individual who is unable to care for themselves due to COVID-19 close of their school, child care facility, or other care program.
- g. Employees may begin recording COVID-19 Emergency Leave beginning in Pay Period 9B.
- h. This leave time will cease on 12/31/2020.
- i. This is a one-time Emergency Leave grant. Once the leave is exhausted, employees will not be able to receive additional emergency leave.
- j. This time will not accrue.

### 11. Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act

- a. President Trump signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act on March 18, 2020. This law creates a new Emergency Family Medical Leave and expands the law (referred to as the Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act or EFMLEA).
- b. Under EFMLEA, Dane County is required to provide 12-weeks of leave to employees to care for the son or daughter (under 18 years of age) of the employee if the school or place of care has been closed, or the child care provider of the child is unavailable due to the public health emergency.
- c. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act exempts Emergency Responders and Health Care providers from receiving this leave. While all County Employees will be eligible to receive this leave, employees who are emergency responders and health care providers are put on notice that their Department may deny the use of this leave.
- d. Employees are able to take this leave starting April 2, 2020.
- e. The Department of Administration is updating the Leave of Absence form and employees should submit that form to their supervisor and then to Employee Relations. Employees wishing to use the EFMLEA should check "EFMLEA" as the reason for the leave. The Leave of Absence Form will be available on <https://www.connect2dane.com/coronavirus>
- f. Under EFMLEA, the first 10 days of an employee's leave may consist of unpaid leave, but an employee may choose to substitute any accrued paid leave (vacation, holiday, sick leave, etc.), including the COVID-19 Emergency Leave for such unpaid leave.
- g. Following that 10-day period, Dane County will provide employees with Paid EFMLEA for the duration of the leave at rate not less than 2/3 (two-thirds) of the employees regular rate of pay and the number of hours the employee would otherwise normally be scheduled to work. During this time, County employees may not substitute for their accrued leave in order to earn 100% of the time.
- h. Limited Term Employees, are eligible for this benefit, provided that they have worked for Dane County in the last 30 days. This leave is available for LTEs.
- i. Intermittent use of EFMLEA is permitted.

### 12. Limited Term Employees

- a. Limited Term Employees typically do not accrue benefits. However, because of the current emergency, Dane County is providing two benefits to Limited Term Employees.



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- b. Limited Term Employees are able to receive COVID-19 Emergency Leave as specified in item #10 under this policy.
- c. Limited Term Employees are able to apply for and take an Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act as specified as item #11 under this policy.