

City & County of San Francisco

Public Health Emergency Leave

Covered Employers Must Post Where Employees Can Read Easily.

Effective April 17, 2020, businesses with 500 or more employees worldwide must provide up to 80 hours of paid Public Health Emergency Leave to each employee who performs work in San Francisco. This paid leave is in addition to any paid time off, including paid sick leave under the San Francisco Paid Sick Leave Ordinance, that the employer offered or provided to employees on or before April 17, 2020, except that employers that voluntarily provided additional paid leave in response to the COVID-19 outbreak may count that leave toward the required Public Health Emergency Leave. Employees may use this leave when they are unable to work (or telework) due to the following:

- (1) The employee is subject to an individual or general government quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19, including shelter-in-place orders.

This includes an employee who is a member of a “vulnerable population,” which include people who are (1) 60 years old and older; (2) have certain health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, kidney disease, and weakened immune systems; or, (3) who are pregnant or were pregnant in the last two weeks.

- (2) The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine.
- (3) The employee is experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
- (4) The employee is caring for a family member who meets one of the categories listed above.
- (5) The employee is caring for a family member if that person’s school or place of care has been closed, or the care provider of that person is unavailable, due to the Public Health Emergency.
- (6) The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Local Health Officer or federal law.

The leave is in effect only during the local emergency. Employers are not required to pay out any unused leave. Employers of health care providers and emergency responders may limit this leave to where the employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

Employers may require employees to identify the basis for requesting Public Health Emergency Leave, but may not require the disclosure of health information or other documentation such as a doctor’s note. Employees who assert their rights to receive Public Health Emergency Leave are protected from retaliation. The City can investigate possible violations, shall have access to employer records, and can enforce the paid leave requirements by ordering reinstatement of employees, payment of paid leave unlawfully withheld, and payment of penalties.

If you have any questions, please contact the Office Labor Standards Enforcement (OLSE) at (415) 554-6271, email us at PSL@sfgov.org, or visit www.sfgov.org/olse.

Additional paid leave, other job-protected leave, and benefit programs include paid leave through the U.S. Department of Labor (dol.gov) and unemployment and disability benefits through the California Employment Development Division (edd.ca.gov) and the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (dfeh.ca.gov).



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