



Monroe County Personnel Department

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Monroe County Personnel's COVID-19 Response Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to Monroe County Department Heads and employees on Monroe County's plan for responding to the rapidly evolving coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency. This plan will be reviewed by the Monroe County Administrator and Personnel Director weekly or more often as needed.

This plan is to provide clarity and guidance regarding taking time off during the COVID-19 public health emergency. With new laws enacted we are looking to give our staff a few options to help them navigate through this difficult time.

Due to Governor Evers Executive Orders throughout 2020 declaring a public health emergency for the state of Wisconsin we have adopted a policy to address changes to the workplace and other policies given the current COVID-19 pandemic. Previous executive orders were given and we had developed new policy in order to remain compliant while providing guidance for our employees. As a precautionary measure in response to the emergency orders and the COVID-19 pandemic the following updated rules will be in effect as of **Thursday, April 1, 2021:**

What does this mean?

- Everyone must wear a mask or cloth face covering to cover the mouth and nose, when entering the building and moving about common areas (hallways, waiting rooms, conference rooms, public rest rooms, courts, common office areas, etc.) and while visiting offices, attending a meeting, gathering or court hearing (*exceptions will be made for members of the public who may have a health condition that may not allow for a mask*).
- Staff in an enclosed office will be able to remove their mask. If another staff member or a member of the public comes into the office the mask would need to be put back on.
- Staff in a cubicle setting will be required to wear a mask.
- Staff working outdoors with the ability to social distance from other individuals will not be required to wear a mask.
- Those who fail to comply with the masking policy will be subject to discipline per the Monroe County Personnel Policy.
- **Some departments may have additional requirements above and beyond the requirements of the Emergency Order #1, which stated face coverings are required (example: Rolling Hills).**

**If employees have a medical reason they cannot wear a face covering, they are to privately let the Personnel Department know. Employees may be required to provide information from their physician confirming their medical condition and why not wearing a mask is necessary to accommodate this condition. Employees are not

expected to disclose those reasons to others. All employees should be respectful of their co-workers' right to privacy. Because some employees are unable to wear a face covering, it is important that those who can, do.**

Staffing

- Department Heads that wish to continue with the alternate scheduling are authorized to do so. Due to these measures staff may still be working rotating schedules with a combination of telework and office time. It is recommended that you contact the Personnel Department regarding the need to take any of the leave due to COVID-19 related circumstances.

Employee – defined as a Monroe County staff member that works full-time (40 hrs. /wk.) or at least part-time status (20 hrs. /wk. or more) that are currently benefit eligible per Monroe County's Personnel Policy Manual.

Leave Options

For those who have to take time off due to COVID-19 related circumstances whether it be personal illness or child care will have the following options to consider.

Compensation during any COVID-19 related leave will be through the use of earned vacation, **sick leave**, floating holiday, comp time or leave without pay. Employee's will have the choice of the accrual bank or leave without pay during any circumstances directly related to COVID-19, whether it is a quarantine order, positive test result, or care for an immediate family member. During this process the required certification from a health care facility will be waived unless there is a cause to believe the employee falsified the request and this will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Determination if telework would be an alternative to accrual usage would be dictated by the Department Head. Certain departments may have more strict enforcement to adhere to state and other guidelines for a health care or other type of facility. ****Dates of quarantine time frames could be reduced under advisement of Monroe County Health Department.****

Employees shall notify their manager of any leave being taken. All employees taking leave must contact their manager or the Personnel Department for accrual bank usage wishes. If staff do not specifically communicate accrual bank usage to their manager or the Personnel Department their time will be charged as such:

1. Vacation
2. Floating Holiday
3. Sick Leave
4. Comp Time (if applicable)
5. Leave without pay (LWOP)

Process

All requests for any leave options must be completed on the attached COVID-19 Personnel Leave Request Form (revised 4/1/2021).

To access the form please visit the Monroe County Personnel Department webpage:

<https://www.co.monroe.wi.us/departments/personnel>

All forms and COVID materials are listed under COVID-19 Response Plan and Policies.

Vaccination Information

During 2021 members of the public and staff will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccines. Our Monroe County Health Department encourages all staff to take part in this process and get vaccinated. If you have any questions regarding this process or resources on where you can find more information or where Monroe County has vaccination clinics being held please use the following links:

<http://healthymonroecowi.org/vaccine>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine.htm>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-map.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

To contact the Monroe County Health Department directly you can call 608.269.8666.

When to Stay Home from Work

Anticipating the spread of COVID-19 to Monroe County, we will have staff who will need to stay home; either because they are ill, have been exposed, are caring for an ill family member, or are watching children due to school or daycare closures.

The most important message we can send is to stay home if you have any symptoms or have any reason to believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19. As we plan for ways to continue to provide necessary, and in some cases, life-saving services to our clients at a time we anticipate potential staffing shortages, the last action we want you to take is to come to work ill and potentially spread COVID-19 to your co-workers and clients.

To help manage the distribution of staffing resources county-wide and plan for more significant interventions, we will be implementing a protocol so that we can centrally track staff that are out due to flu-like symptoms or potential COVID-19 exposure. Specifically, when you communicate to your normal department contact that you are sick or concerned about coming to work, you will be asked to report the following types of information:

- 1) Are you staying home because you are sick, or because you are caring for someone else who is sick?
- 2) Does the illness present flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, headache/body aches), or something else?
- 3) If it is flu-like symptoms, do you have any reason to believe you may have contracted COVID-19?
- 4) Have you or a member of a party you have been traveling with come into contact with someone contagious with COVID-19?
- 5) Have you or a member of your household traveled to a state or country with "community spread/transmission" in the past 15 days?

If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, please call and consult your medical provider. If you are exhibiting some symptoms but not sure whether you should stay home, please stay home and consult your physician via telephone for additional guidance.

Given the potential seriousness and magnitude of the situation, our goal is to remove as many barriers as possible for staff to be able to stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms or otherwise have reason to believe they may have been infected. In addition, a Department Head, in consultation with the Monroe County Health Department may send an employee home who reports to work exhibiting signs of illness as described below.

- The employee is exhibiting flu-like symptoms.
- Someone in the employee's family or household is exhibiting flu-like symptoms.
- The employee has been exposed to someone who is being quarantined due to suspicion of or potential exposure to COVID-19.
- A diagnosed case of COVID-19 by receiving a positive test result. An employee diagnosed with COVID-19 should contact the County Personnel Department to determine FMLA eligibility.

If staff are sent home by a supervisor they will have the option to use earned vacation, sick leave, floating holiday, comp time or leave without pay.

Travel Restrictions

- 1) It is recommended that employees postpone or cancel personal travel outside of Wisconsin, domestic and international.
- 2) Those who choose to travel are strongly encouraged to monitor their symptoms before, during, and upon return from travel, to ensure their safety as well as those around them during travel and their coworkers upon return to the workplace. Prior to traveling anywhere we recommend you check the travel regulations at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel> to ensure you're adhering to all laws and guidelines established.
- 3) Staff will be required to self-quarantine should they meet the requirements listed on the next page with the chart titled **Travel Self-Monitoring Questionnaire**.
 - a. Based on the answers to the guide staff may be required to remain out of the office for up to 14 calendar days. Telework alternative options may be allowed with department head's approval if staff are required to self-quarantine.
 - b. Please review the questionnaire below if you or anybody in your immediate household are traveling.

Travel Self-Monitoring Questionnaire

<p>#1) In the past 24 hours have you experienced:</p> <p>If employee has experienced any of the symptoms listed, they should NOT go to work.</p> <p>Restrictions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-quarantine for 10 calendar days and must remain symptom free for the last 72 hrs. before returning to work. • Recommend employee to contact health care provider for further guidance. <p>Accrual banks required to supplement work time if telework options are unavailable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Cough • Feeling Feverish • Sore throat • Loss of sense of taste/smell • Chills • Muscle/body aches • Congestion/runny nose • Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing • Diarrhea/abdominal pain • Nausea/vomiting
<p>POTENTIAL CONTACT: If employee answers “yes” to #2 they will be sent home and required to self-quarantine for 14 calendar days and potentially longer under guidance of your local Health Department.**</p>	
<p>#2) Have you had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 patient while that person was ill?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

In these circumstances, self-quarantine means remaining away from work and other public areas, typically in one’s home, for a minimum of 10 calendar days. If employee remains symptom free for the last 72 hours they will be eligible to return to work. Compensation during the 10 day self-quarantine period will be through the use of earned vacation, **sick leave**, floating holiday, comp time or leave without pay. Employee’s will have the choice of the accrual bank or leave without pay during any of the circumstances listed on pg. 4. During this process the required certification from a health care facility will be waived unless there is a cause to believe the employee falsified the request and this will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Determination if telework would be an alternative to accrual usage would be dictated by the Department Head. Certain departments may have more strict enforcement to adhere to state and other guidelines for a health care or other type of facility. ****Dates of quarantine time frames could be reduced under advisement of Monroe County Health Department. ****

Employees shall notify their manager of any leave being taken. All employees taking leave as a result of travel outside of the country must contact their manager or the Personnel Department for accrual bank usage wishes. If staff do not specifically communicate accrual bank usage to their manager or the Personnel Department their time will be charged as such:

1. Vacation
 2. Floating Holiday
 3. Sick Leave
 4. Comp Time (if applicable)
 5. Leave without pay (LWOP)
- 4) County travel shall be limited to essential purposes to conduct County business or operations.
- 5) County travel required for a court proceeding, a bona fide law enforcement purpose, or by the medical examiner for a death investigation, is exempt from the restriction under “Travel Restrictions”.

School or Daycare Closure

Any employee that must miss work due to school or daycare closures will be required to use their accrued vacation, sick leave, floating holiday, comp time, or leave without pay within the guidelines established within this policy.

Taking leave without pay under this section will not affect accruals of benefits provided by the county.

For tracking purposes, the Department Head or Supervisor shall have the employee complete the proper form and report the time on the timesheet accordingly for approval.

We are asking departments to be flexible, if possible, with hours of work for staff members to continue to complete tasks. We ask all staff to be in communication and ensure approval through their manager before taking time off.

Reporting to Work

- 1) Employees should continue to report to work unless directed otherwise as reflected in the Monroe County Personnel Policy Manual. A copy of the Personnel Policy Manual can be found on the Monroe county website at <http://www.co.monroe.wi.us/departments/personnel/>. As county employees, we have obligations to maintain services to the extent possible during an emergency. We will be making every effort to reduce exposure in our workplace.
- 2) If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, the Health Department will inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.
- 3) **Employees who fail to come to work without supervisor approval in a pandemic will be treated as if they failed to come to work at any other time and may be subject to disciplinary action.**
- 4) Employees may request leave time and it will be reviewed, and approved or denied, in accordance with the leave provisions in the Monroe County Personnel Manual and listed above in this document. In general, our objective is to ensure the health and safety of our county employees while continuing the County's critical services. At this time, our goal is to encourage healthy employees that are able, to report to work.
- 5) Employees must work as assigned unless granted leave. Employees may be required to assist in performing work for absent or ill co-workers to ensure that the County is able to provide essential services. The County will make an effort to provide the appropriate protective measures to employees assigned to work in a situation that would put them at greater risk of exposure than the typical interactions encountered in conducting usual life activities.

Social Distancing

Social distancing includes any action to limit contact with others. General actions we are directing departments to take:

- **Limiting face-to-face meetings:** To the greatest extent possible, you should be considering how to limit face-to-face meetings, including using email, phone conferences, or videoconferencing when possible. Consider whether any meetings, either within the department or within the community, can be cancelled/rescheduled or conducted remotely with the use of technology. Our default position should be

that in-person meetings will be cancelled unless there is a compelling need. If additional technology conferencing tools are needed please reach out to the IT Director and County Administrator for approval of such need.

Emergency Declaration

As a result, all department heads shall begin tracking all expenses relating to COVID-19 planning and preparedness. This declaration has since expired at the county level, but all departments are still recommended to track expenses for potential reimbursement.

Office Closure

Complete county department/office closure will only be authorized by the County Administrator, with the guidance of Public Health Officials.

Exceptions to Monroe County Policies and Procedures and this COVID-19 Plan may be considered and approved by the County Administrator on a case by case basis.

Response Coordination

The Public Health Director for Monroe County shall be responsible for coordinating Monroe County's response to COVID-19. The scope of that coordination shall include, but is not limited to:

- 1) Consulting with federal, state, and local emergency management and public health officials concerning the County's overall response to COVID-19;
- 2) Distributing official communications concerning the virus, its spread, and the County's response to it;
- 3) Providing recommendations on office closures, and travel limitations and restrictions; and
- 4) Consulting with, and providing recommendations to, department heads on service delivery as it relates to COVID-19.

Communication Protocol

- 6) External Communication: All e-mails, public health bulletins, and press releases concerning the County's overall response to the pandemic shall be issued by the Health Director.
- 7) Internal Communication: Communication to the County employees shall be through County Administration or Personnel in consultation with Health.
- 8) With the exception of the Health Director and Emergency Management Coordinator, all employees shall refrain from distributing group e-mails, notices, pamphlets, brochures or other forms of correspondence concerning the pandemic so as not to confuse, contradict or in any other way interfere with official communications issued by Health or County Administration. Employees concerned with receiving the most recent and credible information concerning the pandemic should go to the CDC website: <http://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-NCOV/cases-in-us.html>.
- 9) At the department level, Department Heads may continue to provide information to their employees concerning the manner in which services will be provided to the public in light of the pandemic.

- 10) Communication to clients, vendors and other business partners regarding changes to business practices, due to the response to a pandemic, will be at the Department Head level.
- 11) Employees are urged to remain vigilant for e-mail scams related to pandemic.
 - a. Avoid clicking on links in unsolicited emails and be wary of email attachments;
 - b. Use trusted sources – such as legitimate, government websites – for up-to-date, fact-based information about the pandemic;
 - c. Do not reveal personal or financial information in emails, and do not respond to email solicitations for this information.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- 1) Monroe County Maintenance is primarily responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all county facilities utilizing standards proven effective against COVID-19, and for coordinating with custodians on the proper cleaning and disinfecting standards related to COVID-19.
- 2) To the extent that employees are capable of doing so safely, they shall assist maintenance and housekeeping staff with disinfecting porous and non-porous surfaces.
- 3) Maintenance and/or housekeeping personnel shall provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace, ensure that adequate supplies are maintained, and place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.

Future Communications

Given the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the fluidity of the situation, this plan may be revised and/or updated frequently. Please ensure you are referring to the most recent version of this plan.