



Monroe County Personnel Department

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Monroe County Personnel Policy Manual – Infectious Disease Policy

4.583 Infectious Disease 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 any public health emergency. In order for this policy language to be put into action a serious health concern must be determined by the Monroe County Health Director in accordance with the County Administrator.

Administration of Infection Disease Policy:

- Once a determination has been made and approved by the Monroe County Health Officer and County Administrator an official announcement will be given to all Monroe County employees as to what the expectations and guidelines will be for the public health emergency.
- All communication will be sent by the Monroe County Personnel Department.
- Any requirements of social distancing, face coverings or masking, or any other precautionary matters will be outlined in detail to assist all staff with expectations and compliance in reference to this policy.

This plan is to provide clarity and guidance regarding taking time off during the 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.

What does this mean for Monroe County Employees?

Employees are expected to follow the guidance listed below:

- Any staff that may be experiencing one or more of the following symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, chills and fatigue should remain home until cleared by a medical provider or the Monroe County Health Department.
- If a mask or face-covering requirement for certain buildings is put in place, 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 this policy will be subject to discipline per the Monroe County Personnel Policy.
- Some departments and buildings may have additional requirements above and beyond this policy, which may state face coverings are required (example: Rolling Hills). Department Heads would have the authority to implement these requirements.

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 public health emergency 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 public health emergency related circumstances whether it be personal illness or child care will have the following options to consider.

Compensation during any public health emergency 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 the public health emergency, whether it is a quarantine order, positive test result, own serious illness, 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.

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 appropriate Personnel Leave Request Form as maintained by the Monroe County Personnel Department.

When to Stay Home from Work

Many times, with the best of intentions, employees report to work even though they feel ill. We provide paid sick time and other benefits to compensate employees who are unable to work due to illness, including Family & Medical Leave Act leave, and leave without pay.

During an infectious disease outbreak, it is critical that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing one or more of the following symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, chills and fatigue. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people with an infectious illness such as the flu remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. Employees who report to work ill will be sent home in accordance with these health guidelines.

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 or any other designated ailment per the public health emergency?

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 or other designated ailment per the public health emergency.

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.

In these circumstances, dates of time frames could vary on a case by case basis and will be reviewed with the Personnel Department under the advisement of the Monroe County Health Department. 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.

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

- 1) County travel must be approved by department head prior to any travel for conducting County business or operations.
- 2) 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 section 1.

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 if leave is in direct relation to the public health emergency.

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 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) **Employees who fail to come to work without supervisor approval in a public health emergency will be treated as if they failed to come to work at any other time and may be subject to disciplinary action.**
- 3) Employees may request leave time and it will be reviewed, and approved or denied, in accordance with the leave provisions in this section of the Monroe County Personnel Manual. 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.
- 4) 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.

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 Infectious Disease Policy may be considered and approved by the County Administrator on a case by case basis.