



Guidelines on Employee Absences Due to COVID-19

The health and safety of our community remains the University's highest priority. In order to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19, public health authorities have provided guidance for individuals who have been exposed to the virus, or are at greater risk of being exposed to the virus. Links to guidance from the University, public health authorities, other government authorities, and other resources have been consolidated on the University's [coronavirus information site](#).

These Guidelines do not apply to employees who are working on-site. The Guidelines are applicable for the period starting March 14, 2020 and continue in force until April 30, 2020. The University may choose to extend the effective period of these Guidelines and may amend them, at its discretion.

These Guidelines describe payments for which new reason codes have been created in HRIS; [detailed instructions are available on the HR & Equity website](#).

Absences unrelated to COVID-19 will continue to be administered in accordance with the applicable collective agreement or employment policy.

COVID-19 Sick Leave

While many of our appointed employees have sick leave provisions in their respective collective agreement or employment policies that sufficiently address such absences, the University has, on an exceptional and without prejudice or precedent basis, temporarily modified and/or improved upon some of the existing provisions for employees who become sick due to COVID-19.

- Employees with paid sick leave in their collective agreement or employment policy should use paid sick leave if they become sick due to COVID-19.
- Employees who have exhausted paid sick leave in accordance with the applicable collective agreement or employment policy will be provided additional days of paid sick leave sufficient to cover a sickness due to COVID-19
- Employees in bargaining units or employee groups that do not have paid sick leave provisions will suffer no loss of pay as a result of sickness due to COVID-19, pursuant to the following:



- Hourly paid employees will be paid for the greater of either any scheduled shifts that they miss up to and including April 30, 2020 if the absence is due to sickness caused by COVID-19, or the average weekly wages for casual employees calculated on the basis of the formula set out in the Employment Standards Act (ESA) for public holiday pay (see Appendix A) if the absence is due to sickness caused by COVID-19
- Salaried employees (including appointed employees and monthly salaried casual employees in CUPE 3902 units 1, 3, and 5) will receive their regular salary during sick leave absences caused by COVID-19
- For the purposes of absences due to sickness caused by COVID-19, **requirements to provide a medical note will be waived, to prevent additional strain on healthcare providers**
- COVID-19 sick leave will not be included in any attendance management process under a collective agreement.

COVID-19 Self-Isolation

- COVID-19 Self-Isolation refers to employees who are instructed to self-isolate as follows:
 - By a healthcare professional, or
 - Due to recent travel as set out in applicable direction from an applicable government authority, or
 - Due to potential exposure as set out in applicable direction from an applicable government authority
- Employees in self-isolation whose roles allow them to work from home are expected to perform the full scope of their duties to the extent possible while in self-isolation
- Employees in self-isolation whose roles are not suited to work from home will continue to receive their regular salary (for salaried employees) or for casual / hourly paid employees, the greater of either any scheduled shifts that they miss up to and including April 30, 2020, or the average weekly wages for casual employees calculated on the basis of the formula set out in the Employment Standards Act (ESA) for public holiday pay (see Appendix A) for the period March 14 – April 30, 2020



- Employees self-isolating are required to complete the appropriate form through ServiceNow:
[Appointed Faculty, Librarian & Staff Self-Declaration form](#)
[Non-Appointed Employee Self-Declaration form](#)
- No period of COVID-19 self-isolation will be included in any attendance management process under a collective agreement.

Appointed Employees That Are Well

Well appointed employees fall into two categories:

1. Employees that may continue performing their duties remotely (e.g. administrative staff), provided such work continues to be required
 - These employees will continue to receive their regular pay and are expected to perform the full scope of their duties subject to any agreement with their manager to do otherwise
2. Employees that cannot continue to perform their duties remotely and/or whose duties cannot be performed for the period March 14 – April 30, 2020
 - Employees in this category may be reassigned by their manager into alternative roles (that fall within the recognition and scope clause of their collective agreement for unionized staff).
 - Reassigned employees will continue to receive their regular pay during this period
 - Employees that are not reassigned will be placed on pandemic leave and receive their regular pay during this period
 - Departments will be asked to submit information regarding these employees, and the Division of HR & Equity will online a paid pandemic leave to account for this time



Casual Employees That Are Well

Well casual employees fall into two categories:

1. Employees that may continue performing their duties remotely (e.g. administrative staff), provided such work continues to be required
 - These employees will be paid for their regularly schedule shifts and are expected to perform the duties assigned for such shifts, subject to any agreement with their manager to do otherwise
2. Employees that cannot continue to perform their duties remotely and/or whose duties cannot be performed for the period March 14 – April 30, 2020.

Employees in this category will be paid the greater of either:

- any scheduled shifts that are cancelled for the period March 14 – April 30, 2020; or,
- the average weekly wages for casual employees calculated on the basis of the formula set out in the *Employment Standards Act* (ESA) for public holiday pay (see Appendix A).

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please contact your [Divisional HR office](#).



Appendix A

Casual Employee Wage Calculations for Use in Determining Wages for Absences that are to be Paid Pursuant to the Guidelines on Employee Absences Due to COVID-19

On a without prejudice basis and in response to the extraordinary circumstances that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, and out of a desire to reduce the disruption of earnings experienced by casual employees who do not receive a regular salaries from the University, the University will provide casual employees with the greater of the following two entitlements between March 15 and April 30, 2020:

1. The wages that the casual employee would have received for any previously scheduled shifts that the employee will not work between March 15 and April 30, 2020 as a result of COVID-19; or
2. The average weekly wages of the casual employee, calculated on the basis of the formula set out in the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* for public holiday pay. Specifically, average weekly wages will be calculated by adding together the total amount of regular wages earned and vacation pay payable to the casual employee in the four work weeks before March 14, 2020 (*i.e.*, from February 16 to March 14), divided by 20. This daily average pay will then be multiplied by 5 to determine the employee's weekly average pay.



Example #1: The casual employee had no scheduled hours between March 16 and April 5, 2020. However, the employee earned the following amounts (inclusive of vacation pay) in the prior 4 weeks:

- Week 4 (March 8-14, 2020): \$200
- Week 3 (March 1-7, 2020): \$0 (no work)
- Week 2 (February 23-29, 2020): \$500
- Week 1 (February 16-22, 2020): \$750
- Total regular wages in past 4 weeks = $\$200 + \$500 + \$750$ or \$1450
- Average weekly wages $\$1450 / 20 * 5 = \362.50

Note – this amount would be paid for each of the three weeks between March 16 and April 5 for a total of **\$1087.50**

Example #2: The casual employee had 5 scheduled shifts between March 16 and April 5, 2020 that the employee will not work due to COVID-19, with an equivalent monetary value of \$1000. The employee earned the following amounts (inclusive of vacation pay) in the prior 4 weeks:

- Week 4 (March 8-14, 2020): \$200
- Week 3 (March 1-7, 2020): \$0 (no work)
- Week 2 (February 23-29, 2020): \$500
- Week 1 (February 16-22, 2020): \$350
- Total regular wages = $\$200 + \$500 + \$350$ or \$1050
- Average weekly wage = $\$1050 / 20 * 5 = \mathbf{\$262.50}$
- If this weekly average is grossed up to three weeks, the total amount payable would be:
\$787.50

Since the value of the shifts the employee will not work due to COVID-19 (\$1000.00) is greater than the amount obtained on the basis of the average (\$787.50), the casual employee would be entitled to **\$1000.00**. Were the opposite true (*i.e.*, the averaged amount was greater than the amount that would have been paid for the shifts they will not work due to COVID-19), then the casual employee would have been paid on the basis of the averaged amount.