Email Subject Line: Information About Your Leave

Date

To: Employee

CC: DisabilityUnit@sonoma-county.org

**RE: INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

On Date, you notified the Department that you tested positive for COVID-19.  You stated that your symptoms began on date, and you were last on site on date. Notices will be sent to all department employees, but you will not be identified in the email. The notification is a requirement under OSHA regulations.  Please see the *Work Exclusion* section below for information on returning to the workplace.

**Work Exclusion:**

*If you have COVID symptoms*: Until further notice, you are excluded from physically coming to work as to help prevent the potential spread of the virus. You may not return to the workplace until:

* ​**Stay home if you have COVID-19 symptoms**, until you have not had a fever for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication AND other [COVID-19 symptoms​](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) are mild and improving.​
* Mask when you are around other people indoors for the 10 days\* after you become sick or test positive (if no symptoms). You may remove your mask sooner than 10 days if you have two sequential negative tests at least one day apart. Day 0 is symptom onset date or positive test date.
* Avoid contact with people at [higher-risk](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html)for severe COVID-19 for 10 days\*. Higher-risk individuals include the elderly, those who live in congregate care facilities, those who have immunocompromising conditions, and that put them at higher risk for serious illness.
* [Seek Treatment​](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Treatments.aspx). If you have symptoms, particularly if you are at [higher risk for severe COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html), speak with a healthcare provider as soon as you test positive. You may be eligible for [antiviral medicines](https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/management/antivirals) or other treatments for COVID-19. COVID-19 antiviral medicines work best if taken as soon as possible, and within 5-7 days from when symptoms start. ​​​​​

If available, and you are able to, telework options will be reviewed with you by your supervisor or manager.

*If you do NOT have COVID symptoms***: You can return to the workplace as long as you:**

* Mask when you are around other people indoors for the 10 days\* after you become sick or test positive (if no symptoms). You may remove your mask sooner than 10 days if you have two sequential negative tests at least one day apart. Day 0 is symptom onset date or positive test date.
* Avoid contact with people at [higher-risk](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html)for severe COVID-19 for 10 days\*. Higher-risk individuals include the elderly, those who live in congregate care facilities, those who have immunocompromising conditions, and that put them at higher risk for serious illness.

Pay During Your Leave: You will use accrued leave for any hours you are unable to work (sick and vacation, as provided under your union contract or the Salary Resolution). If you think you contracted the virus in the workplace and you want to apply for workers’ compensation temporary disability benefits, see information and requirements, below. (You will need to notify your department so you can receive a work comp claim form in the mail.)

**Workers’ Compensation**: If you think you contracted COVID-19 in the workplace, you have the right to file a workers’ compensation claim. Information on filing a claim is available on the County’s Human Resources website: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/human-resources/divisions-and-units/disability-management-unit/service-directory/workers-compensation>

You will need to fill out a Claim form (DWC-1 <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc/dwcform1.pdf> ) if you think you contracted the virus in the course of your work, complete the top portion of the claim form and please describe how you contacted the virus in the workplace. Submit the form to County of Sonoma Human Resources – Disability Management, disabilityunit@sonoma-county.com. **Please call Kaiser Occupational Health to discuss your COVID case with a medical professional at 707-566-5555.**

**Contact Tracing**: As an immediate response to protect our workforce's health and safety, we are investigating to determine co-workers with whom you may have had close contact, as currently defined by Cal/OSHA. As part of this process, we may need to reach out to you for additional information. Your cooperation is critical in preventing the spread of the virus in the workplace.

**Leaves and Protections**:

As a County employee, you may be entitled to the following COVID-19 benefits under applicable federal, state, and/or local laws. Detailed information on the following leaves and protections are available on the County’s Employee Resources website located here: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/human-resources/employee-resources/covid-19>

*Paid Leave for Isolation*:

* Accrued Sick Leave: Employees may use sick leave to cover Isolation time. Additional information on sick leave accruals and use is located in your Union’s Memorandum of Understanding, or the County’s Salary Resolution. Available for review on the County’s Human Resources website: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/human-resources/divisions-and-units/employee-relations/labor-agreements-and-salary-resolution>

*Isolation Protections:*

* Family Medical Leave Act/California Family Rights Act leave provides job-protected leave for an employee’s own illness or care of an ill family member.
* California Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Family Act of 2014 (California Paid Sick Leave).
* Retaliation Protection: If you believe that you have been retaliated against for disclosing a positive COVID-19 test, diagnosis, or order to quarantine or isolate, contact County of Sonoma EEO Unit, at EEOunit@sonoma-county.org, to discuss your concern. You may also contact the State of California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Labor Standards Enforcement at: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/DistrictOffices.htm>

*If you become sick, additional benefit options are:*

* Short-Term Disability (STD): Some Unions have short-term disability benefits available to their members. Short-term disability benefits pay a percentage of your normal wage. You may also have the option of supplementing the payments with your accrued leave to bring you to 100% of pay. Information is available on the HR website at: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/human-resources/divisions-and-units/disability-management-unit/service-directory/short-term-disability>
* Long-Term Disability (LTD): Like STD, LTD pays a percentage of your normal wage. You cannot supplement the payments. If your illness extends beyond 60 days, you may be eligible to receive LTD benefits. Information is available on the HR website at: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/human-resources/divisions-and-units/disability-management-unit/service-directory/long-term-disability>
* Catastrophic Leave: If you exhaust all your own leave accruals, your illness leave extends beyond 2 weeks, and you do not qualify for STD benefits, you may apply to receive Catastrophic Leave (donations of vacation and compensatory time from other County employees).

Catastrophic Leave information is located online at: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/human-resources/divisions-and-units/disability-management-unit/service-directory/catastrophic-leave>

The Catastrophic Leave application form, is available at: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/administrative-support-and-fiscal-services/human-resources/divisions-and-units/disability-management-unit/forms-and-templates>

**Employee Assistance Plan**: Free, confidential support for work and life, available 24/7. To access services, call [1-866-248-4096](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/HR/Benefits/Employee-Assistance-Program/), or go to: <https://www.liveandworkwell.com/content/en/public.html> (Use guest access code: **Sonoma** to access services and information online.)

The County continues to work diligently to comply with Public Health, Cal/OSHA regulations, and CDC guidelines, as employee safety is a top priority. Please contact name/phone number/email if you have questions or need support.

Sincerely,

Department Contact