

TO: STAFF
FROM: Dr. Ryan Sherman
DATE: October 10, 2024
RE: Paid COVID Leave

I write to provide an update as it relates to the availability of paid COVID leave in the 2024-25 school year. In light of recent amendments made to the Department of Labor website, **Affirmations of Isolation will no longer be accepted in support of COVID Paid Sick Leave claims.** Accordingly, to be eligible for this benefit, amongst other eligibility criteria, the employee **must demonstrate they are subject to an order of isolation or quarantine** issued by NYS, the local department of health, or any other governmental entity authorized to issue such orders.

While it is highly unlikely that formal orders of isolation or quarantine will be issued again, if an employee does receive an order of isolation or quarantine issued by NYS, the local county health department or any other governmental entity authorized to issue such orders, the employee may be eligible for paid COVID leave, as follows.

Each employee is only eligible for up to three rounds of paid COVID leave. Each round provides for up to 10 workdays of paid leave for testing positive for COVID-19 and can only be taken for the employee him or herself (it does not extend to dependents). This law was created at a time where the period of isolation was 10 days. Since that time, the guidance was amended to decrease the period of isolation to 5 days and, most recently, the guidance does not provide a “set” period of isolation for employees who test positive for COVID-19 and instead, it varies among people depending on their symptoms. Therefore, of the 10 workdays available, employees will realistically use only 1-2 days, as the current CDC recommendation provides that people stay home and away from others until their symptoms are improving and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours.

To be eligible for paid COVID leave, an employee must complete **all** the below requirements:

1. Submit proof of a positive PCR test;
2. Demonstrate they are subject to an order of isolation issued by the New York State Department of Health, local board of health, or any governmental entity duly authorized to issue such order.

**** AFFIRMATIONS OF ISOLATION OR QUARANTINE ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED in support of paid COVID sick leave claims **.**

3. Not otherwise be permitted to telework by the employer.

In the absence of an Order of Isolation issued from a governmental entity, an employee is NOT eligible for paid COVID leave. Furthermore, if an employee does not submit a positive PCR test, they will not be eligible for paid COVID leave. Rapid tests will not be accepted.

If an employee does not meet the eligibility criteria for COVID leave or, in the event you previously exhausted all three rounds of paid leave, the employee may utilize their own sick leave accruals.

If you have any questions as it relates to the use of COVID leave in the 2024-25 school year, please contact Lauren Leahy, at LeahyL@schuylerville.org.