

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) FAQ for State of Michigan Managers & Supervisors

COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear in as soon as 2 days or as late as 14 days after exposure. This FAQ addresses questions related to state employees, state workplaces, and COVID-19. [Frequently Asked Questions About Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) are available on www.Michigan.gov/coronavirus.

Leave and benefits:

1. May an agency require employees to leave work if they have symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes. If the state has been notified that COVID-19 is circulating in Michigan, employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms upon arrival to work or who become sick during the day should be sent home if approved by the HR office. Because collective bargaining agreements and civil service regulations vary on specific requirements for handling illness-related departures from work, the HR office must give prior approval based on consistent, established standards before requiring an employee exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to leave work. In addition, the HR office **MUST** report to the Office of the State Employer the work location and bargaining unit of any such employees.

2. May agencies mandate employees not report to work if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19?

Yes. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, the CDC recommends staying at home except to get medical care, not going to work, and following local public health department protocols.

3. Under what circumstances will an employee who was required to leave work or mandated not to report to work because of acute respiratory symptoms be permitted to return to work?

Return-to-work procedures vary depending on whether a collective bargaining agreement or civil service regulation applies to the employee. HR **MUST** consult the Office of the State Employer for specific guidance based on the latest information from the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).

4. May agencies mandate employees who have traveled to areas with elevated COVID-19 levels remain away from work?

The Office of the State Employer **MUST** be consulted before attempting to mandate work exclusion for asymptomatic employees. The Office of State Employer will rely on guidance from the State Chief Medical Executive and the SEOC regarding potential quarantines based on travel.

5. Must an employee required to leave work because of acute respiratory symptoms use leave credits?

Yes, sick leave credits should be used to the extent they are available. Annual leave, banked leave, or compensatory time may also be used as permitted by the applicable collective bargaining agreement or civil service regulation. If the employee does not have any leave credits available, the employee may qualify for donated annual leave, Family Medical Leave Act leave, or a medical leave of absence.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) FAQ for State of Michigan Managers & Supervisors

6. What conditions must be met and what is the process to apply for donated annual leave?

Annual Leave Donation [request forms](#) are available on the Office of the State Employer's [Forms page](#). [Collective bargaining agreements](#) and [Regulation 5.09](#) explain eligibility requirements to receive donated annual leave.

7. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 what should coworkers be told?

The CDC [recommends](#) employers inform coworkers of their possible exposure to COVID-19 but maintain confidentiality as required by federal law. Employees exposed to a sick coworker should monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and stay home if they are sick.

8. May a healthy employee leave work or refuse to report to work because he or she is concerned about possible exposure to COVID-19 at work?

Employees must receive supervisory approval to leave work or not report to work, regardless of the reason. Annual leave, compensatory time, or banked leave time may be used in this situation with supervisory approval. The provisions for the respective leave type will apply.

9. What mental health and social services are available to state employees?

The [Employee Service Program](#) offers a variety of services to state employees to address personal, professional, and family issues. Mental health services may also be available for enrolled employees through the [State Health Plan PPO or HMOs](#).

10. If offices are closed due to a COVID-19 outbreak in Michigan, are employees paid regular wages?

The governor or her designated representative has discretion to close state facilities consistent with DTMB procedures. During a closure, some employees may be temporarily reassigned to another facility or mandated to perform required job responsibilities away from a state facility.

In the event of a closure, employees who are (1) not reassigned and not required by their agencies to perform job functions away from the facility and (2) not absent due to previously approved sick or annual leave use during the closure may use administrative leave for their normally scheduled hours of work according to respective [collective bargaining agreements](#) and [civil service rules and regulations](#).

11. If offices are closed due to a COVID-19 outbreak in Michigan, which employees will be required to work?

Employees will be notified by their supervisor or another agency official if they must perform required services. This notification may be given before or anytime during any closure.

Telework and Flexible Work Schedules:

12. Will agencies permit employees to work from home in response to COVID-19 concerns?

The state currently offers telecommuting as an option under the Alternative Work Schedule Program. The [telecommuting guidelines](#) require an approved written

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) FAQ for State of Michigan Managers & Supervisors

telecommuting agreement in place before an employee may regularly perform officially assigned duties at home. If such an agreement is in place, an agency may require the employee to telecommute from home. In response to a COVID-19 outbreak in Michigan, agencies may authorize employees to conduct work activities from home without an approved written telecommuting agreement if done using DTMB-approved hardware and software.

13. Who will monitor the effectiveness of telework and other alternative work schedules implemented because of COVID-19?

The Office of the State Employer will monitor the use of new Alternative Work Schedules, including telework, approved to ensure consistency of application by agencies and the effectiveness of the program.

Alternate staffing:

14. Can an agency ask for volunteers or assign employees to perform tasks not normally assigned?

Yes.

15. Will employees be eligible for working out of class pay for performing tasks not normally assigned?

Yes, if the criteria for working out of class pay are met.

16. Can someone other than an employee's supervisor give the employee directions?

Yes.

Hiring flexibilities:

17. What hiring flexibilities are available to quickly staff essential positions if an agency has many employees out on sick leave?

[Rule 7-3](#) permits disbursements for temporary personal services with approval under Standard A for contracts intended to last up to 832 hours. [Rule 7-8](#) permits disbursements for personal services for up to 28 calendar days without prior civil service approval in an emergency. Limited term and non-career appointments may also be used.

18. To meet staffing needs during a COVID-19 outbreak in Michigan, may agencies extend seasonal employees with needed skills?

Yes, seasonal career employees may be scheduled for additional hours beyond the projected end date of the season in accordance with applicable [civil service rules and regulations](#). Employees in non-career positions other than Student Assistants may work in excess of the limits in [Regulation 3.02](#) (129 hours per month, 720 hours per appointment) only if the state personnel director grants prior approval.

19. Who will monitor the effectiveness of hiring flexibilities?

The Civil Service Commission currently monitors hiring, selection, and contractual-services-approval processes to ensure consistent application of the civil service rules and regulations by agencies and the processes' effectiveness. The commission will continue to monitor hiring, selection, and CS-138 approvals.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) FAQ for State of Michigan Managers & Supervisors

Communication:

20. Who will communicate with unions about labor-relations issues?

The Office of the State Employer administers collective bargaining agreements with unions representing bargaining-unit employees. Any COVID-19 information provided to employees will be shared with unions by the Office of the State Employer.

21. How will employees learn of human-resources and labor-relations developments about COVID-19?

Any COVID-19 information specific to state employees will be at <https://stateofmichigan.sharepoint.com/teams/insidemi>. The state may also use the DTMB's statewide call list, employee email, or text messaging to provide information. Additional COVID-19 information of general interest is posted by the Department of Health and Human Services at www.michigan.gov/coronavirus.

22. What should a manager or supervisor do if they get COVID-19 related questions from individuals outside of the agency?

Follow the agency's protocol for outside inquiries.