



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

DHR-STW-Q #: To be assigned.

Authority: 29 Del. C. § 9003D

Effective Date: May 11, 2023

Supersedes: Revised Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions (Revisions Effective 1/3/2022); July 1, 2022

The content in these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) applies to State of Delaware (State) Executive Branch cabinet agency employees. Other employers of State personnel may choose to adopt these provisions as well. Non-cabinet agency personnel should contact their supervisors to determine whether their employer has adopted these provisions. Questions or concerns should be directed to your supervisor or your Human Resources Representative.

This guidance is provided given circumstances relating to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and is not applicable to any past events and does not create an expectation that these guidelines will continue. The provision of State Paid Emergency Leave and FFCRA leaves, FPSL and FPEL, have been rescinded and no longer available for use effective July 1, 2022. **Effective May 11, 2023, the State of Delaware’s Public Health Emergency order is terminated.**

1. What is coronavirus (COVID-19)?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illnesses, like the common cold.

2. How can I reduce my risk of exposure to COVID-19 at work?

Employees are always encouraged to use general precautions (at work, in public, or at home). [Please visit the Prevention Actions on the CDC website.](#)

3. What should I do if I think I am sick, but don’t know if I have been exposed to COVID-19?

If you have symptoms of fever and cough or shortness of breath and have not had any known exposure to or tested positive for COVID-19, you should contact your health care provider for further guidance.

4. What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19 but do not have symptoms associated with the virus?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) provides for the quarantine recommendations for the public. Please visit [CDC’s guidance](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#). If you have reason to believe that you have been exposed to the virus, you should contact your health care provider. If you are told by a health care provider¹ or public health official you should be under quarantine due to potential exposure, you should not report to work and may be eligible

¹ A health care provider must meet the definition of this term under the Family and Medical Leave Act regulations (https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/whd/fmla/3.aspx?Glossary_Word=PROVIDER#:~:text=The%20Act%20defines%%20%2020%E2%80%9Chealth.)).

for leave per the Merit Rules or other designated authority. You must adhere to your agency's attendance procedures should you need to take leave. COVID-19 documentation of absence may be required per the Merit Rules, other designated authority, or agency policy.

5. What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19 and believe I am developing symptoms associated with the virus?

The [CDC](#) provides guidance for the isolation recommendations for the public. Please visit the [CDC's guidance](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#). If you think you are developing symptoms associated with COVID-19 and have reason to believe you have been exposed to the virus, you should contact your health care provider. If you are told by a health care provider or public health official that you are to be under isolation due to having COVID-19, you should not report to work and may be eligible for leave per the Merit Rules or other designated authority. You must adhere to your agency's attendance procedures should you need to take leave. COVID-19 documentation of absence may be required per the Merit Rules, other designated authority, or agency policy.

6. Where do I seek care?

Employees, pensioners, and their covered spouses and dependent children who are covered under a State of Delaware Health Plan (either Highmark Delaware or Aetna) should first contact their primary health care provider to report symptoms and seek medical guidance. If you do not have a primary health care provider or cannot reach your provider, you may seek medical guidance through telemedicine services. Telemedicine is a service that allows you to have an online video consultation with a doctor to receive a diagnosis and get recommended treatment or referrals wherever you are, by using your computer, tablet, or smartphone. The doctor can also prescribe medications when appropriate.

The State offers 100% coverage for telemedicine services, which has been extended through June 30, 2024 for individuals enrolled in a State of Delaware Group Health Plan through:

- Teladoc Health ([Aetna Members](#))
- Amwell ([Highmark Delaware members](#))

Aetna members wanting to learn more about telemedicine should visit:

dhr.delaware.gov/benefits/medical/aetna/telemedicine.shtml

Highmark Delaware members wanting to learn more about telemedicine should visit:

dhr.delaware.gov/benefits/medical/highmark/telemedicine.shtml

7. Will my insurance cover the cost of COVID-19 testing and treatment?

Coverage for state employees is as follows:

Vaccine

Qualifying COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, both the vaccine/booster and administration will be covered at no cost to individuals enrolled in a State of Delaware Group Health Plan through Aetna or Highmark Delaware.

Member Cost Share Waived

State of Delaware Highmark Delaware and Aetna members who receive in-network, inpatient services related to treatment of COVID-19 or associated complications from COVID-19 will pay nothing.

COVID-19 Testing

100% coverage for COVID-19 testing is available for individuals enrolled in a State of Delaware Group Health Plan through Aetna or Highmark Delaware.

Members who receive one or more COVID-19 tests or have a healthcare provider visit (in or out of network), urgent care visit, or emergency room visit that results in an order for or administration of the COVID-19 test will have a zero-dollar copay, coinsurance, and deductible.

8. What precautions can a state agency take for employees dealing with the public?

Agencies may consider the following precautions:

- Agencies may continue to restrict how closely the public may come to employees;
- Encourage employees to wash hands often and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer frequently;
- Maintain social distancing, when possible;
- Maintain separate pens and other equipment for the public, when feasible.

9. What if I need to miss work if I am ill as a result of COVID-19 or to care for a family member who is ill as a result of COVID-19?

Eligible state employees may use available sick leave per the Merit Rules or other designated authority to care for their family member(s) as a result of COVID-19. You must adhere to your agency's attendance procedures should you need to take leave. COVID-19 documentation of absence may be required per the Merit Rules, other designated authority, or agency policy. If the results of testing for the family member are confirmed, you should remain at home under the guidance provided in FAQs #4 and #5. For merit employees or merit comparable or exempt staff at designated agencies, a family member is defined by Merit Rule 5.3.6.2.

10. What if I need to miss work as a result of a school, dependent care, or elder care facility closure² due to COVID-19?

Eligible state employees may use leave per the Merit Rules or other designated authority due to the COVID-19 closure of a school or childcare facility to care for their child/ren under the age of 18. The leave may also apply for adult child/ren who is/are incapable of self-care and whose facility closed due to COVID-19. You must adhere to your agency's attendance procedures should you need to take leave. COVID-19 documentation of absence may be required per the Merit Rules, other designated authority or agency policy.

² <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>

11. What options are available for employees who need to be absent from work for any other reason as it relates to COVID-19?

State employees who have been advised by a medical provider to self-quarantine, are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis, are subject to a quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19, have been exposed to COVID-19 and are seeking or awaiting the results of a test for COVID-19, are obtaining the COVID-19 vaccination, or are recovering from an injury, disability, illness or condition related to the COVID-19 vaccination may be eligible to use leave per the Merit Rules or other designated authority.

You must adhere to your agency's attendance procedures should you need to take leave. COVID-19 documentation of absence may be required per the Merit Rules, other designated authority, or agency policy.

12. What options are available for casual/seasonal employees who may need to be absent from work due to COVID-19?

Agencies are encouraged, whenever operationally feasible, to allow casual/seasonal employees to rearrange their work hours within the pay period so that their paycheck is minimally impacted.

13. Am I entitled to use Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) for COVID-19?

You may be entitled to use FMLA for absence related to COVID-19 if you have a qualifying event, as defined by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Your Human Resources Representative can assist you with questions related to FMLA eligibility. Additional information can be found here: dhr.delaware.gov/policies/documents/fmla-policy.pdf.

14. Since the use of Emergency Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) Expansion Act (FPEL) is over, how does this impact my Family and Medical Leave?

Any time used under FPEL was deducted from your total FMLA leave entitlement of 12 weeks in a 12-month period. Please refer to your timekeeper system or supervisor for questions about your available leave balance.

15. What should I do if I have a delayed return from personal travel?

If you have a delayed return from personal travel as a result of coronavirus, you should contact your supervisor. The employee shall use their own leave per the Merit Rules or other designated authority, if applicable.

16. What leave can I take if I am now eligible to take the COVID-19 vaccination?

An eligible state employee may use available leave as provided for in Merit Rule 5 or other designated authority.

17. What leave am I eligible for if I suffer from an illness after I receive the COVID-19 vaccination?

An eligible state employee may use available leave as provided for in Merit Rule 5 or other designated authority.

18. Where will notifications of State announcements for State employees be posted?

Notifications will be posted on the Department of Human Resources' website:

<https://dhr.delaware.gov>

For any other personnel-related questions not covered in these Frequently Asked Questions, please contact your Human Resources Representative.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Division of Public Health Website: de.gov/coronavirus

Division of Public Health Email for inquiries and questions: dphcall@delaware.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/