



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

VA Central Office
Washington, DC

March 5, 2020

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER (OCHCO) BULLETIN

SUBJECT: *Updated* VA Leave Guidance During Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This OCHCO Bulletin provides Human Resources offices information on various leave options that may be utilized by employees during COVID-19. **This Bulletin is amended to add weather and safety leave as a possible type of leave for the first scenario.**

Weather and safety leave may be approved when an asymptomatic employee (i.e., healthy, not displaying symptoms) is subject to movement restrictions (i.e., quarantine) under the direction of public health authorities due to a significant risk of exposure to COVID-19. However, if the employee has a telework agreement in place, the employee would generally be expected to perform telework.

If:	Take following action:	Type of Request:
You are asymptomatic but are instructed to stay home and practice social distancing or are under quarantine due to potential exposure to COVID-19.	Inform your supervisor, request leave or request telework, if applicable Seek medical treatment/ diagnosis for COVID-19	Telework, if applicable (see note 3) Accrued sick leave (see note 5) Accrued annual leave Compensatory time Credit hours Advanced sick leave Advanced annual leave Donated leave Weather and safety leave (see note 4)
You are quarantined under the direction of public health authorities due to a significant risk of exposure to COVID-19 (but are asymptomatic)	Inform your supervisor, request leave or request telework if applicable on a case-by-case basis	Telework, if applicable (see note 3) Weather and safety leave (see note 4)
You are diagnosed with COVID-19	Inform your supervisor, request leave and continue medical treatment (see note 1)	Accrued sick leave Accrued annual leave Compensatory time Credit hours FMLA (see note 6) Advanced sick leave Advanced annual leave Donated leave
You don't want to come to work because you are afraid of catching COVID-19	Inform your supervisor, request leave, if applicable	Accrued annual leave (see note 2) Compensatory time Credit hours
You have a child and schools have been closed because of COVID-19. Your child is not sick, but you cannot find a babysitter	Inform your supervisor, request leave or telework, if applicable	Accrued annual leave Compensatory time Credit hours Telework, if applicable (see note 3)

If:	Take following action:	Type of Request:
You have a minor child/elderly relative quarantined under the direction of public health authorities due to a significant risk of exposure to COVID-19	Inform your supervisor, request leave or request telework, if applicable	Accrued sick leave (see note 5) Accrued annual leave Advanced sick leave Advanced annual leave Compensatory time Credit hours Telework, if applicable (see note 3)
Your family member is sick with COVID-19, and you are the only person available to take care of him or her	Inform your supervisor, request leave	Accrued sick leave (see note 5) Accrued annual leave Compensatory time Credit hours Advanced sick leave Advanced annual leave Donated leave FMLA (see note 6)

- Note: (1) Follow [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) guidance on symptom and exposure criteria.
(2) Leave requests due to concerns of the possibility of exposure are subject to supervisory approval, based on workload and staffing needs.
(3) Telework is not a substitute for dependent care. Please review dependent care information on the Telework Fact Sheet at <https://vaww.va.gov/OHRM/ohrmFactSheets/026.pdf> and telework website at: <https://vaww.va.gov/OHRM/Telework/>. An approved telework agreement must be in place prior to teleworking.
(4) Weather and safety leave policy is found in VA Handbook 5011, Part III, Chapter 2, paragraph 12u and Chapter 3 paragraph 9o.
(5) An employee may use a total of up to 13 days (104 hours) of accrued sick leave for general family care and bereavement each leave year. An employee may use up to 12 weeks (480 hours) of sick leave to care for an eligible family member with a serious health condition each leave year.
(6) An employee or eligible family member who contracts a quarantinable communicable disease, such as COVID-19, and becomes ill would generally be considered to have a qualifying serious health condition.

Consult with your HR servicing office and follow medical advice from CDC or your physician before returning to work after illness or COVID-19 exposure.

HR offices should be addressing employee questions. Questions regarding this bulletin from the HR offices may be referred to the Worklife and Benefits Service at: vaco058worklife@va.gov.

Issued by: VA OCHCO/Worklife and Benefits Service