

Special Emergency Leave Plan

PURPOSE

This plan is a part of the efforts to further protect the health and well-being of WVU's campus community in response to coronavirus COVID-19. The plan is meant to address concerns some faculty and staff may have about their leave and encourage them to stay home if they are sick. This plan also is designed to help minimize any potential financial hardships faculty and staff may face as a result of COVID-19.

SCOPE

The plan applies to West Virginia University, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, and West Virginia University Potomac State College (collectively the "University").

Benefit and non-benefits eligible Classified Employees, Non-Classified Employees, Faculty, and any other employee positions of the West Virginia University Board of Governors (collectively "faculty and staff") will be eligible for the benefits outlined in this plan.

Student employees, federal work study, or graduate student assistants (i.e., teaching assistants, research assistants, service assistants) will not be eligible for the benefits outlined in this plan.

DURATION, ALIGNMENT AND INTERPRETATION

This plan will remain in place until the emergency has ended or ninety (90) calendar days from implementation, whichever occurs first. The President will secure additional approval from the Board of Governors if the plan requires extension beyond ninety (90) calendar days.

As necessary, this plan may be modified to align with any federal or state legislation, regulation, declaration, executive order or other authoritative document.

If any current WVU rule, policy, procedure or practice cannot be aligned with this plan, then this plan is controlling.

Authority to interpret this plan rests with the President or his/her designee.

ALTERNATIVE WORK ASSIGNMENTS

In general, faculty and staff should work with their supervisors to flex their schedules or work from home, when possible.

Every opportunity to develop an alternative work assignment should be considered before submitting a request for special emergency leave with pay.

Duties and responsibilities may be temporarily altered to support alternative work assignments. Examples of alternative work assignments include:

- /// Telework, webinars, development and training;
- /// Alternative shifts; and
- /// Policy reviews/operational improvements.

Talent and Culture will post [resources and ideas](#) that may be used for alternative work assignments. Supervisors also may contact their [HR Partner](#) for advice. Supervisors should also work with their HR Partner to properly document the alternative work assignment, if one is given.

SPECIAL EMERGENCY LEAVE WITH PAY

The President or his/her designee may approve up to seventy-five (75) hours of special emergency leave with pay for covered faculty and staff in active appointments, prorated by full-time equivalency (FTE).

Additional hours of special emergency leave with pay, may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Special emergency leave may be cancelled if the reasons supporting the approval of special emergency leave have resolved.

Special emergency leave is contingent upon continued employment and may not be transferred to another West Virginia state agency. If the services of a faculty or staff member have terminated, all special emergency leave credited to the faculty or staff member shall be considered cancelled as of the last day of employment, and no reimbursement or credit shall be provided.

Reasons to Request Special Emergency Leave

Faculty and staff may request to use special emergency leave in instances where an alternative work arrangement is not possible **AND** in the following instances:

- ✓ The employee or a member of their immediate family has had exposure to COVID-19, displays symptoms of the disease or is in self-quarantine.
- ✓ The employee or a member of their immediate family has a confirmed case of COVID-19 and is recuperating.
- ✓ The employee or a member of their immediate family is considered [vulnerable](#) (i.e., older adults and individuals who have serious chronic medical condition) to becoming very sick if they contract COVID-19.
- ✓ The employee is pregnant or has a spouse or member of their household who is pregnant.

Procedure

If an alternative work arrangement is not possible, the supervisor should submit a [request form](#) for special emergency leave. If the supervisor is unable to submit a request form, an HR Partner or other staff member from Talent and Culture or Shared Services may assist.

Shared Services will process the request, and an HR Partner or other staff member from Talent and Culture will review for proper application of this plan.

The request for special emergency leave should be the minimum necessary, and in no case may it exceed seventy-five (75) hours without additional authorization from the President or his/her designee.

If faculty or staff need to discuss specific details regarding medical issues or diagnoses, the supervisor should direct them to Medical Management in Talent and Culture.

Medical documentation related to COVID-19 illness and subsequent returns to work may be required based on current advice from local and state public health and safety officials.

Talent and Culture will publish [frequently asked questions](#) to assist supervisors, faculty and staff with the implementation of this plan.

As testing becomes available, the University may modify the requirements for those seeking to take advantage of this special emergency leave.

Definitions

Immediate family means father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandmother, grandfather, granddaughter, grandson, stepmother, stepfather, step children, or others considered to be members of the household and living under the same roof.

AUTHORITY: [WVU BOG Finance and Administration Rule 5.3 – Emergency Management and Campus Safety](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 19, 2020

HISTORY: This is the first version of this plan.