

# Coronavirus disease 19: What MBC employees should know



**Updated: January 13, 2021**

## **The MBC is adhering to the following City of Minneapolis COVID-19 policies and procedures**

*Information is changing rapidly. This document will be updated as soon as there is new or different information.*

### **How can I apply for COVID related leave?**

The quickest and best option is to contact MBC HR Business Partner Maddie VanDerHeyden at [maddie.vanderheyden@municipalbuilding.org](mailto:maddie.vanderheyden@municipalbuilding.org) or 612-387-6870.

### **What is the new paid leave benefit provided to employees in Emergency Regulation 2020-21?**

The MBC is providing all regular employees with 80 hours of paid 2021 COVID-19 Emergency Sick Leave (“2021 COVID-19 ESL”). Employees can use the 2021 COVID Leave for the following reasons:

1. The employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 and unable to work remotely.
2. The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
4. The employee is caring for the child of such employee if the school or place of care of the child has been closed, or the childcare provider of such child is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.
5. The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor.
6. The employee has received the COVID vaccine and experiences illness following receipt of the vaccine.

### **When does the new 2021 COVID Leave take effect?**

Employees can begin using 2021 COVID Leave on January 1, 2021.

### **Are all employees eligible for 2021 COVID Leave?**

No. Temporary, seasonal, permit and outside trades employees are not eligible for 2021 COVID Leave.

### **How many hours of 2021 COVID Leave are employees entitled to?**

All regular employees will be provided 80 hours of 2021 COVID Leave to use for COVID-19 related absences as specified above.

### **What time increment can 2021 COVID Leave be taken in? Must the 80 hours be taken in a solid block or can it be taken intermittently?**

The 2021 COVID Leave may be used in one-hour increments by all employees, including exempt employees.

### **How does an employee request to take 2021 COVID-19 Emergency Sick Leave?**

Employees will be required to follow a process as designated by human resources in order to document and validate the employee’s request to use 2021 COVID Leave. Human resources will be responsible for reviewing and approving the leave.

MBC reserve the right to require additional documentation.

**Can an employee use 2021 COVID Leave if they are sick as a result of receiving the COVID vaccine?**

Yes, employees may use some of their 2021 COVID leave if they receive the COVID vaccine and are ill as a result (reason #6 above).

**Will any remaining 2021 COVID-19 Emergency Sick Leave be paid out upon separation?**

No. The 2021 COVID-19 Emergency Sick Leave is not paid out upon separation.

**At what wage rate will the 2021 COVID Leave be paid?**

2021 COVID Leave will be paid at 100% the employee's regular base wage. It will not include overtime, shift pay, supplemental pay, and/or other additional pay.

**Are Federal COVID leave under the FFCRA or COVID leave for Emergency Responders still in effect?**

No, both expired on December 31, 2020. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and the City of Minneapolis Emergency Regulation 2020-18 (amending Emergency Regulation 2020-6 and 2020-14) both expired on December 31, 2020. The Emergency Regulation provided for paid COVID-19 leave for employees designated by the City as "Emergency Responders."

**What leave do Emergency Responders receive under this new Emergency Regulation?**

For purposes of 2021 COVID Leave, all employees are treated the same. There is no longer a different paid leave for employees who had previously been designated as "Emergency Responders."

**Are employees who were designated "Emergency Responders" in 2020 still able to use their "COVID Leave #2"?**

Yes, the 2021 COVID Leave benefit does not impact the COVID Leave #2 under the 2020 Emergency Regulation. Eligible employees designated as "Emergency Responders" with a balance of COVID-19 Leave #2 remaining on December 31, 2020 will be able to use the leave on January 1, 2021, with supervisory approval. Available balances are shown in ADP. Employees may use this leave for any reason with supervisory approval, like vacation time. It does not have to be for a COVID-related absence. COVID Leave #2 must be used in eight-hour increments.

**Can employees choose to use sick leave or other leave types before using 2021 COVID Leave for COVID-19 related absences?**

No. Employees shall use 2021 COVID Leave for COVID-19 related absences prior to using other leave types including sick, vacation, comp time, or COVID Leave #2.

**When does 2021 COVID Leave expire?**

Emergency Regulation 2020-21 is effective for 30 days. City Council will be required to ratify the emergency regulation to extend 2021 COVID Leave and will determine when it will expire.

**What if the Federal government, or State government, passes legislation providing for a COVID-19 paid leave benefit?**

If the Federal or State government passes a law that addresses paid leave for COVID-19-related absences, then the 2021 COVID Leave benefit will be null and void and the MBC will follow the Federal or State law.

### **What if an employee uses some or all the 80 hours of 2021 COVID Leave and then the Federal government passes similar legislation? Would the employee be eligible for the Federal benefit? Would the employee have to pay back the City benefit?**

Unless the law states otherwise, the employee will be eligible for the Federal or State leave benefit even if the employee used some or all the 2021 COVID Leave. The employee will not be required to reimburse the MBC for any paid leave time used.

### **If I am classified as an emergency responder, how long will it last?**

You are classified as an emergency responder until December 31, 2020, as provided in Emergency Regulation 2020-14.

### **What does the term emergency responder mean?**

"Emergency Responder" is expected to be defined in federal regulation as local government public safety, fire, law enforcement, emergency response, emergency medical, and related personnel. The MBC may interpret emergency response to include other department front-line workers.

### **Am I considered an emergency responder at the MBC?**

Emergency responders at the MBC include all security, custodial, utility and trades staff.

### **What happens if a co-worker tests positive for COVID-19 or if a co-worker is believed to have been exposed to COVID-19?**

HR Business Partner Maddie VanDerHeyden will directly contact any MBC staff who were deemed to be in close contact with the co-worker who is positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed and is awaiting a test result. Please keep in mind even if you worked on the same day as a co-worker who is suspected or confirmed for having COVID-19, you may not have been in close contact based on CDC guidelines. Close contact means within 6 feet of an individual for at least 15 minutes.

### **Where can I find information on getting get tested for COVID-19?**

Anyone who thinks they need a test should get tested for COVID-19. You should for sure get tested if you have any [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 or if you have [had been in close contact with someone](#) who has COVID-19, even if you do not have symptoms. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is offering many free testing options in the Twin Cities. For more information, visit the [MDH website](#).

### **When does the 80 hours of negative sick leave accruals end?**

The ability to accrue negative sick leave expires on December 31, 2020.

### **What help is available if I don't have MBC health insurance?**

MNsure is offering open enrollment for eligible Minnesotans who do not have health insurance coverage because of the COVID-19 crisis. For more information on enrollment, [visit the MNsure website](#).

### **Can I apply for unemployment insurance if my hours have been reduced due to COVID-19?**

Yes, if your hours or rate of pay have been reduced because of COVID-19, you may be eligible for unemployment benefits. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (MNDEED) Unemployment Insurance Program will review the application and determine your eligibility for benefits. [Go to the MNDEED website for more information](#).

## What are the impacts to employee programs?

The following programs for the MBC's employees have been cancelled, postponed or adjusted:

- **YMCA reimbursements:** The YMCA has adjusted the total visit requirement for March for the corporate wellness program reimbursement. If you had five or more visits within the first 15 days of March, you will receive your reimbursement of \$15 on your May dues. The YMCA is working closely with Medica on a solution for the Fit Choices by Medica reimbursement. The YMCA will communicate an update to those enrolled in the program when Medica has a solution. Check the YMCA website for more information.
- **Life Time reimbursements:** Life Time is prorating dues for active, club-accessing membership based on the number of days the club is closed. Check the Life Time website for more information.

## How do I cancel/suspend my MetroPass?

Submit a [cancel or suspend MetroPass form](#) to Nicky Giancola and Nicole Moua.

## When will the cancellation or suspension of my MetroPass take effect?

- If you cancel or suspend by the 23rd of the month, your card stops the next month (for example, if you cancel June 10 your card stops working on July 1), otherwise your card stops a month later (for example, if you cancel June 25 your card stops working on August 1).
- Your paycheck deductions stop the same month your card stops.

## What is the difference between cancelling and suspending my MetroPass?

- If you are canceling your MetroPass, you will be asked to return your MetroPass to Room 105. Your card will no longer be able to be used. If you are wanting to cancel your card long term, this option is appropriate.
- If you are suspending your MetroPass, you will keep your MetroPass as it will be reactivated again per your requested start date.

During this time of crisis regarding COVID-19, there is increased flexibility if you choose to suspend your card for the next 3 months. If you intend to use your card once normal working conditions resume, please opt to suspend your Metropass.

## Have the unions that represent MBC employees been involved?

MBC Leadership has shared COVID-19 communication with union leadership and welcomed feedback and conversation. MBC leadership will maintain close communication with union leadership to share information and listen to union concerns as they arise. The MBC's union partners recognize that we're all in this together and are collaborating to find the best way forward for all employees.

## Am I required to wear a cloth face covering at work?

Yes, you must wear a cloth face covering in all common areas of the workplace, including office areas where there is face-to-face contact with the public. Common areas include, but are not limited to, conference rooms, restrooms, hallways, entrances, breakrooms, kitchens, copy rooms, etc.

The MBC will provide cloth face coverings for each employee unless personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided given job requirements. Employees may also opt to wear their own masks.

## Can my supervisor rescind approval of a vacation?

Yes. Because the potential crisis may cause significant staffing shortages, previously approved vacation, PTO, holiday, compensatory time off or unpaid time may be rescinded in order to provide staffing

coverage.

### **What resources are available to me through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?**

For resources to help deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, please utilize the Medica Employee Assistance Program at 1.800.626.7944.

### **What is the role of custodial staff across the organization?**

The role of the custodial staff is to provide general and routine cleaning of the building such as cleaning restrooms, emptying trash, vacuuming, and cleaning common areas. Custodians are increasing disinfection of frequently touched surfaces according to CDC recommendations. MBC staff uses Clorox Pro™ Total 360® Disinfectant Cleaner. This bleach mixture is deemed safe and is EPA-approved to kill the COVID-19 virus and additional bacteria and viruses. In addition, MBC staff is constantly hand wiping sensitive areas such as telephones, keyboards, copier control pads, table & countertops.