



CITY OF GIG HARBOR – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

TITLE: Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Policy

POLICY MANUAL SECTION & NO.
A-20-03

EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/01/2020
REVISED DATE:

APPROVED:
DRAFT

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides temporary protected leave and paid leave benefits for certain absences arising from the COVID-19 outbreak in accordance with the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The benefits available under this policy are available beginning on April 1, 2020. The policy will be administered in accordance with the FFCRA statute and forthcoming federal regulations and guidance.

The FFCRA provides for two categories of leave. The first expands existing FMLA coverage to provide up to 12 weeks of partially-paid Public Health Emergency Leave (“PHEL/FMLA”) for eligible employees forced to miss work due to closure of their child’s school or the unavailability of the child’s childcare provider for reasons related to COVID-19. The second provides up to 10 days of Emergency Sick Leave for various reasons related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Details regarding each category of leave are provided in the sections below.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees except “emergency responders.” Please see “Appendix A” for job titles that are exempt from this policy as emergency responders.

3. POLICY

3.1. **Public Health Emergency Leave (PHEL/FMLA)**

- A. Eligibility. Subject to certain exceptions described below, employees who have worked for the City for at least 30 days are eligible for PHEL/FMLA leave. An employee need not meet the eligibility requirements for regular FMLA (12 months of employment and 1250 hours worked in the prior year) to be eligible for PHEL/FMLA. To ensure the City’s ability to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency responders are not eligible for PHEL/FMLA leave.
- B. Leave Entitlement. An eligible employee may take up to 12 weeks of protected leave if the employee is unable to work, or telework, based on a need to care for the employee’s child under age 18 because the child’s school or place of care has been closed, or the child’s childcare provider is unavailable due to a public health emergency. A public health emergency means an emergency with respect to COVID-19 declared by a federal, state, or local authority. PHEL/FMLA may be taken intermittently only if approved by the City through Human Resources.

PHEL/FMLA is part of an employee's regular FMLA leave entitlement. Accordingly, if an employee has already used FMLA for other purposes during the FMLA leave year, the amount of available PHEL/FMLA will be reduced by the amount of FMLA leave already taken. PHEL/FMLA leave will be available through December 31, 2020.

- C. Partial Pay Entitlement. The first 10 days of PHEL/FMLA will be unpaid, although employees may elect to use accrued leave or Emergency Sick Leave during this period. For leave beyond the first 10 days, the City will pay two-thirds of the employee's regular pay, up to a maximum of \$200 per day or \$10,000 in the aggregate. Pay is calculated based on the number of hours an employee would otherwise have been scheduled to work. For employees with variable hours, hours will be determined based on the average number of hours scheduled over the six-month period preceding the leave (including paid leave hours) or on a reasonable expectation at the time of hire as to the hours per day the employee would normally be scheduled to work. Employees may elect to supplement the employer-paid portion of the PHEL/FMLA paid benefit with their own accrued paid leave to receive their regular rate of pay.
- D. Notification; Verification. Employees who need to take PHEL/FMLA leave should notify Human Resources as soon as practicable after the need for leave arises. An employee seeking PHEL/FMLA leave must submit documentation establishing a school closure or unavailability of childcare, which may include a post from a school district website, email from a school or provider, etc.
- E. Other. This policy will be administered consistent with the City's existing Family and Medical Leave practices, except as modified by the FFCRA.

3.2 EMERGENCY SICK LEAVE

- A. Eligibility. All employees of the City are eligible for up to 80 hours of Emergency Sick Leave, subject to certain exceptions. To ensure the City's ability to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency responders are not eligible for Emergency Sick Leave. For those eligible, Emergency Sick Leave may be fully paid or partially paid, depending on the reason for taking leave.
- B. Covered Reasons for Using Emergency Sick Leave: Employees are entitled to use Emergency Sick Leave when they are unable to work, or telework, for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. The employee is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
 - 2. The employee has been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
 - 3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and is seeking a medical diagnosis.

4. To care for an individual who is self-isolating for one of the reasons described in (1) or (2) above.
 5. To care for the employee's child under age 18 due to closure of the child's school or unavailability of the child's childcare provider due to COVID-19 precautions. A "child" is defined the same as under the FMLA; *i.e.*, a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis who is either under 18 years of age or is 18 years of age or older and "incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability" at the time leave is to commence.
 6. 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.
- C. Paid Leave Entitlement. Full-time employees are entitled to up to 80 hours of Emergency Sick Leave. Part-time employees are entitled to the Emergency Sick Leave equal to number of hours they typically work over a two-week period. For employees with variable hours, hours will be determined based on the average number of hours scheduled over the six-month period preceding the leave (including paid leave hours) or on a reasonable expectation at the time of hire as to the hours per day the employee would normally be scheduled to work. Any Emergency Sick Leave available under this policy is in addition to accrued leave to which an employee was already entitled under existing City policies or labor agreements.
- D. Reduced Benefit for Certain Leaves; Cap on Sick Leave Amount. Where Emergency Sick Leave is taken for reasons (1), (2), or (3) above (which cover leave due to the employee's own health or quarantine), the paid sick leave benefit is equal to the employee's regular rate of pay for the missed work time, provided that Emergency Sick Leave is capped at \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate when leave is taken for these reasons. Where leave is taken for reasons (4), (5), or (6) above (to care for another, to care for a child due to a school closure or unavailability of childcare, or where the employee is experiencing a substantially similar condition), the paid sick leave benefit is two-thirds of the employee's regular rate of pay, provided that Emergency Sick Leave is capped at \$200 per day and \$2,000 in the aggregate when leave is taken for one of these reasons. Employees may elect to supplement the employer-paid portion of the Emergency Sick Leave paid benefit with their own accrued paid leave to receive their regular rate of pay.
- E. Use of Paid Sick Leave; Sequencing with Other Leave; Intermittent Use. Employees may access Emergency Sick Leave for a covered reason before exhausting other accrued leaves. If an absence is covered by this Emergency Sick Leave Policy and the PHEL/FMLA Policy above, the employee may elect to use Emergency Sick Leave during the first 10 days of PHEL/FMLA in order to remain in paid status.

If an employee is using Emergency Sick Leave intermittently due to a closure of a child's school or unavailability of the childcare provider, the employee may take leave intermittently only with prior approval by Human Resources. An employee may also

use Emergency Sick Leave intermittently with Human Resources approval if unable to telework his/her normal schedule of hours due to a qualifying reason (for example, if an employee can telework in the morning, but needs to care for a child in the afternoon due to a school closure).

Per Department of Labor guidance, where an employee is not teleworking, intermittent use of Emergency Sick Leave is not permitted when leave is taken for reasons (1), (2), (3), (4), or (6) above. In such cases, Emergency Sick Leave must be taken in full-day increments and once leave is initiated for one of these reasons, the employee must continue to use Emergency Sick Leave until either:

- (i) The full amount of Emergency Sick Leave has been used; or
- (ii) The employee no longer has a qualifying reason for taking Emergency Sick Leave.

The Department of Labor has explained that this requirement is imposed because if an employee is actually or possibly sick with COVID-19, or is caring for someone who is sick or possibly sick with COVID-19, the intent of the law is to provide paid leave to prevent the spread of the virus.

- F. Carryover; Termination of Benefit. The Emergency Sick Leave Benefit expires on December 31, 2020; any unused Emergency Sick Leave will not be carried over to the next calendar year or merged into other leave banks. Additionally, the entitlement to Emergency Sick Leave ceases beginning with the employee's next scheduled work shift immediately following the termination of the need for paid sick leave. However, to the extent an employee subsequently needed additional time off for another covered reason prior to December 31, 2020, the employee could use any remaining Emergency Sick Leave available.
- G. Notification. An employee who needs to take Emergency Sick Leave should notify their Department Director and Human Resources as soon as practicable. After the first workday (or portion thereof) that an employee takes Emergency Sick Leave, the employee must follow the notice requirements required for use of regular sick leave.
- H. Verification. An employee requesting Emergency Sick Leave must:
 - 1. Specify the qualifying reason for requesting leave; AND
 - 2. State that the employee is unable to work or telework, for that specified reason; and provide the date(s) for which leave is requested; AND
 - 3. The Department of Labor also requires that the City obtain documentation supporting the leave request. Documentation may include, for example, a copy of the federal, state or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19; written documentation from a healthcare provider advising the individual to self-quarantine due to COVID-19; or documentation from the employee's child's school or childcare provider of closure (such as website posting or email).

“Appendix A”

The following employees are exempt from the provisions of the FFCRA and identified as “emergency responders.”

Administration

City Administrator
City Attorney
Finance Director
Senior Accountant
Human Resources Director
Payroll & Benefits Administrator
Information Systems Manager
Information Systems Assistant
Tourism & Communications Director
City Clerk
Assistant City Clerk

Community Development

Community Development Director
Principal Planner
Building Official / Fire Marshal
Building Inspector
Permit Coordinator

Court

Court Administrator

Police

Chief of Police
Police Lieutenant
Police Sergeant
Police Officer
Police Services Specialists
Community Services Officer / Code Enforcement

Public Works

Public Works Director
City Engineer
Construction Supervisor
Public Works Superintendent
Public Works Field Supervisor
Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor
Wastewater Treatment Plant Senior Operator
Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator
Building Maintenance Technician
Maintenance Technician
Custodian
Executive Assistant
Public Works Assistant
Custodian