

Quarantine Leave for Managers and Employees

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, incidents will undoubtedly arise that require an employee to quarantine temporarily, whether it is due to possible exposure, personal illness, travel restrictions, or caring for an individual in quarantine. There are variety of leave options available in these situations which should be coordinated through Human Resources.

The newly created **Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA)** is the primary source of leave of employees impacted by quarantines. EPSLA provides up to 80 hours of continuous paid leave, with a maximum benefit of \$511/day if the employee is sick or in quarantine, and a maximum benefit of 2/3rds their daily wages capped at \$200/day if the employee is caring for an individual in quarantine. Employees using EPSLA need to fill out the FFCRA Request Form at (please scroll down on the page to access the form): <https://www.umassp.edu/hr/covid-19/benefits>

Other leaves (sick, vacation, personal, and family sick leave) can be combined or used alternately depending on the reason for the quarantine and the employee’s unique circumstances. Below are some common scenarios:

QUESTION	ANSWER
Q: An employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19. What leave status should be used?	A: Employees infected with COVID-19 should apply for EPSLA leave which provides for up to 80 hours of continuous paid leave. If more than 80 hours is required, employees can use their own accrued sick leave, vacation leave, or personal leave for any additional recovery or quarantine time.
Q: An employee has been ordered to quarantine for 14 days due to possible exposure. What leave status should be used?	A: If an employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine or isolate for 14 days due to possible exposure, several leave options are available. First, employees should telework during a non-illness quarantine if possible. If they are not able to work remotely, EPSLA leave is available. Additionally, vacation, personal, and sick leave are also available to use depending on the situation.
Q: An employee needs to quarantine for 14 days. Do they have to apply for EPSLA leave?	A: No, EPSLA provides an additional 80 hours of emergency sick leave to employees, but they are not obligated to use it. If they prefer to use other accruals to receive a higher rate of pay, they are permitted to do so. (EPSLA is capped at \$511/day).

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Q: An employee has been ordered to quarantine for 14 days for a second (or third) time. What leave status should be used?	A: Leave available under EPSLA is capped at a maximum of 80 hours. If an employee has previously exhausted their EPSLA leave, they can use sick, vacation, or personal leave to cover the absence.
Q: EPSLA provides a maximum benefit of \$511/day—Can I use my own accruals to supplement this amount?	A: No, EPSLA cannot be supplemented with other leaves. An employee does not have to use the EPSLA leave, however, and can choose to use their own accrued sick, vacation, or personal leave if that is more beneficial to them.
Q: An employee has traveled to a “high risk” location under the UMMS Travel Policy. Do they need to self-quarantine and what leave should be used?	A: Employees who travel to restricted areas under the UMMS Travel Policy are required to self-quarantine for 14 days. Ideally, they should telework if possible. If they are unable to telework, EPSLA, vacation, sick, and personal leave are all available as options.
Q: An employee needs to care for a family member in quarantine. What leave status should be used?	A: When EPSLA is used for the care of an individual in quarantine (rather than the employee themselves), the daily benefit is 2/3rds their daily wages capped at \$200/day. An employee is permitted to substitute family sick leave, vacation, or personal leave instead of using the EPSLA leave. Leave must be used in whole day increments, however, and other leaves cannot be used to supplement the daily rate of EPSLA leave.
Q: Can EPSLA leave be taken intermittently?	<p>A: If the EPSLA leave is for the employee’s own illness-related quarantine, it must be used continuously in whole day increments only.</p> <p>If the EPSLA leave is for possible exposure but not illness, the leave can be used intermittently in whole day increments only (with a combination of telework only).</p> <p>If the EPSLA leave is to care for another individual, it can be used intermittently in whole day increments (e.g., an employee caring for a child in quarantine can use EPSLA leave for 3 days in a week and telework for 2 other days).</p> <p>NOTE: Employees who have been designated as health care providers are not eligible for emergency sick leave under EPSLA. These employees should contact Employee Relations to discuss leave options available.</p>