

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q & A) COVID-19

I would ask that you all be patient during this difficult time for us all. Most of us have not been through a pandemic or an event of this magnitude. I have discussed in detail with the Vice President, Janice Lawson, and our Ohio Council 8 Staff Representative concerns for the members, and I have met with management regarding those concerns that addressed many of the questions that members later brought to me. I have also held a conference call for members to call in so that a question and answer session could be held with the Union. Further, the Union has requested that when the employer emails information to the employees that a clear explanation is given so that members are well informed on the procedures. Below are answers to commonly asked questions.

1. Who determines which employees are categorized as **essential** and **non-essential**?
 - The employer has shared a list of classifications and personnel with the Union that designate which bargaining unit employees are **essential** and **non-essential**.
2. If I am a non-essential employee and told not to come to work, must I use my vacation, compensatory time, or personal leave to cover the time I am off work?
 - No. Non-essential employees will be paid as if they are working.
3. If I am a non-essential employee, do I have to remain available to come to work if contacted by my employer?
 - Yes. You must remain available during the work week in the event the employer recalls any or all employees to work.
4. If I am an essential employee and I have a compromised immune system, and I am concerned about coming to work, can I work from home?
 - No. The EDMS system is on a State shared drive and is not yet set up to allow bargaining unit employees to work from home. Currently, Adult Protective Services (APS) is excluded and may work from home.
5. If I am an essential employee and I have a compromised immune system and I am concerned about coming to work, and cannot work from home, am I entitled to paid leave just as the non-essential employees?
 - No. You must use your sick, vacation, personal or compensatory leave. (The Union has concerns regarding the use of your own leave for essential employees and is further addressing this matter with management).

6. If I chose the 4 - ten (10') hour shifts and I call off or request scheduled time off. How much time would I need to use to cover my time off?
 - If you work the 4- ten (10') hour shifts you will be required to use (10) hours of paid leave (vacation, personal, or compensatory leave) to cover any time off.
7. If I work in Outreach, will I be able to continue to work out in the Community?
 - No. The employer is recalling all employees that work in Outreach positions to work within the agency if they are essential employees. This is for the safety of the clients and the employees.
8. If I have a scheduled vacation out of the country, can I return to work once I return from vacation?
 - No. You must be self-quarantined for fourteen (14) days. You will be placed on paid leave during that time. If you have symptoms during that time you must inform the employer. **KEEP IN CONTACT WITH THE EMPLOYER AFTER YOUR RETURN FROM VACATION OUT OF THE COUNTRY.**
9. If I have child care issues, am I covered by Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), since amendments were recently made to the Family and Medical Leave Act?
 - Yes: You may use sick, vacation, personal or compensatory leave. (If you have questions, please contact your Deputy Director in your division or Human Resource Department).
10. Is the employer looking at other shift options for employees that are currently caring for family or service members that have compromised immune symptoms, or that have child care issues, in order for the employees to use no leave or less leave time?
 - As of 3-24-20 all essential employees will be on rotating work schedules (1 week in the office and 1 week out of the office). Those employees can select the option of working a 4-ten (10) hour shift (7:30 am to 5:30 pm) or standard work day shift in order to address using their leave time.
11. Am I eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave?
 - No. The Employer is stating that County buildings are not shut down pursuant to Summit County Codified Ordinance 169.23(m) and the agency is open for business. Services are still being offered to the public, though there is no direct contact. Summit County Policy does not supersede a Summit County Ordinance. Further, non-essential employees are on paid leave to reduce risk of exposure COVID-19. (This will provide less people in the work place and the

employees that are working can keep a safe distance from each other). Essential employees are already receiving pay for the work they are performing.

Further, the Employer was contacted by our Ohio Council 8 Staff Representative, Shelby Woodall, regarding Emergency Pay, and she has shared the Employer's response to her below:

Shelby Woodall

Fri, Mar 20,
3:07 PM

We have heard the concerns on the issue of pay from some of your membership. To those concerned, you may give the following response:

“Summit County buildings all remain open for business. Employees are not **entitled to** any kind of emergency pay. Employees being compensated to perform normal employment functions during normal working hours. Please keep in mind that the ongoing long-term economic impact of this crisis is likely to create a severe financial hardship on the County in coming months.”

12. If I am an essential employee 60 years of age or over, and I am concerned about exposure at the agency, can I work from home?

- No. The EDMS system is on a State shared drive and not set up to allow bargaining unit employees to work from home. (This could be subject to change for essential employees and everyone will be informed if or when it changes).

13. If I am an essential employee 60 years of age or over, and I am concerned about exposure at the agency, can I stay home and be paid like non-essential employees?

- No. You must use your sick, vacation, personal, or compensatory leave. (The Union has concerns regarding the use of your own leave for essential employees and is further addressing this matter with management).

14. If I am an essential employee that has a compromised immune system, a chronic illness, a caretaker for a family or service member with a compromised immune system, or has child care issues, and I have no sick leave, am I entitled to Emergency Paid Leave?

- The employer has determined that employees with no leave must take Leave without Pay.

15. If I must enter into a Leave without Pay status, will I still have health care coverage?

- Maybe. If you are an essential employee that has a child care issue, then the employer will provide health care coverage. However, for all other essential employees, the employees must pay for their coverage. (CONTACT THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT REGARDING YOUR MONTHLY COVERAGE COSTS AND QUESTIONS).

16. What if my doctor states I am showing symptoms of COVID-19, do I still receive paid leave?

- The employee must immediately provide the employer with documentation (a note) from their health care provider stating the person has symptoms **and** must be quarantined, then the employee will be placed on paid administrative leave for only 14 days.

17. Can I donate sick leave to employees during this pandemic?

- Yes

18. Who can receive sick leave donations?

- Anyone that has childcare issues that cannot find alternative arrangements for child care.

19. Do normal sick leave donation procedures apply during this pandemic? (i.e., can I donate leave to someone on FML that has run out of sick leave).

- Yes. The normal procedure should be followed.

Anyone that goes into a Leave without Pay status must contact the Employer regarding health care, if they are eligible for unemployment, etc.

The Executive Board Members and Stewards have all been updated on the situation and should be able to answer many of your questions.