

COVID-19 HR Recommendations: Hospital Employee Sick Pay

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REVISED – May 29, 2020

This document has been revised to amend the expiry date of these recommendations from June 2, 2020 to June 9, 2020.

This document has been developed to provide Ontario hospitals with recommendations related to Hospital employee sick pay. For the purposes of this document, the term “employee” pertains to hospital employees only. These recommendations will be updated as the COVID-19 situation changes.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation. This document is designed to offer suggestions and advice to help decision-making; it is not intended to replace or supersede government directives or public health measures. Adapted approaches may be required to address unique, organizational or other exceptional circumstances and conditions.

Context

Ontario’s hospital employees are an essential service that is critical to the successful management of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the frontlines of this global crisis, we need our teams to feel confident stepping forward to care for patients and to protect themselves.

These recommendations should be considered in the context of individual organization compensation plans given the wide variety of compensation practices that are currently in place.

Common Principles

- Hospital employees are essential to the health and well-being of our society and our ability to manage and deliver services.
- Hospital employees are an essential service that is critical to the successful management of the pandemic. We are committed fully to ensuring the safety and well-being of all employees.
- Employees who require a workplace accommodation should follow the procedures as outlined in the Ontario Health “*COVID-19 HR Guidance: Workplace Accommodations for At-Risk Front-Line Health Care Providers*”.
- Medical notes are not required under the current circumstances; however, they may be required in order to provide accommodations or in the future to provide continued support to employees.
- Sick pay entitlements have been developed to support employees during the global COVID-19 crisis and expire as of June 9, 2020. At such time, employee sick pay entitlements will be subject to regular hospital policy and/or relevant collective agreements. Hospitals may be flexible with the expiry date to align with payroll cycles.
- Individual organizations may choose to make additional recommendations above and beyond these recommendations, as appropriate to the circumstance and the situation.

Recommendations

- All employees without symptoms should report to work.
- Employees who are asymptomatic and were sent home by Occupational Health or Public Health and placed in self-isolation due to unprotected exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual, are entitled to paid sick time for their scheduled shifts up to and including June 9, 2020 or a confirmed negative COVID-19 test, whichever comes first.
- Employees with symptoms of COVID-19 (even mild ones) must report to Occupational Health immediately upon presentation of symptoms to be assessed. If it is deemed that a COVID-19 test is required, staff will be paid sick time for their scheduled shifts, up to and including June 9, 2020 or a confirmed negative COVID-19 test, whichever comes first.
- Employees with a confirmed positive result of COVID-19 are entitled to paid sick time for their schedule shifts up to and including June 9, 2020. Any employee who has commenced the 14-day isolation period before the expiry date these recommendations will continue to be eligible for paid sick time for the remaining duration of their isolation period.
- All employees living with someone with a confirmed positive result of COVID-19 must stay home and self-isolate until the family member has been cleared by Public Health. Paid sick time would include any scheduled shifts up to and including June 9, 2020.

This recommendation expires on June 9, 2020 at midnight. Should these recommendations not be extended, employees may be able to access a variety of new government financial supports for employees that would otherwise not be entitled to compensation with paid sick leave, including:

- Employment Insurance (without the one (1) week waiting period)
- Emergency Care Benefits
- Emergency Support Benefits
- One-time GST Credit to those eligible in May
- Increase to Canada Child Benefit payments (extra \$300 per child granted in May)