

**Guidance Regarding COVID-19 Related Leaves**  
**March 31, 2021 – Issuance**  
**May 10, 2021 – Second Issuance**  
**September 20, 2021 – Third Issuance**

**Summary of COVID-19 Related Notices and Regulations Pertaining to Academic Personnel**

- On March 16, 2020, former President Napolitano issued an executive order whereby eligible employees would receive a *“one-time allotment of up to 128 hours of paid administrative leave,”* subject to specific enumerated conditions.<sup>1</sup>
- On November 12, 2020, President Drake issued an amended executive order whereby eligible employees would be able to use their *“one-time allotment of up to 128 hours of paid administrative leave,”* by June 30, 2021.
- On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) into law, which gives employers the option to offer their employees Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) in 2021. Effective March 29, 2021, the University is providing up to 80 hours of EPSL for full-time employees and the two-week equivalent for part-time employees. (See FAQ 1 for additional information regarding EPSL’s effective dates and FAQ 3 for additional information regarding determining EPSL entitlement.) The EPSL that the University is offering in 2021 is more generous than federal law would require and more generous than California’s COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave.
- On September 16, 2021, President Drake issued an executive order extending the time in which eligible employees would be able to use their allotment of *“up to 80 hours of EPSL for full-time employees and the two-week equivalent for part-time employees”* through June 30, 2022.

**Summary of COVID-19 Related Paid Leaves**

Below is a summary of the COVID-19 related paid leave provisions potentially available to academic appointees. Regardless of whether academic appointees have exhausted their COVID-19 paid leave options (EPSL), they may use paid leave by using any remaining personal time off or vacation. Also, see the [2021 EPSL Request Form](#).

<b>2021 Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)</b>
80 hours for FTE or the two-week equivalent for part-time appointees (See FAQ 3 for additional information)
March 29 – June 30, 2022 (See FAQ 2 for additional information)
No prior service requirements
See FAQ 12 for information regarding block and intermittent usage

<sup>1</sup> [Coronavirus update: Expanded leave policies.](#)

<b>2021 Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)</b>
Qualifying reason for use – unable to work or telework because of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Quarantine or isolation order</li><li>2. Told by health care provider to self-quarantine</li><li>3. (a) appointee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis; (b) appointee has been exposed to COVID-19 and is seeking or awaiting the results of a diagnostic test for, or a medical diagnosis of, COVID-19; (c) the University has requested that appointee obtain a diagnostic test for, or a medical diagnosis of, COVID-19, and appointee is seeking or awaiting those results; (d) appointee is obtaining immunization related to COVID-19; or (e) appointee is recovering from injury, disability, illness, or condition related to obtaining COVID-19 immunization</li><li>4. Caring for individual subject to quarantine/isolation order or who was told by health care provider to self-quarantine</li><li>5. Caring for child whose school/place of care is closed or child care provider unavailable b/c of COVID-19</li><li>6. Other substantially similar condition specified by HHS Secretary</li></ol>

**FAQs Related to COVID-19 Paid Leaves**

**1. Who is eligible for leave under the EPSL?**

All appointees are eligible for EPSL in 2021-22, regardless of their length of employment at the University or appointment type. Although health care workers and emergency responders were not eligible to take EPSL for Reasons 4 or 5 in 2020, they are eligible to take EPSL for any reason in 2021-22.

*Updated 9/20/21*

**2. When is 2021 Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) effective?**

Appointees are able to take EPSL between March 29, 2021 and June 30, 2022. If an appointee took any leave between January 1, 2021 and March 28, 2021 for one or more of the EPSL qualifying reasons but was not paid their regular rate of pay during that leave, the appointee may request that the University allow them to retroactively use EPSL. Also, any appointee who has a block EPSL leave in progress on June 30, 2022 must be permitted to finish that block leave using any remaining 2021 EPSL entitlement.

*Updated 9/20/21*

**3. How should locations determine an academic appointee’s 2021 EPSL entitlement?**

- **If an academic appointee is full-time:** The appointee’s 2021 EPSL entitlement is 80 hours.
- **For all other academic appointees:**

- **Step 1:** If the appointee worked or was scheduled to work, on average, at least 40 hours per week in the two weeks immediately before the leave, then the appointee's 2021 EPSL entitlement is 80 hours. Otherwise, the location should proceed to Step 2.
- **Step 2:** The appointee's entitlement depends on whether they have a normal schedule or they report time on a variable basis:
  - If an appointee has a **normal weekly schedule**, the appointee's 2021 EPSL entitlement is the number of hours that the appointee is normally scheduled to work over two weeks (up to 80 hours).
  - If an appointee **reports time on a variable basis**, the appointee's 2021 EPSL entitlement is equivalent to the average number of hours the appointee works over two weeks (up to 80 hours). That average is calculated using a six-month lookback period. If the appointee has worked for fewer than six months, the lookback period used for this calculation is the period of time that the appointee has worked. If the lookback period includes any break in service, the break in service period is excluded from the hours calculation.
- **Requests to use 2021 EPSL for subsequent leaves:**
  - If a full-time academic appointee uses 2021 EPSL for a leave and then requests 2021 EPSL for a subsequent leave, the appointee's earlier 2021 EPSL usage would be deducted from the appointee's 80-hour 2021 EPSL entitlement to determine the amount of 2021 EPSL available to use for the new leave.
  - If an academic appointee who is not full-time uses 2021 EPSL for a leave and then requests 2021 EPSL for a subsequent leave, the location would use Step 1 and, if applicable, Step 2 to calculate the appointee's entitlement for each subsequent leave. Once that entitlement is calculated, the appointee's earlier 2021 EPSL usage would be deducted to determine the amount of 2021 EPSL available to use for the new leave. For example, a part-time appointee used 8 hours of 2021 EPSL in May and asks to use 2021 EPSL again in August. When the appointee's entitlement is calculated for the August leave request, the result is 60 hours. The 8 hours previously used in May is deducted, leaving 52 hours of 2021 EPSL available for the appointee to use for the August leave.
- **Requests to use 2021 EPSL intermittently:** If an academic appointee asks to use 2021 EPSL for a leave that is being taken intermittently, the location would determine the appointee's entitlement just once. Because the segments of the intermittent leave are not separate leaves, there is no need to recalculate the appointee's 2021 EPSL entitlement during the intermittent leave. (Note that 2021 EPSL may only be used intermittently in certain circumstances. See FAQ 12.)

***Updated 9/20/21***

**4. Will an academic appointee be asked to complete documentation to request 2021 Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)? Must a form be used?**

Appointees may request EPSL orally or in writing. Locations should encourage appointees to complete the systemwide leave request form that asks the appointee to specify pertinent information regarding eligibility for EPSL and to certify that the information provided is correct. See the [2021 EPSL Request Form](#). If an appointee is unwilling to complete the form but is eligible for EPSL, the location should grant the leave.

It is not required that a location use this form, but academic appointees can be encouraged to use the appropriate form. If an appointee does not use a form but provides all of the documentation required that demonstrates their eligibility for the leave (in an email, for example), the University should maintain that documentation and grant the leave.

***Updated 9/20/21***

**5. An academic appointee used their paid leave accruals to take time off for an EPSL-qualifying reason on or after March 29, 2021. The appointee subsequently asks if they can instead use EPSL for that absence. Should the location grant the appointee's request?**

Yes, if the absence occurred between March 29, 2021 and June 30, 2022. An academic appointee who used paid leave accruals (e.g., vacation, sick leave) or other available paid leaves for any EPSL-qualifying reason between March 29, 2021 and June 30, 2022 can subsequently opt to use EPSL for that time instead. The accruals that the appointee used for the absences would then be credited back to the appointee. Likewise, an appointee who took unpaid leave for any EPSL-qualifying reason between March 29, 2021 and June 30, 2022 can subsequently opt to use EPSL for that time instead. The location should use this same approach even if an appointee makes this request regarding a block EPSL-qualifying leave in progress on June 30, 2022, handling the portion of the leave after June 30, 2022 as indicated in FAQ 2.

***Updated 9/20/21***

**6. When can an academic appointee subject to a quarantine or isolation order (including a stay-at-home order) (Reason 1) elect emergency paid sick leave (EPSL)? For example, can an appointee subject to a quarantine or isolation order elect EPSL because they are unable to telework for lack of an ergonomic computer set-up?**

*“Quarantine or isolation orders include a broad range of governmental orders, including orders that advise some or all citizens to shelter in place, stay at home, quarantine, or otherwise restrict their own mobility.”* If an appointee is not covered by a particular order,

then the appointee cannot rely on that order in seeking to take EPSL for Reason 1. For example, an order that excludes essential workers such as healthcare workers, would not apply to such appointees.

The implementation guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Labor provide that the critical question to determine eligibility for paid sick leave is “*whether the employee would be able to work or telework ‘but for’ being required to comply with a quarantine or isolation order.*” Under Reason 1, the appointee has to be unable to work or telework because the appointee is subject to a federal, state or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19. In other words, being subject to the order must be the reason that the appointee is unable to work (or telework) for the University. An appointee subject to a valid order may not take EPSL under Reason 1 if the University does not have work for the appointee to perform based upon a COVID-19 or other reason. The DOL further provides, “*that an employee subject to a quarantine or isolation order is able to telework, and therefore may not take paid sick leave, if (a) his or her employer has work for the employee to perform; (b) the employer permits the employee to perform that work from the location where the employee is being quarantined or isolated; and (c) there are no **extenuating circumstances** that prevent the employee from performing that work. For example, if a law firm permits its lawyers to work from home, a lawyer would not be prevented from working by a stay-at-home order, and thus may not take paid sick leave as a result of being subject to that order. In this circumstance, the lawyer is able to telework even if she is required to use her own computer instead of her employer’s computer.*” Examples of **extenuating circumstances** include serious COVID-19 symptoms or a power outage. Lack of ergonomic computer set-up likely does not meet the same standard of extenuating circumstances and thus an appointee subject to a quarantine or isolation order would not be permitted to take paid sick leave under EPSL for lack of an ergonomic computer set-up at home. However, to the extent there are disability concerns, locations should engage in the **interactive process**.

Examples provided by the Department of Labor where EPSL under Reason 1 would be appropriate include: (a) If an employee is prohibited from leaving a containment zone and their employer remains open outside the containment zone and has work the employee cannot perform because the employee cannot leave the containment zone, the employee may use EPSL. (b) If an employee is ordered to stay at home by a government official for fourteen days because the employee was on a cruise ship where other passengers tested positive for COVID-19, and their employer has work for the employee to do but the employee cannot work (or telework) because of the order, the employee may use EPSL.

**7. When can an academic appointee who has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19 (Reason 2) elect EPSL?**

Advice to self-quarantine may be based on the health care provider's belief that the appointee has COVID-19, may have COVID-19, or is particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. The implementation guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Labor provide that, *"[S]elf-quarantining must prevent the employee from working. An employee who is self-quarantining is able to telework, and therefore may not take paid sick leave for this reason, if (a) his or her employer has work for the employee to perform; (b) the employer permits the employee to perform that work from the location where the employee is self-quarantining; and (c) there are no extenuating circumstances, such as serious COVID-19 symptoms, that prevent the employee from performing that work."*

**8. When can an academic appointee experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (Reason 3(a)) elect EPSL?**

The implementation guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Labor provide that *"paid sick leave taken for this reason must be limited to the time the employee is unable to work because he or she is taking affirmative steps to obtain a medical diagnosis. Thus, an employee experiencing COVID-19 symptoms may take paid sick leave, for instance, for time spent making, waiting for, or attending an appointment for a test for COVID-19. But, the employee may not take paid sick leave to self-quarantine without seeking a medical diagnosis. An employee who is waiting for the results of a test is able to telework, and therefore may not take paid sick leave, if: (a) His or her employer has work for the employee to perform; (b) the employer permits the employee to perform that work from the location where the employee is waiting; and (c) there are no extenuating circumstances, such as serious COVID-19 symptoms, that may prevent the employee from performing that work."* In addition, an appointee *"may continue to take leave after testing positive for COVID-19, regardless of symptoms experienced, provided that the health care provider advises the employee to self-quarantine..."* (Reason 2). An appointee who is *"unable to telework may continue to take paid sick leave under this reason while awaiting a test result, regardless of the severity of the COVID-19 symptoms that he or she might be experiencing."*

**9. When can an academic appointee caring for an individual who is either subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 or who has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19 (Reason 4) elect EPSL?**

The implementation guidelines issued by the U.S Department of Labor provide that this qualifying reason applies only if *"but for a need to care for an individual, the employee*

*would be able to perform work for his or her employer....”* The appointee will need to identify their relationship to that individual.

**10. An academic appointee has requested paid leave (i.e., EPSL) because they are unable to work or telework due to a lack of childcare as a result of COVID-19. How can I determine whether the appointee is eligible for paid leave and which leave they are eligible for?**

An academic appointee who is unable to work or telework because they are caring for their child whose school or place of care has closed (or whose child care provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 reasons is eligible to take EPSL (Reason 5).

***Updated 9/20/21***

**11. How are the paid leave entitlements related to COVID-19 (i.e., EPSL) being funded? To which funding source should locations charge time when an academic appointee is determined to be eligible for paid leave?**

Locations should charge paid leave to an academic appointee’s regular funding source unless instructed otherwise. There is no systemwide central source of funds.

***Updated 9/20/21***

**12. May an eligible academic appointee on approved EPSL elect to use such leave intermittently?**

Yes, but only in certain circumstances as described below. It depends on whether the appointee is teleworking or working onsite, and it may also depend on the reason for which the appointee is taking EPSL:

- Non-exempt appointees who are teleworking may take EPSL as a block leave or intermittently in increments of at least one hour.
- Exempt appointees who are teleworking may take EPSL as a block leave or intermittently in whole day increments.
- Appointees working onsite may take EPSL for any reason as a block leave but may only take EPSL intermittently if taking EPSL for Reason 5. When taking EPSL intermittently for Reason 5, non-exempt appointees may take EPSL in increments of at least one hour, and exempt appointees may take EPSL in whole day increments. For public health reasons, appointees working onsite who are taking EPSL for Reasons 1-4 or 6 must continue using EPSL until the appointee either uses the full amount of EPSL or no longer has a qualifying reason for using EPSL.

- 13. Does an academic appointee on paid leave related to COVID-19 (i.e., EPSL) continue to accrue service credit for purposes of UCRP and continue to accrue vacation and sick time, if applicable?**

An academic appointee on paid leave continues to accrue vacation and sick time, as well as service credit for purposes of UCRP, as they normally would under pay status. Academic appointees who are eligible to accrue sabbatical leave shall continue to accrue credits as they normally would under pay status.

*Updated 9/20/21*

- 14. May an academic appointee elect paid leave related to COVID-19 (i.e., EPSL) past their pre-determined appointment end date?**

No, consistent with applicable collective bargaining agreements and the APM, an academic appointee may not elect paid leave related to COVID-19 past their pre-determined appointment end date.

- 15. Who should an academic appointee contact to initiate paid leave related to COVID-19?**

An academic appointee should first notify their direct supervisor of the need to take paid leave related to COVID-19. Academic appointees and supervisors should work with their local academic personnel office to determine eligibility.

- 16. If a fiscal year academic appointee is on approved paid leave (i.e., EPSL) because they are unable to work or telework due to lack of childcare related to COVID-19 school closures, can they continue to use such leave even once their child's school would have ended – i.e., during the summer?**

Yes, assuming that the same eligibility requirements are met, such as summer school, daycare or summer recreation camp closure, fiscal year academic appointees would continue to be eligible for such leave during the summer. For EPSL, locations may encourage appointees to complete a new request form; however, if an appointee is unwilling to complete the form but is eligible for EPSL, the location should grant the leave. Academic-year appointees that are not in service during the summer, would not need to use leave during their non-service period.

*Updated 9/20/21*

- 17. Will COVID-19 related leaves need to be tracked?**

The University is tracking and reporting the amount of COVID-19 leave taken and the associated payroll expense. The UCPath Center is working on mechanisms to track the



type of leaves taken, including the reason. Not all entry and calculations will be automated in UCPATH or PPS – locations will need to process some manual entry and upload of leaves. Locations will also need to monitor whether an appointee is exceeding their paid leave allotments as the UCPATH Center is not programmed to place caps on the paid leaves.

**18. What is the rate of pay to apply when an academic appointee is on EPSL?**

The University has decided to pay appointees on EPSL at the appointee’s regular rate of pay. Although the law allows employers to place caps on pay for EPSL, the University has decided not to apply these caps.

**19. Can extramural funds be used to pay the salaries of academic appointees who cannot work remotely or whose work is limited due to COVID-19?**

Please refer to [UCOP’s Research and Innovation Office, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination’s webpage with current information from extramural funders](#) and consult with your local Contracts & Grants/Sponsored Projects office.

**20. Some schools are operating on an alternate day (or other hybrid-attendance) basis. The school is open each day, but students alternate between days attending school in person and days participating in remote learning. The school only permits students to attend school on their assigned in-person attendance days. May eligible academic appointees use EPSL for Reason 5 in these circumstances?**

Yes, an eligible academic appointee may use EPSL for Reason 5 on days when the school does not permit their child to attend school in person if the appointee is unable to work or telework for that reason. The school is effectively “closed” to the appointee’s child on days that the child cannot attend in person. An eligible appointee may take EPSL on each of their child’s remote learning days. As an example, an eligible academic appointee may take EPSL on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays if the school does not permit their child to attend school in person on those days.

**21. Some schools only permit children to attend school in person for part of the day, and the children must spend the rest of the day at home participating in remote learning. May eligible academic appointees use EPSL for Reason 5 in these circumstances?**

The answer depends on whether the appointee is exempt or non-exempt. Non-exempt appointees may take EPSL for Reason 5 intermittently in increments of at least one hour. This means that a non-exempt appointee could use EPSL for Reason 5 for the hours that the child is participating in remote learning if the appointee is unable to work or telework during that time for that reason. Exempt appointees may take EPSL for Reason 5

intermittently in whole day increments. This means that an exempt appointee would not be able to take EPSL for a partial day. (Please refer to FAQ 12 for the rules regarding intermittent use when taking EPSL for other reasons.)

*Updated 9/20/21*

**22. Some schools are giving parents a choice between having their children attend in person or participate in a remote learning program. If an academic appointee elects remote learning for their child, can that appointee use EPSL for Reason 5 while their child is at home?**

No. An academic appointee is not eligible to use EPSL for Reason 5 under these circumstances because the child's school is not "closed" or otherwise unavailable due to COVID-19 reasons; it is open for the appointee's child to attend. If an appointee's child is home because the appointee has chosen for the child to remain home, the appointee is not entitled to EPSL for Reason 5.

**23. Will hourly academic appointees receive paid time off to receive the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) vaccine?**

Yes, hourly academic appointees may take up to four hours of paid time to obtain each dose of the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) vaccine. Appointees must provide advance notice to their supervisor. If an appointee needs more time for this purpose, the appointee may request EPSL (Reason 3(d)) for the additional time.

**24. Can academic appointees use EPSL if they get sick from side effects of the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) vaccine?**

Yes. Academic appointees may request EPSL (Reason 3(e)) for that purpose. If an appointee has exhausted EPSL or opts not to use them, the appointee would be able to use accrued sick leave, vacation leave, and/or PTO.

*Updated 9/20/21*