

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Fact Sheet



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Human Resource Services

Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

Leave Benefits

FFCRA provides for 10 working days (total, not per occurrence) of **emergency sick leave** if an employee is unable to work (or work remotely) for the following reasons:

1. is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
3. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
4. is obtaining an immunization related to COVID-19 (the university already offers release time for this reason) – *new as of April 1, 2021*;
5. is recovering from any injury, disability, illness or condition related to the COVID-19 immunization – *new as of April 1, 2021*;
6. is seeking or awaiting the results of a diagnosis of COVID-19, when the employee has been exposed to COVID-19 or the employer has requested a test or diagnosis – *new as of April 1, 2021*;
7. is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2);
8. is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed (or childcare provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19; or
9. is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretaries of Labor and Treasury.

FFCRA also provides for up to an additional 10 weeks of **expanded Family Medical Leave (FMLA)** for employees that are eligible and are unable to work (or work remotely) for reason #8 above.

Emergency sick leave for reasons #1 - #6 above provides for 10 days of paid leave at 100% of base pay up to \$511 per day. Emergency sick leave for reasons #7 - #9 above provides for 10 days of paid leave at 2/3 percent of base pay up to \$200 per day.

FFCRA for reason #8 above provides for up to a total of 12 weeks of paid leave at 2/3 percent of base pay up to \$200 per day.

The paid leave benefits provided by FFCRA are in addition to any available accrued or non-accumulative time already provided by the university.

The provisions of this Federal Act are currently set to expire on December 31, 2020. The university has voluntarily extended this leave program through September 30, 2021.

Eligibility Requirement

All currently active employees receiving a W2 from the university are eligible for FFCRA emergency sick leave benefits. All currently active employees receiving a W2 from the university with at least 30 days of service are eligible for FFCRA expanded FMLA leave benefits. Employees are entitled to 12 workweeks of FMLA leave

in a 12-month period. Any FMLA entitlement already used will count toward to the total entitlement and will take away from the available FFCRA expanded FMLA leave.

Leave Usage

The 10 working days of paid sick leave benefits must be taken on a continuous basis. Any partial day usage will count as a full day of the 10 working day allocation. However, if there is no longer a qualifying reason for taking paid sick leave before the paid sick leave exhausts, the remaining paid sick leave can be taken later, before September 30, 2021, if another qualifying reason occurs.

The 12 weeks of expanded FMLA may be taken on a continuous or intermittent basis in specified increments of time.

Application Process and Documentation

- Eligible employees wishing to apply for FFCRA leave benefits should apply for leave by submitting the FFCRA request form.
- The application should be submitted as soon as practical.
- Upon receipt of the FFCRA request form, the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office will determine if the employee is eligible for the leave. Both the employee and their supervisor will be notified of the determination. Departmental attendance procedures are expected to be followed until the FFCRA leave notification has been processed.
- When applying for FFCRA leave benefits, the employee will have to attest to certain information based on their reason for leave. In some cases, medical documentation will be requested. The Insurance and Employee Benefits Office will work with the employee on what documentation is needed.

Payroll and Time Reporting Information

Hourly employees that are using paid emergency sick leave benefits should report regular hours on their timesheet and indicate 'COVID-19 sick leave' in the comments section. Hourly employees that are using paid expanded FMLA should report family sick leave hours on their timesheet and indicate 'COVID-19 FMLA' in the comments section. These hours should also be reported as FMLA hours in the designated section.

Salaried employees that are using either paid emergency sick leave benefits or expanded FMLA should not report either on their benefit usage form. All pay for salaried employees will be based on their leave request. Any changes to the request need to be coordinated with the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office.

Return to Work

Employees on leave will need to have clearance from Human Resources Services prior to returning to work. This clearance will also be communicated to the employee's supervisor.

All employees are expected to return to work on the date indicated in their leave confirmation. Any changes in this date must be communicated to the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office.

Questions on FFCRA should be directed to the Insurance and Employee Benefits Office by emailing HRSCOVID@niu.edu.