WHEN TO STAY HOME / USE OF LEAVE / RETURNING TO WORK

Q. I suspect that I may have been exposed to COVID-19 at home or in the community but I am not showing any symptoms. What should I do?
A. Do not come to work. Stay on 14 day self-quarantine or until such a time as you have tested negative for COVID-19. Call your health care provider for instructions BEFORE going to any medical office, urgent care or emergency room. You should tell them that you may have been exposed and request to be tested for COVID-19. Call your manager to discuss your situation. Telecommuting may be an option depending on your job. If you cannot work remotely, you should use any accrued sick leave first. Once all accrued sick leave is exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave. If you do not develop symptoms after the 14 days of self-quarantine, you can come back to work.

Q. I suspect that I may have been exposed to COVID-19 at home or in the community and I am showing symptoms (fever of 100 degrees F or higher, coughing, and/or difficulty breathing.) What should I do?
A. Do not report to work. Call your health care provider for instructions BEFORE going to any medical office, urgent care or emergency room. You should tell them that you may have been exposed and request to be tested for COVID-19. Also, call your manager to discuss your situation. For the period you are out of work, you should use any accrued sick leave first. Once all accrued sick leave is exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave.

Q. I suspect that I may have been exposed to COVID-19 during the course of my duties as a UCI employee. What should I do?
A. Do not come to work. Stay on 14 day self-quarantine or until such a time as the person has tested negative for COVID-19. Call your manager to discuss your situation. Telecommuting may be an option depending on your job. If you cannot work remotely, you should use any accrued sick leave first. Once all accrued sick leave is exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave.

Q. I suspect that I may have been exposed to COVID-19 during the course of my duties as a UCI employee and am starting to exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. What should I do?
A. If you begin to show symptoms, call your manager who will call HR. You will be referred to the appropriate clinic for work-related illnesses and injuries. For the period you are out of work, you should use any accrued sick leave first. Once all accrued sick leave is exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave. If you were exposed during the course of your duties as a UCI employee, you should file for Worker’s Compensation.
    UCI Health Workers Compensation
    UCI Campus Workers Compensation

Q. I am sick from COVID-19, do I qualify for FMLA or CFRA?
A. An employee who is sick may be entitled to leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and California Family Rights Act (CFRA) under certain circumstances. The FMLA and CFRA entitle
eligible employees to take up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job protected leave in a calendar year if they have a serious health condition. Some instances of COVID-19 may qualify as a “serious health condition.” Contact HR for advice.

Q. Does the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or California Family Rights Act (CFRA) entitle an employee to take leave to avoid contracting COVID-19?
A. No. The FMLA and CFRA entitle employees to job-protected leave when they have a serious health condition or when they need leave to care for covered family members who have a serious health condition. Leave for the purpose of avoiding exposure to the COVID-19 is not protected under the FMLA or CFRA.

Q. Who needs a doctor’s note to return to work?
A. We are in unprecedented times, and the U.S. healthcare system is taxed due to the additional burden of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak. During this time, and until further notice, a doctor’s note is NOT required for campus staff to return to work AS LONG AS THE STAFF MEMBER does not have any symptoms. The EXCEPTION is for employees who have tested positive for COVID-19. Those employees must provide a doctor’s note clearing them to return to work. All UCI Medical Center employees must be cleared by Occupational Health before returning to work.

Q. When does the 14 days of self-quarantine technically begin?
A. It begins from the date of last exposure or suspected exposure.

Q. A person that lives in my household believes they have been exposed to COVID-19. What should I do?
A. Do not come to work. Stay on 14 day self-quarantine or until such a time as the person has tested negative for COVID-19. Call your manager to discuss your situation. Telecommuting may be an option depending on your job. If you cannot work remotely, you should use any accrued sick leave first. Once all accrued sick leave is exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave.

Q. A person that lives in my household is showing symptoms of COVID-19 (fever of 100 degrees F or higher, coughing, and/or difficulty breathing) but they have not been tested. Should I come in to work?
A. Do not come to work. Stay on 14 day self-quarantine or until such a time as the person has tested negative for COVID-19. Call your manager to discuss your situation. Telecommuting may be an option depending on your job. If you cannot work remotely, you should use any accrued sick leave first. Once all accrued sick leave is exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave.

Q. A person that lives in my household has tested positive for COVID-19. Should I come in to work?
A. Do not come to work. Stay on 14 day self-quarantine. Call your medical provider if you begin to show symptoms of COVID-19 (fever of greater than 100 degrees F, cough, difficulty breathing.) If you cannot reach your medical provider, call an urgent care or emergency room for instructions BEFORE going in person so that you do not expose other people. Call your manager to discuss your situation. For the period you are out of work, you should use any accrued sick leave first. Once all accrued sick leave is exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave.

Q. I have been home sick but not because of COVID-19. Do I need a doctor’s note to return to work?
A. Normal UCI policy defines that you must have a doctor’s note to return to work any time you are out sick for three or more work days. However, during this unprecedented period of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, no employee will be required to provide a doctor’s note to return to work. You should only return to work if you are not showing any symptoms of illness, regardless of the illness type at this time. However, Medical Center employees must report to Occupational Health before returning to work.

Q. I have been home sick and tested positive for COVID-19. When is it safe for me to return to work?
A. You should return to work only after you are no longer showing any symptoms of COVID-19. This includes a fever of 100.00 degrees F or higher, cough and/or difficulty breathing. You should confirm with your medical provider that it is safe for you to return to work before you come back, and because you tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19), you must bring a doctor’s note clearing you to return to work. Clinical healthcare workers must be cleared by Occupational Health before returning to work.

Q. How many times can an employee be exposed and have to stay home?
A. There are no limits to how many times an employee can be exposed and must self-quarantine. If you are subjected to self-quarantine, speak with your manager regarding the option to telecommute. If telecommuting is not an option, use accrued sick leave and compensatory time first. When sick leave and compensatory time have been exhausted, you are eligible for 14 days of paid administrative leave. Situations required time off beyond what is described here should be addressed on a case-by-case basis with your manager. Managers needing guidance should contact their HRBP or local HR professional.

Q. Are student workers eligible for the 14 day administrative leave pay if they are required to stay home because of self-quarantine due to exposure or if they become ill and test positive for Coronavirus?
A. Student workers are eligible for up to 14 days of paid administrative leave if they are required to miss work due to Coronavirus exposure requiring self-quarantine, if they become ill and test positive for Coronavirus, and/or if they are required to care for a family member who is ill with Coronavirus. Student workers should NOT return to work until they exhibit no symptoms. Student workers who test positive for Coronavirus MUST provide a doctor’s note clearing them to return to work. A doctor’s note is not needed unless the student worker has tested positive for Coronavirus.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Q. What does social distancing mean?
A. In simple terms, it means making every attempt to keep at least six feet of space between you and another person, especially in public spaces. This helps reduce the likelihood that one person will breathe in any droplets should another person cough or sneeze, and therefore reduce the likelihood of exposure to viruses, including the Coronavirus.

Q. What employees need to use special personal protective equipment?
A. Employees in a clinical setting providing direct care to patients should use special personal protective equipment as defined by policy and procedure. Employees who are not in clinical roles do
not need special personal protective equipment. The best ways employees can protect themselves is to do the following:

- Wash hands frequently with clean water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
- Use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if hand washing is not an option.
- Cover coughs and sneezes using a tissue or crook of the elbow. Properly dispose of tissues in a waste basket.
- Stay home if you are sick. This includes if you are sick with illnesses such as colds and flus.
- Clean common areas. If possible, assign a team member(s) to regularly disinfect door handles, phones, desks, conference tables, and chair handles, etc. that are shared by staff.
- Practice social distancing; ensure a distance of 6 feet between yourself and other individuals
- Avoid gatherings of 100 people or more
- Consider virtual meetings

Q. Can UCI require symptomatic people to self-quarantine?
A. Yes. If you are showing any signs of Coronavirus (COVID-19), including a fever of 100.00 degrees F or higher, cough and/or difficulty breathing, you should self-quarantine at home. Do not come to work, and avoid exposing others in the community. If your symptoms worsen, CALL your medical provider, an urgent care or emergency BEFORE you visit for instructions on how to proceed.

Q. How long do we have to follow the guidance that UCI has provided?
A. Effective immediately and until further notice. Please check uci.edu/coronavirus frequently for updates.

TELECOMMUTING / WORKING REMOTELY / STUDENT WORKERS

Q. Who can approve a telecommuting request for employees that prefer to work from home?
A. Vice Chancellors, Associate Vice Chancellors, Deans and Chiefs are responsible for approving telecommuting requests for their business units. They may, at their discretion, allow directors, managers and/or supervisors to approve telecommuting requests. Please contact your direct supervisor regarding any questions or concerns regarding telecommuting.

Q. I am concerned about exposure to Coronavirus and would prefer to just work from home. Can I do this?
A. At this time, telecommuting is an option available at the discretion of the manager. Please talk to your manager.

Q. I am concerned about exposure to Coronavirus because a member of my household is in a high risk category and I can’t risk getting them sick. Can I work from home?
A. Consult your manager regarding options for telecommuting. Managers are reviewing telecommuting options for their staff based on whether positions are essential or non-essential and how critical onsite work is to business operation.

Q. I need emergency childcare/eldercare/pet care assistance. Does UCI have any resource for these types of services?
A. Yes. UC offers Bright Horizons Care Advantage™, a comprehensive web-based resource, to help you balance work and family responsibilities. The Bright Horizons Care Advantage programs — Sittercity,
Years Ahead, BrightStudy and Bright Horizons preferred enrollment — provide information about pre-screened care providers and services so you can choose the solution that’s right for you. Visit: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/compensation-and-benefits/other-benefits/family-care-resources.html

Q. I am a limited, casual restricted or TES employees. Can I work remotely? (If so, how do we define the average for those roles where hours can vary week over week.)
A. Limited, casual restricted, or temporary employees are often performing work that is based on short-term assignments or requiring physical onsite presence. All employees should consult their managers for guidance on whether their position is eligible for telecommuting. Non-exempt employees are only eligible to be paid for hours worked. If it is not operationally feasible for an employee to work from home, the manager will not approve telecommuting. Criteria to determine what is considered to be operationally feasible may include the type of work not requiring onsite presence, having the appropriate equipment to do the work at home, and possessing the required training to perform work remotely.

Q. Will hourly paid (non-exempt) employees be allowed to work remotely? If not, will they get paid?
A. All employees should consult their managers for guidance on whether their position is eligible for telecommuting. Non-exempt employees are only eligible to be paid for hours worked. If it is not operationally feasible for an employee to work from home, the manager will not approve telecommuting. Criteria to determine what is considered to be operationally feasible may include the type of work not requiring onsite presence, having the appropriate equipment to do the work at home, and possessing the required training to perform work remotely.

Q. If required to work from home, will there be any restrictions on where you work from?
A. Employees and managers should reference the safety, security, and other restrictions provided in the Short-Term Telecommuting Procedure. Employees need to be thoughtful and careful in their work location. Unless there is a daycare/eldercare/school closure, the remote worksite should be free from distractions, security concerns (physical and electronic), and with appropriate social distancing. Employees are required to inform their manager of where they will be physically located during the day.

Q. What if I need equipment to work from home? Will it be provided?
A. We are facing an unprecedented time at UCI. Not all units will be set up to provide each employee with equipment to work remotely. Where available, employees may be provided with University-owned equipment. Equipment must be listed on the “Employee Agreement Concerning the Use of Electronic Communications Resources” found in Appendix A of Policy BFB-G-46: Guidelines for the Purchase and Use of Cellular Phones and Other Portable Electronic Resources (https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/3420357/BFB-G-46) and the employee must sign. Equipment is expected to be returned upon conclusion of the telecommuting agreement. Employees may also use their personal equipment, ensuring proper VPN and security is set up. When no equipment is available and the employee does not have personal equipment to use, the manager may determine that it is not operationally feasible for this employee to telecommute.

Q. Where do we forward the phones or what message should we put on our phones if we’re required to stay at home?
A. Employees should consult their managers on what they should do with their phones. Employees on the campus may access their voicemail anywhere by dialing (949) 824-8989. Employees on the
campus may forward their campus lines to an external number by visiting this website https://www.oit.uci.edu/help/telephone-voicemail/ and selecting the model phone they have from the tabs in the middle of the page. Non-exempt employees should not have phones forwarded to their homes or cells during non-work hours. Employees at the medical center should consult their local telecommunications team, after consulting with their manager.

Q. If I’m required to use my cell phone while working remotely, will I be reimbursed?
A. Business calls made within the coverage of the personal calling and/or data plan will not be reimbursed. Only expenses above and beyond what the employee normally pays for cell phone coverage would be considered for reimbursement. Additional information about this policy may be found here: https://www.accounting.uci.edu/ap/cellphones.html

Q. Should things get worse and people need to work from home, what is your advice on how to handle non-exempt employees? We are able to get them on our VPN temporarily but do you have any FLSA or other concerns? One of mine is that they don’t have UCI issued computers but I’m meeting with IT this morning to see if we have options there.
A. Normally, it is often discouraged for non-exempt staff to telecommute. However, UCI is facing unprecedented times. In support of the health and welfare of the UCI community, and where operationally feasible, non-exempt employees may be allowed to telecommute, with or without University-provided equipment. A Short-Term Telecommuting Agreement should be completed for each employee. The manager and employee must agree on the expected work schedule and document it on the agreement. Employees are expected to take their regular rest and meal breaks and have any overtime pre-approved by their manager.

Q. My staff have been requesting telecommuting for a while now and I have said it is not feasible for our unit because it would impact our operation too much. However, now I am letting them telecommute. Does this mean I have to in the future, too?
A. No, telecommuting now in response to the COVID-19 outbreak does not set a precedent for future telecommuting. Be sure to have employees sign the short-term telecommuting agreement and explain this to your team.

Q. What if I have an employee on a performance improvement plan, i.e. and I am closely monitoring their performance given concerns? Can I not let them telecommute because I don’t trust them?
A. Managers should consult their HR Business Partner for additional assistance.

Q. Can telecommuting be just partial days? What if I wanted to split up the team and only have 50% of staff in the office at time to make sure we can continue our operation, but limit exposure?
A. Yes. At this time (3/11/20), the campus is not closing and operations are to continue. Telecommuting is an option available at the discretion of the manager. Managers may determine what works best for their unit while weighing the continuity of service from their unit with the health and welfare of its employees.

Q. If someone has a sick child (with the same symptoms as COVID) and doesn’t want to come in because they have been exposed, but they are not sick, can we allow them to work from home? Our current remote contracts specify that employees are required to make childcare arrangements when working from home but I have a feeling this one is going to come up more and more so are people allowing flexibility with that part of the contract under these circumstances?
A. This employee should consult their manager. Normally, if an employee is staying home to care for an ill child, that employee may be expected to use sick time. However, with COVID-19 outbreak, if an employee needs to provide dependent care because of a daycare/eldercare/school closure, they may telecommute or use sick time. Also, with COVID-19, if an employee is exposed, they may telecommute or use sick time. Telecommuting is only for positions where it is operationally feasible, which is determined by the manager.

Q. Can student assistants (student workers) continue to work?
A. Yes, they can continue to work if they have not been exposed and are not ill.

Q. What if my student assistant (student worker) goes home (because their classes are online) – do I need to pay them?
A. No. UCI pays student workers only for time worked. However, you may be able to provide them with project or other remote work. Check with your manager to see if telecommuting for your student workers is operationally feasible.

Q. Can a student assistant (student worker) be in an essential position and be required to report to work?
A. It is unlikely that a student assistant (student worker) would be considered an essential position, however, classifying what positions are deemed critical (essential) or non-essential is up to the Vice Chancellor, Associate Chancellor, Dean or Chief of their respective department. Managers should check with their leadership to determine what positions are classified as critical (essential) versus non-essential.

Q. Are student workers eligible for the 14 day administrative leave pay if they are required to stay home because of self-quarantine due to exposure or if they become ill and test positive for Coronavirus?
A. Student workers are eligible for up to 14 days of paid administrative leave if they are required to miss work due to Coronavirus exposure requiring self-quarantine, if they become ill and test positive for Coronavirus, and/or if they are required to care for a family member who is ill with Coronavirus. Student workers should NOT return to work until they exhibit no symptoms. Student workers who test positive for Coronavirus MUST provide a doctor’s note clearing them to return to work. A doctor’s note is not needed unless the student worker has tested positive for Coronavirus.

Q. Will temporary or intermittent workers be paid if they do not work?
A. No. Temporary and intermittent workers will only be paid for time worked. However, you may be able to provide them with project or other remote work. Check with your manager to see if telecommuting for your temporary workers is operationally feasible.

Q. Can student assistants (student workers) work remotely (telecommute)?
A. Yes, if operationally feasible and deemed appropriate by department leadership.

TRAVEL / MEETINGS / EVENTS / VISITORS / JOB CANDIDATE VISITS & INTERVIEWS

Q. How do I find out what countries are categorized with Travel Advisories Levels 2, 3 and 4?
A. Visit the U.S. State Department Travel Advisory page for more information: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/
Q. We have job candidate scheduled to come to campus for interviews. What should we do?
A. UCI has restricted all travel by air and train. Candidates expected to arrive by air or train should be rescheduled to be interviewed virtually (via Zoom, etc.) Local candidates travelling by car may still be interviewed in person. Everyone is encouraged to hold meetings virtually as much as possible at this time.

Q. At what point do we cancel meetings?
A. In-person meetings of 100 or more persons should be redesigned and offered virtually if possible. If holding the meeting virtually is not possible, the meeting should be rescheduled to a later date or cancelled. Departments may also want to redesign, reschedule or cancel meetings of less than 100 people if the meeting room does not sufficiently allow for social distancing, meaning allowing for a minimum of six feet between people.

Q. Will the Basic Life Saving Skills and American Heart Association HeartCode classes continue to be offered?
A. These classes will still be offered at this time. In the event of a class cancellation, registered participants will be notified by the Program Coordinator.

Q. I am scheduled to attend a meeting, conference or training session in-person. Will it be cancelled?
A. Please check with the organizer or facilitator of the event to determine whether or not the event will be held as planned. Please keep in mind that UCI has restricted all University-related, non-essential travel by air or train, which may limit your options even if the event in question is still held in person.