

Administering Human Resources Policies and Procedures During an Extended Health Crisis

Background

The Research Foundation is committed to proactive planning in the event of a communicable disease outbreak. Response to a health crisis such as an avian flu epidemic will be controlled by federal, state and local agencies. In addition, the State University of New York requires each campus to develop a plan that identifies key actions that need to occur at each level of a pandemic. RF operations should act in accord with the direction from governmental entities and in coordination with SUNY preparedness activities at each campus location.

This document provides guidance for administering applicable RF personnel policies and procedures, payroll and benefits for RF employees in the event of an extended health crisis.

Paid Time Off- Leave Accruals

The RF offers generous paid time off benefits that protect against loss of income due to illness or disability and provide paid time off for other purposes. The existing [Leave Policy](#) and [Leave Administration](#) guidelines will be maintained during a pandemic situation.

Employees who become ill or take time off to care for family members will continue to be responsible for complying with the existing [sick leave](#) guidelines and reporting procedures. If, due to circumstances outside the employee's control, he or she is unable to comply, the situation will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Requests for time off from healthy employees who wish to avoid exposure require appropriate approvals and must follow existing absence procedures. Employees with appropriate accruals may charge [vacation](#), [personal](#) or [holiday](#). If the employee does not have accruals, he or she will be put on unpaid leave.

Family Medical Leave Act

Employees who take leave in a pandemic situation may be eligible for FMLA. Eligible employees are allowed 12 weeks of unpaid leave for the employee's serious health condition or to care for a family member. For additional information on the administration of leave under FMLA, see [FMLA: Guidelines for Administering Leave](#).

Leave of Absence – Disability

Existing disability procedures will apply in the event of an extended health crisis. An employee who is unable to work due to illness or injury and who is eligible for New York State Disability will be placed on [disability leave](#) without pay.

Benefits Continuation

For information on benefits continuation coverage for employees on leave, refer to the [Benefits Handbook](#).

Working at an Alternate Work Site

In the event of a pandemic, it may be prudent to enable employees to perform their job functions while away from the central work location in order to continue business operations. Given the extremely diverse nature of work done by RF employees, this decision must be made on a case by case basis. The [RF Teleworking and Telecommuting Policy](#) provides guidance to operating locations in administering an alternate work site arrangement.

Employee Pay

In order to ensure that employees continue to receive salary without interruption in the event of a pandemic, the RF encourages enrollment in the Direct Deposit Program. Paychecks and direct deposit stubs can be delivered to an alternate location in the event business operations are moved to an alternate worksite.

Communication

Communication is essential in responding to demands resulting from a pandemic and to facilitate the effective exchange of information. The RF, in a continuing commitment to provide safety and security for its employees, is participating in the NY-ALERT program and other campus emergency alert systems in conjunction with SUNY. Please encourage RF employees to sign up to receive important safety and emergency information electronically.

Change History

- **November 14, 2008** - New document.

Feedback

Was this document clear and easy to follow? Please send your feedback to webfeedback@rfsuny.org.

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