

Midwestern State University

Employee FAQ

Is there a way to seek medical care without going to the doctor?

For employees who participate in HealthSelect, the University's medical health plan, virtual doctor visits are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including weekends and holidays. Additional information about this benefit is available on the [ERS website](#). Additionally, the [ERS Dr. on Demand website](#) has made available a [Coronavirus Assessment](#) to help prepare and protect you and the ones around you. BlueCross BlueShield also offers a 24-hour Nurse Line 1-800-581-0368. In most cases, the virtual doctor and nurse line visits will not have a co-pay.

Does the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) apply to absences due to COVID-19?

Yes, COVID-19 qualifies as a “serious health condition” under FMLA allowing eligible employees to take FMLA leave if either the employee or an immediate family member is diagnosed with the disease. Please contact Human Resources for questions or assistance with FMLA.

What is the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)?

The FFCRA requires certain employers to provide employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. A summary of employee rights may be found here: [Employee Rights](#)

If I am displaying signs of respiratory symptoms such as coughing or other symptoms identified by the CDC, can my supervisor require me to go home?

Yes, employees can be sent home; however, they cannot be penalized for being sent home. Supervisors should encourage employees to seek medical advice, but they cannot require them to go to the doctor.

What options are available if employees want to self-monitor or self-isolate due to risk factors or potential exposure?

Employees who have potentially been exposed to Coronavirus or belong to categories considered to be at higher-risk (older adults, individuals who have serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease) should consult with their managers about telecommuting or working from home, where feasible. See more information at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>. Otherwise, employees (with supervisor approval) may take other paid leaves as applicable to their position and situation.

If I need to request vacation leave or am sick not due to COVID, what process do I follow?

If a benefit eligible employee is unavailable to work and needs to request sick or vacation leave, a time request should be submitted through the normal approval process.

If an employee has traveled to high risk countries or has potentially been exposed to COVID-19 and is self-isolating as required, what type of leave should they use?

Faculty and Staff in benefits-eligible positions: Supervisors should consider a temporary alternate work location for employees who are under self-monitoring or self-isolating. If a temporary alternate work location arrangement is not feasible for the employee, departments should request approval for Emergency Leave. The President or designees are authorized to approve emergency leave for ten business days due to COVID-19 related absences as appropriate.

If a student employee is not self-monitoring or self-isolating and is otherwise able to return to work, but chooses not to, what type of leave should they use?

Student employees, (including graduate assistants) who are not self-monitoring or self-isolating and are otherwise able to return to work, may choose not to return for whatever reason but they will not be paid. Managers should be flexible with student employees and not penalize them if they prefer to avoid campus.

I have an active position recruitment going on right now. Should I set up in-person interviews or continue with previously scheduled interviews?

Currently the campus is open, however, alternatives to in-person interviews such as Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc need to be utilized. Recruitment activities should be handled with minimal exposure to both the university and the candidate by either delaying interviews or conducting virtual interviews. Delaying the interview process might result in lost candidates, however, the risks associated with personal contact may outweigh the loss.

How can I protect myself from getting COVID-19?

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your mouth with tissues whenever you sneeze, and discard used tissues in the trash. If a tissue is not available, sneeze or cough into your elbow or upper sleeve, not into your hand.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Consider using telephone and video conferencing instead of face-to-face meetings, if available, during this outbreak. If face-to-face meetings are unavoidable, meet in a large room to avoid close contact.
- Refrain from shaking hands.

Have cleaning procedures changed?

Prevention continues to be the best protection. The custodial team spray down all hard surfaces students/staff/faculty may come in contact with on a daily basis. This effort includes the usual hand rails, doorknobs, push/pull handles and includes gathering spots such as common areas. A 1 gallon pump up sprayer is used to help speed the time in which it takes to disinfect larger areas. Disinfecting wipes are utilized for fast, effective disinfecting of highly touchable surfaces which are non-sprayable such as keyboards, light switches and time-clocks.

Are there different procedures to purchase equipment?

The purchasing process has not changed. All current processes and requirements are in effect. MSU Texas Purchasing Website: <https://msutexas.edu/purchasing/>

Who do I contact if I have further questions?

For further questions, please email human.resources@msutexas.edu