



NOTICE

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Executive Director

No. 20-10 (updated)

Issue date:

Updated -- April 17, 2020 to address new leave under federal law and use of accrued leave categories.

Telework, Social Distancing, and Leave Use Directives in Response to COVID-19 Updated as of April 17, 2020

Please note: This updated Notice replaces all earlier versions of Notice 20-10.

During these challenging and unprecedented times, the health of our workforce and visitors remains a top priority. To this end, the agency has implemented several strategies including telework, paid Social Distancing leave, and liberal leave to minimize the impact of COVID-19. This protocol was developed in consultation with our operational managers and Union officials. The Commission continues to assess public health protocols and directives as updates are issued by federal/state/local officials. Effective immediately:

Telework: Commission leadership strongly encourages supervisors to approve telework for applicable employees wherever possible, and strongly encourages those who can telework to do so. Telework may be implemented on an ad hoc basis, without the use of telework agreements. However, employees who want to telework still must get supervisor approval. Supervisors are asked to identify assignments that can be carried out remotely.

- Employees who utilize telework are ***expected to be available during telework hours and provide contact information/phone numbers.***
- Employees/supervisors should ensure necessary access to email/VPN and other appropriate platforms are in place and tested.

Social Distancing Leave: The agency has implemented two different tools to encourage social distancing in the workplace: a temporary, paid leave for Merit System and “Term” Contract employees, and a separate pay category which only applies to “Seasonal/Intermittent” and “Temporary” Contract employees. These tools are designed to reduce the density of staff in the workplace while maintaining operations. The tools give employees the flexibility to take time off to deal with the disruption to their personal lives caused by COVID-19, including their own care, childcare, and other needs.

1. **All Merit and “Term” Contract Employees** will receive up to 40 hours of paid “Social Distancing” ***leave*** that can be taken with supervisor approval.
 - a. Individuals who work less than a 40-hour workweek, will receive a pro-rata amount of Social Distancing leave. (For example, an employee who works 20 hours a week will receive 20 hours of Social Distancing leave.)

- b. Social Distancing leave may be used at any time through December 31, 2020. The Finance Department established a leave bucket (up to 40 hours) which appears on each employee's timecard as SocDLv as of March 21st. Employees may use the available Social Distancing leave balance for any time off beginning March 16th. This leave functions similar to Personal Leave, as it does not carry over to the next calendar year. Unused balances also are not paid out if an employee leaves the agency.
2. **"Seasonal/Intermittent" and "Temporary" Contract Employees** will be eligible to use the balance of any remaining 40 hours of Social Distancing **pay** through December 31, 2020.
 - a. While Commission operations are limited to the public, the presence of "Seasonal/Intermittent" and "Temporary" contract employees in our facilities will continue to be reduced to encourage social distancing.
 - b. The supervisor will determine whether the employee is needed to carry out program services either onsite or through telework, subject to input from the Department Head.
 - c. The supervisor may authorize Social Distancing pay (subject to item 2d) for regularly scheduled work hours which could not be carried out due to COVID-19. Time will be entered using the pay code SeaSDPay.
 - d. This leave does not carry over to the next calendar year and unused balances are not paid out if an employee leaves the agency.

The Finance Department previously issued procedural guidance to all Department Heads and timecard administrators on the coding of this pay. This guidance explains how the pay code should be entered for various timekeeping methods (paper, timeclocks, or online systems).

3. Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act

In addition to the use of available Commission issued Social Distancing leave/pay, employees also eligible for leave under the Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (see Notice 20-11, Paid Sick Leave Benefits Under the Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act).

4. Use of Accrued Leave Categories

Employees may also request use of their own accrued leave to care for their own health or other personal concerns. Accrued leave includes annual, sick, personal, or other available leave balances, as necessary. Employees are expected to communicate and coordinate leave needs to their supervisor for approval.