



The Universities

AT SHADY GROVE

To: USG Staff
From: Nico Washington, Chief Operating Officer/USG Office of Human Resources
Date: March 18, 2020
Subject: Temporary Guidance for Working Through COVID-19

The COVID-19 Outbreak poses an unprecedented public health threat. The Universities at Shady Grove (USG) wishes to promote employee, student, and community health and safety by encouraging social distancing, including self-isolation, during the presence of COVID-19 in the institution community or State of Maryland. The university is working to provide options that may be used to adjust your personal and family risk, and taking actions that could help limit the spread of illness in the community. We should prepare so we can help lessen the risk for everyone, even if we do not feel personally at risk.

Please review the temporary guidance on employee telework and paid leave. Please visit the [FAQ](#) section on our website for more information.

I. TELEWORK

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, USG buildings are currently not open until March 27th to practice social distancing. All non-essential USG staff including regular faculty or staff member, contingent 1 or contingent 2 employees, student employees are expected to telework and provide access to services remotely until on-site facilities are re-opened, if their duties can be accomplished via telework. Any staff not deemed essential should not be present on-site to perform their duties at this time. Any employee who is unsure whether their job is suitable for telework should speak with their supervisor. Employees who are not on any previously approved leave of any type and are in positions that are not appropriate for telework will be placed on administrative leave. All other teleworking employees will receive their regular pay; they will not be granted any additional paid Administrative Leave.

Supervisors will notify their employees if they are deemed essential and needed on campus. No staff member who is immuno-compromised or otherwise considered by CDC guidance to be high-risk regarding COVID-19 will be required to work on campus. In the event that a nonexempt employee who is deemed essential is required to work on campus during the period when the facility is temporarily not open, will be paid as usual. If other employees who support that operation or work in the same building are granted administrative leave, nonexempt employees who are required to work on campus will have the option of receiving compensatory leave or additional compensation.

Graduate assistants and student employees who (1) do not earn sick leave; (2) are in positions that are not appropriate for telework; or (3) are unable to safely telework due to the necessity to care for a child or dependent adult, may be assigned temporarily to an alternative work schedule or granted an excused absence. This will be determined by individual departmental supervisors.

II. SICK AND ADVANCED SICK LEAVE, FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE, AND EXCUSED ABSENCE

If an employee feels sick and therefore unable to telework or cannot work because they need to take care of an ill family member, you will be required to use available accrued sick leave, advanced sick leave, annual leave, personal leave, compensatory leave, or any other type of available accrued leave. Faculty and staff over the age of 60, or those with CDC-recognized underlying conditions, who are unable to telework, can contact the Office of Human Resources on a confidential basis to use accrued sick or other leave, or receive an excused absence.

Sick leave and advanced sick leave (ASL) may be used for the following purposes related to COVID-19:

- Employee's or family member's COVID-19 illness
- Employee's need to self-isolate or be quarantined if not ill or injured, if an employee is not able to telework from home
- Employee's need to supervise a dependent child or dependent adult family member who needs supervision due to self-isolation, quarantine, or COVID-19 related school or daycare closure
- Employee is sent home from the workplace due to concerning symptoms or suspected COVID-19 exposure based on established standards, if an employee is not able to telework from home

To cover a COVID-19 related absence as stated above, all **regular faculty and staff** may be provided up to 60 days of Advanced Sick Leave (ASL) in the calendar year (prorated to the employee's FTE) under the applicable Sick and Safe Leave policies regardless of the years of service. Employees in these categories must first exhaust all other accrued paid leave before ASL will be granted. Employees are obligated to repay the ASL when they return to work. At that time the institution will deduct one-half of their accrued ASL as it is earned, until the advanced leave is repaid. During the period of this guidance, rules regarding required medical documentation may be relaxed as necessary.

Contingent I and II staff, Hourly Faculty and Student Employees who accrue sick leave may be permitted to use accrued sick leave to cover COVID-19 related absence. Any restriction based on the total number of hours used within a particular period may be temporarily suspended. Once such an employee has exhausted any available accrued leave, they may be provided up to 12 additional days of sick leave (prorated by FTE) for the purposes set forth above. Advanced sick leave should be limited to the amount of days necessary to equal 20 days (prorated by FTE), both accrued and advanced, during any single fiscal year.

Graduate assistants and student employees who do not earn sick leave may be provided an excused absence without any loss of pay as determined by the departmental supervisor.

Please keep in mind that this is a dynamic and evolving situation. All decisions and policies pertaining to Telework and/or returning on-site will be continually reevaluated. We appreciate your patience and support as we work through these difficult circumstances.

For any questions or concerns, please contact the [Office of Human Resources](#).