



Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this temporary policy is to provide salary continuation for employees who are either sick due to COVID-19 or have a suspected workplace COVID-19 exposure and are required to quarantine.

This policy is separate from and independent of any existing sick leave policies that the County grants employees in the normal course of business.

2.0 Applicability

All employees will be eligible to utilize their unused Emergency Paid Sick Leave hours as described below.

3.0 Policy

1. Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) will be available for an employee who is unable to work or work remotely because:
 - 1.1. The employee is subject to federal, state, or local quarantine/isolation order related to COVID-19.
 - 1.2. The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine because they are infected with, or have been exposed to, or are at high risk of complications from COVID-19.
 - 1.3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and is seeking a medical diagnosis.
 - 1.4. The employee is experiencing side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine.
2. The County Manager has the discretion to increase ESPL hours, as needed, in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

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3. Eligibility for EPSL

- 3.1 All full time employees will be granted up to 80-hours of EPSL, part time employees will receive prorated hours based on their annual scheduled hours to use during the COVID-19 Crisis.

Return to Work Following EPSL

Employees are required to have a return to work notice from Buncombe County's Employee & Family Health Center and follow guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and prevention.

Notification of Leave Request

Employees should request their need for emergency paid leave as soon as they have been placed on quarantine, by notifying their immediate supervisor AND Employee and Family Health.

Employee and Family Health will provide a stay at home notice to the employee through their Buncombe County email. The employee must forward this notice to Beth Ray at: FMLA@buncombecounty.org to be approved to use this leave benefit.

If an employee is incapacitated, the employee's representative should contact the employee's supervisor as soon as possible.

Policy Non-Compliance

Employees who meet the qualifications must apply for the expanded benefits by emailing FMLA@buncombecounty.org. Failure to submit the required documents will delay or deny the ability to participate in this benefit.

4.0 Audit

All policies for Buncombe County may be subject to audit or review as outlined in the [Internal Auditor's Statement](#). The Internal Auditor's Statement is incorporated into all County policies through this reference.

Definitions

- a. **Effective date:** This policy shall be in effect from January 1, 2021 and shall remain in effect during the COVID-19 crisis.

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