

FERGUS COUNTY

Information for Employees Regarding COVID-19 Leave

EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 1, 2020

Beginning April 1, 2020, Fergus County employees who are directly affected by COVID-19 may be eligible for two new types of leave. The leave is available via the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) enacted on March 18, 2020.

Employees who wish to use FFCRA leave must make a **written request** to Becki Wiseman stating which type of leave is desired and the circumstances making the employee eligible for the leave. As of today's date, FFCRA leave expires on December 31, 2020. Becki's e-mail is assistant@co.fergus.mt.us.

Who is eligible?

All employees are eligible for 80 hours of paid sick time for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Employees hired on or before March 2, 2020, may be eligible for up to an additional 10 weeks of paid family leave to care for a child under certain circumstances related to COVID-19.

Are there any exceptions?

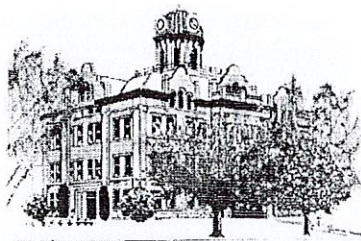
Yes, an employee working for a healthcare responder or an emergency responder can be excluded from these requirements by the employer.

What are the leave options?

1. **Paid Sick Leave (EPSLA)** – This provides up to 80 hours of paid sick leave if an employee is unable to work or telework due to COVID-19.

What are the qualifying reasons?

1. The employee is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
2. The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
4. The employee is caring for an individual who is subject to either number 1 or 2 above.



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5. The employee is caring for his or her son or daughter if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, or the childcare provider of such son or daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.
6. The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the secretary of health and human services in consultation with the secretary of the treasury and the secretary of labor.

What type of leave?

- Up to 80 hours of paid sick leave, prorated for part-time employees.
- Employees are not required to use other types of leave prior to using this leave.
- Paid sick leave used for reasons 1-3 above will be paid at the employee's regular rate of pay (subject to certain maximums).
- Paid sick leave used for reasons 4-6 above will be paid at 2/3's of the employee's regular rate of pay (subject to certain maximums).

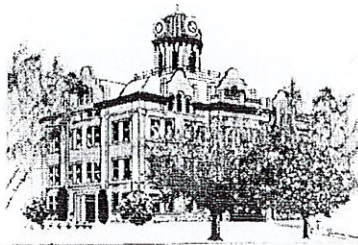
2. **Expanded FMLA (EFMLEA)** -- This allows employees to take an additional 12 weeks of protected leave because their minor's school or childcare is closed due to a COVID-19 emergency declared by federal, state or local authority. These 12 weeks are in addition to the 12 weeks allowed for a qualified family or medical reason.

What type of leave?

- The first 10 days of this leave are unpaid; however, employees may use any accrued leave during this time, including the 80 hours of ESPLA leave.
- After the initial 10 days, employees will be paid 2/3's of their regular rate of pay based on the number of hours the employees would have been otherwise scheduled to work (subject to certain maximums).

Are there any other options for leave?

Employees may use regular sick leave, vacation leave, or compensatory time if it is approved by their supervisor. Please understand that requests for these types of leave may be denied if other employees are absent due to COVID-19 circumstances.



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As of today, all Fergus County offices remain open, and employees who are not experiencing any of the above circumstances are expected to report for work as usual. The COVID-19 situation continues to change rapidly. Our goal is to continue providing County services to citizens as long as we can do so while keeping our employees safe. If you have questions or concerns, please communicate with your supervisor and/or Becki Wiseman. **We are all in this together, and we will get through it.**

Dated this _____ day of March, 2020.

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