



Diocese of Green Bay

MEMORANDUM

TO: Parish, School and Curia Employers and Employees

FROM: Office of the Vicar General

DATE: ***UPDATES AS OF March 18, 2020 in RED FONT and highlighted below***

RE: Guidelines in effect through **March 31, 2020** for Diocesan Employers in response to Public Health Emergency COVID-19

Good afternoon,

I begin this communication with a request that you take one moment to pause to pray for those affected by COVID-19. Then please see the following employment guidance in how we care for our employees during this time. Employment topics covered in this memorandum include:

COVID-19 Positive Test Reporting (p. 1)

School, Parish and other Diocesan Employer Closures (p. 1)

Non-Traditional Work Opportunities / Schedules and the Work Environment (p. 2)

Employee Quarantine (p. 2)

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Compensation for Remote Work While Quarantine (p. 4)

As a manner of introduction, the guiding principle for this document is to remain true to who we are with God first, family next and faith that everything else will come together, please see the following.

COVID-19 Positive Test Reporting

If you do become ill and are confirmed to have COVID-19, contact your Pastor/Pastoral Leader, Supervisor and Diocesan Human Resources immediately so that we can monitor the situation and work to mitigate exposure in the workplace. If you are a Pastor/Pastoral Leader, Supervisor or HR staff person, **it is your obligation to keep any employee's name confidential – this includes any reference to that individual's position, department, gender or any other information that could promote identification of the employee by other staff persons.** Comprehensive resource information is available on the diocesan website at [**www.gbdioc.org/COVID-19**](http://www.gbdioc.org/COVID-19).

School, Parish, Child Care Centers and other Diocesan Employer Closures or Suspension of Service

1. The following compensation guidance **during the employer closure or suspension of service** applies to school/parish salary, hourly, benefit-eligible (1,000 hours per year or 50% contract) and non-benefit eligible employees. It does not, however, apply to temporary or seasonal employees who are employed, typically, for 6-months or less (i.e. snow removal or lawn care temporary employees).

2. Contract employees (not independent contractors) who cannot report to work due to a school, parish or other diocesan employer closure are required to continue to be paid under the terms of their contract. Remote work or working during non-traditional hours is required if the employee is not ill. See “Non-Traditional Work Opportunities” below.
3. At-will employees who cannot report to work due to a school, parish or other diocesan employer closure should continue to be paid with an expectation that the employee works remote/non-traditionally at least daily/each day he/she is regularly scheduled for work.
4. If, because of school closings, employee parents of young children must take time away from work-at-home due to lack of day care alternatives, they should look at a non-traditional work schedule and, regardless of work hours, will be paid full salary or wages.
5. The Governor issued an Executive Order “Restricting the Size of Child Care Settings” on March 18, 2020 as follows:
https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WIGOV/2020/03/18/file_attachments/1404852/DHS%20Order_3.18.2020.pdf

In summary, the Executive Order states that Centers may not operate with more than 10 staff present at a time and may not operate with more than 50 children present at a time. The restriction in size goes into effect at 8 a.m. on Thurs., March 19, 2020 to give child care providers and families time to make plans for care moving forward. The closure will remain in effect for the duration of the public health emergency.

A press release can also be found: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIGOV/bulletins/281de9e>

Non-Traditional Work Opportunities / Schedules and the Work Environment

1. Remote work means that employees, where possible, will stay engaged in their work to the extent possible. At a minimum employees should be checking email and voicemail at least once per day.
2. Non-traditional work schedules means that employees may work early mornings, evenings and other non-standard office hours in order to mitigate direct exposures and transmission of the virus.
3. Employees with essential job functions may be needed on site at various points. When that happens the employee should work in a closed office if possible.
4. Employees should refrain from in-person contact whenever possible, be mindful of social distancing and good hygiene. Employees should contact each other via phone, email and other technology vs. in person.
5. If employees use common equipment/areas, they are to bring a disinfecting wipe with them and wipe any surface they touch. They should also use hand sanitizer before leaving their isolated work space and after returning to their isolated work space.
6. Employees who remain at work should designate a staff person to wipe down common work areas within their immediate office space during break times, lunch periods and at the end of the work day.

Employee Quarantine

1. For employees who are ordered quarantined by a medical doctor without a diagnosis, regardless of the reason, follow Diocesan policies on “Sick Time” as described in the Employee Handbook. In addition, employees may apply for unpaid Family Medical Leave or Leave of Absence. Employees may use accrued sick leave and may request an additional 5 days of sick leave if needed. Short-term disability may also apply when available.
2. If employees are quarantined because they are diagnosed with an illness, follow Diocesan policies on “Sick Time” as described in the Employee Handbook. In addition, employees may apply for unpaid Family Medical Leave or Leave of Absence in accordance with Diocesan policies. Employees may use accrued sick leave, request an additional 5 sick days and may be eligible for short-term disability insurance benefits where applicable.
3. Employees who stay home to care for a medically quarantined spouse, child or parent also fall under FMLA and Leave of Absence policies as described via the Employee Handbook. They may use accrued sick time and request an additional 5 sick days.
4. Employees who become ill while quarantined, regardless of reason for original quarantine, follow policies on Sick Time, FMLA and/or Leave of Absence. Employees may request 10 additional days of sick time. Employees may be eligible for short-term disability insurance benefits where applicable.
5. Diocesan employees who have traveled **outside the state of Wisconsin, whether domestically or internationally will not be allowed at the parish/school office or work site/premise for 14 days.** **The employee should also** self-quarantine and use their vacation time, work remote or go unpaid. An employee who has traveled to countries identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) as a Level 3 High Risk region is required by the CDC to self-quarantine for 14 days.
6. Employees who are concerned about exposure by traveling to work, interacting with others, or using high touch equipment or devices, may request vacation time off, work remote or go unpaid for up to 14 days.

Working While Quarantined – Remote Work Opportunities

1. Employees who travel outside of the diocese may be directed to self-quarantine for up to 14 days before he/she will be permitted to return to work.
2. Employees who are quarantined because they have been diagnosed as ill should not work.
3. Employees who are quarantined as a necessary preventative measure and are not diagnosed as ill may be required to work remotely.
4. Employees caring for quarantined family members, who are not themselves ill, may not be requested to work remotely.
5. Employees who self-quarantine may work remotely with supervisor approval.

Note: The decision to allow employees to work remotely cannot arbitrarily favor some individuals over others. The remote work decision has to be objective and job based. Employees holding similar jobs must be treated equally unless documented work performance issues justify making a distinction between similarly situated employees.

Sick Pay While An Employee is on FMLA/Leave of Absence During a Pandemic

1. Non-exempt, hourly employees who are on FMLA/Leave of Absence for his/her own sickness during a pandemic may not report to work or work remotely. They are to utilize sick hours. The employee may request and be approved for an additional 5 sick days at their regular daily scheduled hours and rate of pay. The request and approval will be made to the employee's supervisor.
2. Exempt employees who are on FMLA/Leave of Absence for his/her own sickness during a pandemic may not work. Exempt employees who are off work must utilize sick hours. The employee may request and be approved for an additional 5 sick days at their regular salary. The request and approval will be made to the employee's supervisor.

Compensation For Remote Work While Quarantined

1. Non-exempt, hourly employees who are quarantined and are not ill and are required to work remotely by his/her supervisor shall be paid for all hours worked. Hours will be reporting on their honor. All wage and hour rules remain in effect.
2. Exempt employees who are quarantined and are not ill and are required to work remotely must be paid in accordance with wage and hour rules for exempt employees.
3. Exempt employees who are quarantined and do not work at all (including answering emails or phone calls or texts) for an entire week need not be paid. However, if an exempt employee does any work during a week and is ready, able and willing to work while quarantined (not sick) that employee must be paid for the entire week regardless of how many hours the employee has worked.
4. Any wireless/cellular data packages used in order to conduct remote work will be reimbursable with supervisor approval.

Closing Comments

At this time all parish offices **continue** to remain open and operating during their current hours. If necessary, remote services like call forwarding should be utilized through March 31, 2020. If your office requires any adjustment from current hours, approval is required through the Vicar General of the Diocese.

And, in keeping with these guidelines all categories of employees, **except for Temporary employees**, will be required to work in offices or remotely, and continue to be paid in full until this is reviewed on March 31, 2020.