

TO: UMMS Employees

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SUBJECT: Emergency Paid Sick Leave - Extension

As you may be aware, on March 18, 2020, Congress enacted the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) in response to the COVID – 19 pandemic. The FFCRA established the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) which provided additional leave benefits to employees for COVID – 19 related absences. These benefits included up to 80 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave, which were set to expire on December 31, 2020.

Recently, Congress enacted the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA), which provides employers with the option to extend the deadline to use these benefits through March 31, 2021. As a result, UMMS has elected to exercise this option and extend the deadline to use Emergency Paid Sick Leave to March 31, 2021.

Employees may qualify for up to 80 hours of paid sick leave at their regular rate of pay (capped at \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate over a 2-week period) when they are unable to work or telework for the following reasons:

1. An employee subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
2. An employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19.
3. An employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis.

Employees may qualify for up to 80 hours of paid sick leave at 2/3 their regular rate of pay (up to \$200 per day and \$2,000 in the aggregate over a 2-week period) when they are unable to work or telework for the following reasons:

1. An employee is caring for an individual subject to a quarantine or isolation order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2).
2. An employee is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed (or childcare provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19.
3. An employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretaries of Labor and Treasury.

After March 31, 2021, employees on an EPSLA leave will be required to utilize their available accruals and/or request an additional leave of absence pursuant to UMMS policy. Pursuant to the FFCRA and CAA, employees cannot “carry over” unused EPLSA leave beyond March 31, 2021. Moreover, the extension to utilize EPSLA benefits does not create any additional leave beyond the 80 hours established under the FFCRA.

Additional information may be found at the Department of Labor’s EPSLA FAQ website: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>.

Employees with questions about EPSLA leave as it pertains to their personal situations should contact the Human Resources Leave Administrator at FMLA.UMMS@umassmed.edu or 508-856-5260, Option 5.