

## Frequently Asked Questions

### COVID-19 Leave Provisions for Employees

#### 1. How is COVID-19 paid special leave days calculated?

The maximum paid special leave is 20 days for full time employees and pro rata for part time.

The 20 days is based the ordinary hours specified in the relevant Award and can vary depending on the Award. The maximum paid special leave hours are calculated as follows for full time employees (note: pro rata for part time employees):

Full Time Award Hours	Maximum Paid Special Leave Hours
35 hours per week	140 hours
38 hours per week	152 hours
40 hours per week	160 hours

Employees should be rostered their hours that they would have worked and paid special leave is applied up to the maximum hours specified in the table above (pro rata part time employees).

Due to varying shift length for some employees, the paid special leave provisions may be used in less than 20 days. For example a full time 12 hour shift employee would be rostered as they would have worked, and paid special leave would be applied for each shift until the maximum hours as described in the table above is reached.

#### 2. Who is the SCHN delegated approver for COVID-19 special paid leave?

Tier 3 managers are the SCHN delegated approvers for paid special leave associated with COVID-19.

### **3. How is COVID-19 paid special leave provisions monitored?**

Managers will need to monitor the utilisation of paid special leave to ensure it is granted in line with the Ministry of Health advice and do not exceed 20 days/equivalent hours as per point 1 above for full time employees or pro-rata for part time employees. After the maximum paid special leave has been used, employees may access accrued leave entitlements in accordance with normal leave application processes.

### **4. Can an employee access paid special leave if they choose not to send their children to school?**

If an employee chooses to keep their children at home while schools are officially open, the paid special leave provisions do not apply. Where some schools have officially closed and the employees have provided evidence to their manager, paid special leave should be granted if working from home is not practicable.

### **5. Can special paid leave be granted during official school holidays?**

COVID-19 paid special leave is not to be granted during official school holidays.

### **6. What type of leave can an employee access if they are unable to work due to illness?**

If an employee is sick due to COVID-19 or any other reason, their current sick leave entitlements and conditions apply.

### **7. What type of leave can an employee access if they become sick during a period of paid special leave?**

An employee who is self-isolating on paid special leave and becomes sick for any reason, at that point the employee should transition onto sick leave.

### **8. What type of leave can an employee with mild symptoms access if they are waiting for COVID-19 test results and would otherwise attend work?**

The Ministry of Health has advised that sick leave provisions apply to staff with mild symptoms who would otherwise attend work outside the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes an employee who is feeling better but awaiting their COVID-19 test results.

**9. What type of leave can a positive COVID-19 employee access?**

When a COVID-19 positive employee is unable to attend work due to active infection (including a-symptomatic employees and working from is not possible), sick leave provisions apply.

**10. What type of leave can an employee access if they choose not to attend work as they have a vulnerable family member at home?**

The employee should discuss their concerns with their manager who will need to assess and work through the options with the employee. Options could include, but not limited to, relevant training eg PPE, a change of work practice/s to assist with addressing the concerns, flexible work arrangements eg working from home, redeployment into a suitable available role, request to access accrued leave entitlements in accordance with normal leave application processes.

**11. An employee is required to care for a family member who has had close contact with someone who has been tested positive for COVID-19. (note: the employee has not had close contact with this COVID-19 positive person)**

Managers will need to assess and consider if the employee can be provided with work that can be undertaken from home whilst caring for their family member.

Where it is not possible to accommodate working from home arrangements or balance working from home arrangements with caring responsibilities, employees may access accrued leave entitlements in accordance with normal leave application processes.

If the family member tests positive for COVID-19, the employee can access the paid special leave provisions to care for their family member.