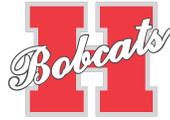


Hope Public Schools



COVID-19 Information for Employees

As we transition from the shutdown to usual operating procedures, the situation remains fluid. The following information is current as of today; however, it will be revised as additional guidance is received.

The District must maintain essential services and operations. *The majority of* positions are required to be on-site to support those services and operations. HPS expects employees to perform the *essential* job functions for which they were hired. Employees are expected to attend work as scheduled and to work their entire work period. Any time away from work must be discussed with and approved in advance by the employee's supervisor.

HPS has developed procedures for personnel and buildings during this emergency. The effectiveness of these procedures depends on the choices and behaviors of staff, students, and visitors in each building. Even with these precautions, HPS cannot guarantee an individual will not come in contact with COVID-19. Therefore, all employees, especially high-risk individuals, must be diligent in their actions and make decisions that are best for their situation.

Personal travel: As employees make decisions about travel this summer, they should avoid situations that may subject them to self-isolation or required quarantine when they return to home and work. Employees should be aware of the first date of their contracts and plan accordingly.

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and CDC have shared guidance for potential travelers. The CDC has established criteria to identify geographic risk and continues to issue travel health notices for areas with COVID-19 transmission. Crowded locations, like airports, may increase the chances of getting COVID-19. **If COVID-19 is spreading at your travel destination, you are more likely to get infected if you travel than if you stay home.** To view an updated map of states reporting cases of COVID-19 to the CDC, click [here](#).

The CDC recommends all persons defer any travel on cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide because of the increased risk of COVID-19 transmission onboard ships. Deferring travel is especially important for older adults and all people with serious chronic medical conditions (such as heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease), because of their increased risk for severe disease. Cruise ship passengers, including those who take river cruises, are at increased risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

Depending on your circumstances, you may choose to delay or cancel your plans. If you decide to travel, be sure to [take steps](#) to prevent getting or spreading COVID-19. Employees should be aware that individuals who travel to a CDC Level 3 destination and/or travel on a cruise ship must self-quarantine for

14 days after they return home. In all cases, be aware of your first workday and plan accordingly to avoid the possibility of self-quarantine.

For additional information, contact: Bobby Hart, Superintendent or Portia Jones,
Assistant Superintendent. Phone: 870-722-2700. E-mail:
bobby.hart@hpsdistrict.org

EMPLOYEES AT HIGH-RISK Employees who are at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions are urged to consult their health care providers about steps they can take to protect their health. If an employee at risk for complications from COVID-19 and their health care provider agree that increased social distancing in the workplace is prudent, the employee should contact their supervisor. They will work with the Superintendent or designee to review the request, explore alternatives, and attempt to appropriately address the employee's health concerns while maintaining operations.

PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE An employee who is unable to return to work and requests to apply for a leave, should seek additional information regarding available leave options.

COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave - Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) Employees may receive COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave for one of the following six qualifying reasons:

1. They are subject to federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation orders (including shelter-in-place orders) related to COVID-19, but only if "*but for*" their being subject to an order, they would be able to perform work that is otherwise allowed or permitted by their employers. Leave is not available when employers do not have work for employees seeking leave as a result of an order or other circumstances.
2. They have been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
3. They are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms identified by CDC) and seeking a medical diagnosis from healthcare providers, but only for the time, they are unable to work because they are taking affirmative steps to obtain a diagnosis.
4. They are caring for an individual (employee's immediate family member, a person who regularly resides in the employee's home, or a similar person with whom the employee has a relationship that creates an expectation that the employee would care for them in a quarantine situation) who is either subject to a government-issued quarantine or isolation order or is directed to self-quarantine by healthcare provider, but only if "*but for*" a need to care for an individual, they would be able to perform work for their employer, either at their normal workplace or by teleworking.
5. They are caring for a son or daughter whose school or place of care has been closed, or the son or daughter's child care provider is unavailable, for reasons related to COVID-19, but only if no other suitable person is available to care for the child.
6. Employees are also eligible if they have "a substantially similar condition" as specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The employee must have scheduled hours of work to use COVID-19 paid sick leave. An employee may

NOT take COVID-19 paid sick leave if he/she unilaterally decides to self-quarantine for an illness without medical advice, even if he/she has COVID-19 symptoms. *Employees may use COVID-19 paid sick leave before using other paid leave available to the employee for reason #5 above.* To request COVID-19 paid sick leave, complete the [COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Request Form](#)

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FMLA - Family and Medical Leave Act Under the FMLA eligible employees are entitled up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period. Under FMLA, employees must have been employed at least 12 months and have worked 1250 hours during the previous 12 months. To qualify for FMLA leave, employees must meet qualifying criteria with documentation provided from a healthcare provider. Employees meeting these criteria are eligible to use available HPS sick days. FMLA is available for reasons #3, #4 and #6 above.

FMLA+ - Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLA) Under FMLA+, employees are eligible for up to 12 workweeks of leave if they are unable to work or telework because they must care for a son or daughter due to the school being closed due to a public health emergency; the child care provider being unavailable due to a public health emergency; or, if no other suitable person is available to care for the child. The first two weeks are unpaid; but, employees may choose to use COVID-19 paid sick leave up to an additional 10 weeks. An individual must have been employed at least 30 days and there is no minimum number of hours to have worked.

SELF-QUARANTINE and SELF-ISOLATION It has been shown that wearing a mask and social distancing are two of the most effective ways to minimize the spread of COVID-19. We expect all HPS employees to take personal responsibility to minimize the spread of COVID-19 by wearing masks and practice social distancing. In some situations, employees may need to self-quarantine or self-isolate. **Employees who believe they should self-quarantine or self-isolate should contact their supervisor.**

Quarantine refers to separating people who are, or may have been, exposed to COVID-19, but are not showing signs of illness. Isolation refers to separating people who are sick from those who are not sick. A person who is in close contact (living in the same household, caring for a sick person with COVID-19, and/or being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for about 15 minutes) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must self-quarantine (remain home) for 14 days after the date of their last exposure to the positive case. *ADH requires a person exposed to COVID-19 to complete a 14-day quarantine period, even though they may have a negative test result during the quarantine period. During quarantine, the individual MAY NOT leave his/her house for any reason.*

A negative COVID-19 test during a person's 14-day quarantine does not provide an early or total

release from quarantine. All persons must complete a full 14-day self-quarantine when they have been in close contact with a known case. Employees in quarantine must remain in strict home quarantine for the entire quarantine period. [ADH Guidance Regarding Quarantine 6-25-20](#)

If an employee is in a position where they can work from an alternate workplace, they should contact their supervisor. The supervisor and the employee will discuss expectations during the alternate workplace period to ensure the employee will be able to perform his/her duties at an alternate workplace. If appropriate, the employee should complete the Request for Alternate Workplace form in TalentED.

If an employee's position is not suitable to work from an alternate workplace or obstacles prevent the employee from working in an alternate workplace, the employee would utilize appropriate leave. The employee must be unable to work at the District and unable to work remotely due to one of the six qualifying reasons before this leave can be accessed. An employee may qualify for leave if the employee is unable to work or telework according to HPS policies, COVID-19 paid sick leave, FMLA, and/or FMLA+ sick leave requirements. HPS has adapted medical leave procedures to address COVID-19 related issues from April 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020.

For additional information, contact: Bobby Hart, Superintendent or Portia Jones,
Assistant Superintendent. Phone: 870-722-2700. E-mail:
bobby.hart@hpsdistrict.org.

CONFIDENTIALITY An employee who tests positive and/or has an active case of COVID-19 must contact Bobby Hart, Superintendent. Employee medical information will remain confidential. The name of an employee with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis will not be shared.

To reduce the spread of the virus, employees who may have come in contact with an infected employee will be informed that they may have been exposed.