

Southwestern University
Emergency Pay Policy and Procedures for Staff
Frequently Asked Questions
For Current COVID-19 Emergency Situation

Q: Has the President/President's Staff determined to apply the new Emergency Pay Policy and Procedures for the COVID-19 Emergency Situation?

A: Yes. Based on the message sent by President Knobel on March 12, 2020, it has been determined to apply the newly approved Emergency Pay Policy and Procedures beginning March 12, 2020.

Q: I work in a regular, part-time position which is not benefits-eligible. Does the Emergency Pay Policy and Procedures apply to me?

A: Yes. Even if a staff member works fewer than 30 hours per week and is not, therefore, eligible for the University's group health and other insurance benefits or other benefits such as sick leave, vacation leave, holidays, etc., the Emergency Pay Policy and Procedures applies to them. Any continued pay under the Policy is prorated based on the employee's regularly scheduled work hours.

Q: I work on a temporary-on-call basis – does the Emergency Pay Policy and Procedures apply to me?

A: No. This Policy only applies to staff employees who are in positions that are categorized as "regular." It is possible, however, that during the emergency situation that Temporary On-Call employees will be called upon to work.

Q: What is "University-Directed Leave?"

A: Basically, University-Directed Leave is when the University tells an employee to leave the workplace during the emergency situation. In most circumstances, the University will continue regularly scheduled staff pay and benefits (as applicable) for up to four weeks of combine ERAL and UDL (160 hours, prorated for part-time). Employees should enter their time and use the UDL or ERAL leave codes as appropriate.

Q: If the University directs me to leave the workplace, but to perform what duties I am able to perform remotely, how does that affect the amount of paid time?

A: There are positions that have duties that can be performed remotely, and during most emergency situations, the University will ask employees in those positions to perform their duties to the extent possible from a remote location. Employees will receive their regular pay for those worked hours and if those hours total less than the employee's regular work schedule, the employee should enter the balance of hours as UDL for the period of time determined by the University.

Q: What is "Emergency-Related Approved Leave?"

A: If an employee informs the University that they need to be away from the workplace during the emergency situation due to a reason directly related to the emergency situation, and that request is approved, the employee should enter their time as ERAL.

Q: If I am approved for ERAL, but I am able to perform some of my work duties remotely, what should I do?

A: For those who are able to perform some or all of their University-related work duties remotely and have received their supervisor's approval to conduct work remotely (and, for medical-based leaves, a release from their health care provider indicating that they are able to work remotely), they should enter any work conducted as regular work hours and, if those hours do not total their regularly scheduled work hours, the remaining hours should be entered as ERAL.

Q: If I am on a medical-based ERAL, will I need a return to work release before I report to work?

A: You may be required to submit a healthcare provider's release to return to work which states that you no longer pose a risk to others before reporting to work or are otherwise cleared to return to the workplace. The notice should only be sent to the Human Resources department.

Q: How do I account for University-Directed Leave and Emergency-Related Approved Leave?

A: When you enter your time, you should use the code UDL for any University-Directed Leave and the code ERAL for any Emergency-Related Approved Leave.

Q: Is there a limit to the amount of UDL or ERAL that an employee can use?

A: In most circumstances, the University will continue regularly scheduled staff pay and benefits (as applicable) for up to four weeks of combined UDL and ERAL time (160 hours, prorated for part-time), normally from the start of the emergency situation or as otherwise applicable to the individual employee's situation.

Q: If I exhaust all 160-hours of ERAL or UDL time, what happens?

A: Once the 160-hours of continued pay (ERAL or UDL) is exhausted, you may use your accrued sick leave and vacation leave to continue your pay.

Q: What happens if the Emergency situation lasts well beyond four weeks? Will the University provide more continued pay (ERAL or UDL)?

A: The President/President's Staff will reassess and make that type of determination based on each Emergency situation.

Q: Under the current COVID-19 emergency situation and the CDC guidelines, I (or my spouse or someone in my family that lives with me) am considered someone at "high-risk." If I want to remain at home for the duration of the emergency situation, what do I do?

A: This is considered a possible Emergency-Related leave. You should contact the Human Resources department to confidentially discuss your circumstances to determine whether you should apply for Emergency-Related leave. If approved, you will be allotted 160 hours of ERAL time to use as needed during the emergency situation.

Q: I think that I (or my spouse or a family member that lives with me) may have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. What should I do?

A: You should immediately self-quarantine for the number of days that are being recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), contact your healthcare provider, and follow all of their recommended protocols. Please contact the Human Resources department to discuss the applicable leave policy and procedures.

Q: Do I have to tell my supervisor why I'm going to be absent from work?

A: Although it is important to inform your supervisor about your expected absence, you are NOT required to disclose your personal medical information. It is important for you to talk with the Human Resources department to confidentially review your situation.

Q: If the University decides to close the University for a period of time during an emergency situation, how will I know if I am considered an "essential" employee?

A: The President/President's Staff determine which positions are designated as "essential" and will communicate that information to their management teams so individual employees can be notified.

Q: If the University decides to close and I am in a position identified as "essential" and I am paid on an hourly basis (bi-weekly) will I be paid overtime?

A: "Essential" hourly-paid staff, will be paid the regular overtime rate of 1.5 times base hourly rate for any hours worked during the emergency closure.

Q: I am in an "essential" position, but I am paid on a monthly basis (exempt from overtime). How will this impact my pay?

A: "Essential" monthly-paid (exempt) staff members will be paid their regular monthly salary for any work performed during the emergency closure.

March 23, 2020