

Emergency Contingency Plan for Staffing and Sick Time

The Rowan University Accrual and Use of Sick Time Policy outlines the expectations for attendance and the process for use of sick time and return to work. The Emergency Contingency Plan will become effective when the President or designee declares a pandemic emergency on one or all of our campuses. Provisions of this policy may be implemented on a full or partial campus basis or a system wide basis.

In response to the public health warnings, Rowan is preparing for “significant disruption” from the coronavirus and will take reasonable precautions against the COVID-19 virus. In no event will this guide supersede federal or state law regarding terms and conditions of employment including the Fair Labor Standards Act, The Family Medical Leave Act and the Americans with Disability Act.

The purpose of this policy is to provide for the safe and efficient delivery of ongoing business as well as to ensure that mission essential functions are performed while protecting the needs of our students, faculty and staff.

Reason for the Policy:

During a pandemic, the University could experience increased absences due to illness, caring for ill family members, fear, public school or child care closure, quarantines or campus closure. Rowan has developed an emergency plan for response to a potential influenza pandemic crisis which includes the Emergency Staffing and Sick Time Policy. This policy will provide for special handling of staffing and attendance and leave issues.

There are many variables associated with an outbreak of infectious disease. This policy provides for a guideline of expectations and may be updated or rescinded in accordance with crisis response.

This policy attempts to balance the need for continuation of essential services and student safety with the need to ensure the health and wellbeing of employees and the Rowan community. As a result, while essential employees will be expected to report to work when directed to do so, Rowan also wishes to ensure that employees who are ill or have been directed to self-isolate understand the need to stay home and do so to avoid the spread of illnesses.

Definitions:

Quarantine: A determination issued by the applicable health department in which individuals who have had a risk of exposure must be isolated to prevent the spread of a disease.

Self-isolation: An employee elects to socially distance as a result of possible exposure.

Note that at a time of a public health emergency, Rowan may ask individuals who have travelled to areas of high risk, in accordance with CDC guidelines, not to return to work for a period of at least fourteen days to protect the university community.

Operation Levels:

1. Normal-Low severity. Operations continue as usual. Employees utilize sick time in accordance with the Accrual and Use of Sick Time policy. Schedules and work assignments may be altered and essential personnel may be trained. Symptomatic employees may be sent home utilizing sick time or other accrued time.
2. Flexible Operations. Moderate to high COVID-19 or infectious disease. Certain buildings or campuses may be closed, events may be cancelled or some operations suspended. Objective is to minimize the spread but continue business operations. The Emergency Staffing and Sick Leave Plan will be implemented. Employees will receive increased crisis communication. Social distancing and telework will be implemented. Other flexible work schedules such as staggered schedules, alternate work sites or work duties may be implemented. Employees are expected to report as usual, unless otherwise instructed. Failure to report will be subject to disciplinary action if not medically or legally excused in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and law. If regular employees are not scheduled to work either remotely or on campus, they will be compensated.
3. Emergency Operations. High number of disease cases and/or greater severity of illness. Operations may be closed and directives may be issued by the Rowan President or the Governor of New Jersey. Objective is to contain pandemic by requiring non-essential employees to remain at home, screening essential employees for symptoms and ceasing non-essential operations. Student safety still remains a top priority. Only mission-critical functions will continue. Essential employees are still required to report or telework unless excused based on illness or legal leave. Compensation will continue for regular employees and coordination with state and federal agencies will determine compensation for hourly or contingency employees. Employees may be required to work additional hours and with minimal notice. Previously approved non-medical leave may be rescinded. Employees may be assigned overtime, special duties and alternate work with minimal notice. Failure to comply with assigned work directives will result in disciplinary action, in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and law.

Staffing:

1. Departmental leaders should immediately identify mission critical functions that must continue during a staffing shortage or a campus closure.
2. Identify personnel who will be deemed as "essential personnel" during this emergency plan. Absentee rates are estimated to exceed 40% so faculty and staff must be identified and cross-trained personnel that have the skills and abilities to perform these functions identified.
3. The essential personnel may be employees now performing other tasks or working in other departments that will not be required to deliver mission critical operations in their regular position. Consider employees who may have versatility and can be trained either in advance or on the job.
4. Essential personnel should be notified immediately of their designation. HR should be provided the names of essential personnel. HR will coordinate any compensation or collective bargaining issues.

5. HR will provide Essential Employee placards for identified personnel should a state of emergency be issued.
6. If feasible, leaders should first ask for volunteers to work shifts other than their regular schedule or regular duties. If volunteers are not available then employees may be directed to do so.
7. Leaders should attempt to minimize the impact of these schedule or staffing changes where possible. A 24 hour notice should be provided if possible. Such notice may not be feasible in cases of emergency.
8. Flexible scheduling should be considered. A record should be maintained of flexible schedules that have been granted or denied and the rationale for the decision.
9. HR will contact employees on our temporary employment list for availability to provide a list of possible substitute employees.
10. Although Finance and HR will provide for the continuity of payroll and benefits, each department must provide a contact for payroll and benefits who can provide the necessary information for processing. Rowan must ensure uninterrupted pay and benefit continuation as income and healthcare will be critical. Cross training staff to complete salary vouchers, time entry or time approval will be necessary.
11. Each leader should identify the names of designated personnel and how they can be contacted in the event that the division/department leader becomes unavailable. Employees are expected to share valid, current emergency contact information.
12. Each department should maintain a communication tree with contact information for his/her department in the event the electronic system is unavailable or slow due to high volume. A contact list will be available for senior leadership and emergency operations personnel.
13. Departments should determine what critical information needs to be accessible. In the event of a quarantine, employees may not be permitted back in to the facility or equipment could become unavailable.
14. Leaders should review time off authorizations and determine if cancellation may be required. This should only be as an emergent need but may need to be considered in a crisis.
15. This does not rescind any work accommodations or FMLA or NJFLA leave approved.

Essential Personnel:

Definition: An employee whose duties are of such a nature as to require the employee to report for work, remain in the workplace or to telework during an emergency situation. The University may excuse emergency personnel or require their presence based on the emergent need of the circumstances and conditions including student safety, minimum staffing levels, and business continuity.

As healthcare providers, all Rowan Medicine employees are considered essential personnel. Clinical leaders will determine the necessary staffing levels required depending upon emergent need.

1. Essential personnel will be paid in accordance with collective bargaining agreements or applicable policies.
2. Essential personnel are expected to perform in accordance with supervisory directives. For essential personnel, all reasonable and diligent effort must be provided for continuity of scheduling.

3. Employees should be informed of the expectation that they report to work and that the consequence of not doing so will be disciplinary action in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreement or law.
4. The level and severity of discipline will be dependent upon the length of the absence, if the incident is repeated or a pattern is exhibited. Mitigating circumstances should be taken into consideration on a case by case basis.
5. Rowan understands if essential personnel are ill or need to provide for family medical care in accordance with the FMLA, that absence may be unavoidable, but documentation of such absences will be required, including physicians' notes unless such notes are unavailable due to the public health crisis, in which other supporting documentation may be required.
6. Essential employees who do not report to work and do not provide documentation of absence will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined above. The safety of our students and employees is paramount but this must be balanced with the university's need for continuity of critical operations and student services.
7. In the event of closure or quarantine, essential employees who do not report will be required to utilize accrued time to the extent consistent with applicable law and collective bargaining agreement. Non-essential personnel may be approved for administrative leave based on the discretion of the Rowan President or upon an emergency declaration by the New Jersey Governor.

Time and Attendance:

1. The CDC encourages the separation of employees who are exhibiting the signs of influenza or COVID-19. Employees who come to work with respiratory symptoms such as fever (100.4+), cough and shortness of breath or who become sick during the day should be separated and sent home immediately. Employees will not be permitted to return to work until they have been free from fever for 24 hours and in cases of suspected COVID-19, until cleared to return to work in accordance with public health mandates.
2. Employers MAY require employees exhibiting symptoms to leave the work place based upon the "direct threat" provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Leaders should secure HR or medical approval prior to sending an employee home. Supervisors should not make medical diagnosis but should rely solely on the CDC symptoms including fever, cough, respiratory distress or pneumonia.
3. Leaders should NOT discuss why an employee left. An employee's health is confidential even in an emergency. If a public threat exists, the public health department will assume responsibility for exposure protocols.
4. Employees are expected to notify their supervisor prior to any absence in accordance with existing call-out procedures.
5. Employees requesting FMLA should be directed to HR for processing.
6. Time and attendance departmental policies should be relaxed based on the level of operations. Any disciplinary actions relating to Time and Attendance will be suspended during this period pending review by HR and consideration of the circumstances as it relates to employees who are ill. An employee who is sent home due to suspected illness or who provides appropriate

documentation supporting an absence due to illness or a directive to self-isolate will not be subject to disciplinary action and the absence will not be considered in future disciplinary action.

7. Non-benefitted personnel will only be paid for time worked or any accrued time earned under the New Jersey Earned Sick Leave law.

Return to Work:

1. If an employee is quarantined or caring for a family member who is quarantined, the employee must provide documentation indicating that the quarantine has been lifted.
2. Employees who have been absent for quarantine, illness or care of a family member should contact their supervisor prior to returning to work.
3. Guidelines are 24 hours fever free or 14 days of quarantine.
4. Medical documentation may or may not be required depending upon public health directives and the availability of healthcare personnel.

This policy is subject to revision and modification based upon the variability and degree of the emergency situation. Employees will receive ongoing communication updates and should contact their supervisor or Human Resources with questions.