

Memorandum

TO: Campus Community

FROM: Judy Vanderburg, Associate Vice President Human Resources

DATE: March 12, 2020

RE: COVID-19 & Human Resources Update

Earlier you received information from President Fuller and Provost Winningham. This email from Human Resources (HR) is offered to answer some of the questions you may have related to employment issues.

USE OF SICK LEAVE

Updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) outlines symptoms to look for and may be reviewed at the university's coronavirus website linked below. If you have a fever of 100.4° or more, a cough, or sore throat, have family members who have these symptoms, or are otherwise ill, the university strongly encourages you to use accrued sick leave and remain out of the office until symptoms subside. Sick leave, depending on employee category, is governed by state statute, university policy or collective bargaining agreement. If you have questions about sick leave, please consult the following resources, depending on employee category.

Classified Employees covered by SEIU CBA: Article 36 of the SEIU CBA [here](#).

Sick Leave Plan Policy is [here](#).

If you have any questions about sick leave, hardship leave or the donated leave bank, please contact us in HR. Also, if you have questions regarding use of other accrued leave please contact HR. Any concerns or questions regarding leave use or exhaustion of accrued leave should be directed to HR.

USE OF FMLA/OFLA

If personal circumstances warrant—either because you are ill or because you are tending to a sick relative—may need to take protected leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA). Usually, when an employee has accrued sick leave, it would run concurrently with protected

FMLA/OFLA leave. With that, there are specific requirements to ensure an employee is on FMLA/OFLA. You may review resources and forms for protected FMLA/OFLA leave [here](#). (Scroll down to BENEFITS RESOURCES and click on “Family and Medical Leave Forms”). As always, if you have questions about FMLA/OFLA eligibility and requirements, please contact us in HR.

ABSENT EMPLOYEES

In the current environment, information and guidance can change on a daily basis. In turn, updated data and information on university operations can assist the university to manage circumstances locally with maximum effect. A key element of this local management is monitoring when employees are out of the office. Supervisors should take special care to monitor employee absences and work with HR and the President’s Cabinet if extended absences impact department or unit work and, at the same time, to determine whether affected employees are extended the resources available to them.

USE OF TELECOMMUTING

Although the campus will remain open, if employees and supervisors wish to mutually agree that the employee can fulfill their duties from home during this time the telecommuting [guidelines are available here](#). Please contact HR with questions and submit the signed [telecommuting agreement](#) HR. Telecommuting should not be used as a mechanism for childcare or to care for sick relatives. If a current employee needs to care for sick relatives, they should approach the sick leave and FMLA/OFLA resources above. The telecommuting option may be used in combination with other leave not in place of the appropriate leave.

CLOSURE/ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES

At the present time the guidance from President Fuller and the governor’s office is that the campus will remain open, although we will be offering classes remotely. If circumstances or guidance changes dramatically and counsels a university closure, the university will turn to existing approaches governing closures, most typical in the event of inclement weather. University policies and relevant collective bargaining agreement articles governing university closures may be reviewed [here](#). In the event of a university closure, some classified employees may be deemed “essential” under the SEIU collective bargaining agreement to maintain core university operations. Interested employees may review those provisions at Article 58 of the SEIU CBA [here](#). Faculty and unclassified employees that may be necessary to maintain core university operations in the event of a closure will be identified through collaborative work with the cabinet, deans, and division chairs, as appropriate.

HR, along with the President’s Cabinet and Emergency Planning Team, remains committed to monitoring and implementing updated information and guidance. Accurate information and fair, consistent application of policies and procedures will assist the university to manage our circumstances locally. We stand ready and available to answer your questions about resources available to you and the community necessary to manage the current COVID-19 situation.

HR is available to answer questions and assist any employee with concerns that they may have. Human Resources is located on the second and third floors of the Lieuallen Administration Building and may be contacted at hr@wou.edu or 503-838-8490. The campus also has established a website to serve as a clearinghouse for updated COVID-19 information at www.wou.edu/coronavirus.