

## Memorandum

**TO:** Campus Community

**FROM:** Judy Vanderburg, Associate Vice President Human Resources

**DATE:** March 9, 2020

**RE: COVID-19 & Human Resources**

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The Office of Human Resources (“HR”), with other departments and offices on campus and in the state, is monitoring information to manage the spread of the coronavirus (“COVID-19”). While at this juncture, there is no evidence or guidance which would counsel the University’s closure, HR wants to remind our community of resources and policies that might be relevant as information continues to emerge. As always, 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](mailto:hr@wou.edu) or 503-838-8490. The campus has also established a website to serve as a clearinghouse for updated COVID-19 information at [www.wou.edu/coronavirus](http://www.wou.edu/coronavirus).

For general information, you may also visit the HR website at [www.wou.edu/hr](http://www.wou.edu/hr).

Information regarding specific topics that may be of interest to employees follow:

### 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 above. If any employee is exhibiting these symptoms—or is otherwise ill—the University strongly encourages the employee 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 viewed [here](#).

Sick leave is also advised if an employee needs to take care of a sick relative at home.

If you have any questions about sick leave, hardship leave, or the donated leave bank, please contact us in the HR Office.

### FMLA/OFLA

If personal circumstances warrant, an employee—either because they are ill or because they 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 the HR Office.

### 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 or not affected employees are extended the resources available to them.

### Telecommuting

While, again, there is no current guidance advising a University closure, the Cabinet, Emergency Preparedness Team (“EPT”), and HR are prepared if these circumstances change. If employees, departments or units—looking forward—wish to duty station an employee at home, the University has a policy and approach to telecommuting. Employees, supervisors, departments or units that wish to deploy telecommuting should consult the [guidelines here](#) and work with HR to establish a valid [telecommuting agreement](#). Telecommuting should not be used as a mechanism for childcare or to care for sick relatives, including but not limited to parents or children. If a current employee needs to care for sick relatives, they should approach the sick leave and FMLA/OFLA resources articulated above.

### Closure/Essential Employees

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.

### General Information

Some preventative actions that we urge all employees to follow are:

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Stay home when you and/or family members are sick. If you have symptoms of acute respiratory illness it is recommended by the OHA and WOU that you to stay home and not come to work until you are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). If you believe you have COVID-19 please contact your medical provider or OHA by telephone or through their website and follow their instructions.

Here are some links available to you for updated information regarding the coronavirus – COVID-19.

- <https://wou.edu/hr/>
- <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/emerging-respiratory-infections.aspx>
- <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/COVID19-FAQ.aspx>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

HR, along with the President's Cabinet and EPT, 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.