

**CITY OF MASON CITY, Iowa**  
**Infectious Disease Action Plan**  
**COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Effective: April 1, 2020**

**NOTE: This Policy involves a rapidly evolving public health emergency. The City of Mason City (City) will continue to reassess this policy as the public health emergency and the law evolves. The City reserves the right to amend or revise this policy at anytime.**

**GOALS:** To protect employees and citizens. To establish a consistent approach to an infectious disease which is potentially impactful to the quality and timeliness of services. To provide a way to disseminate information to employees and answer questions or concerns.

This is a working document and will be further updated as information is released, and legislation is passed by the federal and state government. The City will strive to follow all guidelines put in place by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the County Department of Public Health. This policy is compliant with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

**COVID-19:** Covid-19, or coronavirus, is a respiratory illness for which no vaccine exists and people do not possess immunities from previous exposure/infection. This new (“novel”) coronavirus was discovered in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The incubation period for COVID-19 is estimated to be approximately 14 days. COVID-19 is spread through infected aerated respiratory droplets from a host coming into contact with a recipient’s mouth, nose, or eye membranes via talking, coughing or sneezing. Transmission may be human-to-human, object-to-human, fecal matter-to-human. There is possible, but low threat of animal-to-human and food-to-human exposure as well. Because of the possibility of person-to-person transmission, it is important that you stay a minimum of six (6) feet away from persons with whom you are interacting and refrain from handshakes and other forms of human touching. Common areas such as computers, mice, public countertops, chairs, tables, doors, knobs, light switches, restroom sinks and toilet handles, manual soap and sanitizer dispensers should be regularly wiped down with disinfectant. Employees using these items should wash their hands or use sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol following the contact.

**ACTION:** The City may modify work schedules of any employee as follows:

- 1) Work from home entirely;
- 2) Work partially from home and work partially at their worksite;
- 3) Work staggered shifts either on a full-time or part-time basis; or
- 4) Adjust or otherwise reduce their hours.

Essential service employees required to remain working full-time on site are as follows: emergency service personnel in the Police Department and Fire

Department, designated employees in the Operations & Maintenance and Water Supply Departments, and any other City staff designated by their Department Head. Some of these employees may be allowed to work from home (telework) with advance approval from their supervisors. In some instances, these employees may be required to work overtime or otherwise adjust their regular schedules to assist during this crisis. They will be compensated pursuant to collective bargaining agreements, City policy, and state and federal law. Any emergency responder and essential employees taking elective actions that result in their inability to report to work may result in disciplinary action.

For any regular full-time or part-time employee that is normally scheduled to work forty (40) hours per week, and who is sent home by their Department Head for reasons other than telework or a FFCRA qualifying leave, the employee shall be compensated for any hours not worked up to forty (40) hours at 100% of their regular rate of pay. This paid leave will not be considered FFCRA leave unless it otherwise falls under the criteria for that leave.

For any seasonal/temporary part-time employee that is normally scheduled to work less than forty (40) per week, and who is sent home by their Department Head for reasons other than telework or a FFCRA qualifying leave, they will not be compensated for the hours for which they do not work. This unpaid leave will not be considered FFCRA leave unless it otherwise falls under the criteria for that leave.

Any employee working from home will be required to execute a Telework Agreement prior to being permitted to work from home. EMPLOYEES ARE NOT PERMITTED TO WORK OVERTIME WHILE WORKING FROM HOME UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED IN WRITING BY THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR.

During this time, if you are reporting to work or working from home, you may be asked to perform tasks that are not normal for your job description or you may be asked to train someone else to handle responsibilities that normally rest solely on you. This is just temporary during this time of necessity. Please be adaptable and understanding.

The City will periodically re-evaluate this situation and workplace attendance and leave policies.

**EMERGENCY PAID  
SICK LEAVE:**

Pursuant to federal legislation passed March 18, 2020, the City will provide time off for employees who meet the following criteria:

1. A federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
2. The employee has been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.

3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
4. The employee is caring for an individual who is subject to (1) a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19; or (2) advice by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
5. The employee is caring for a son or daughter (under age eighteen (18)) of the employee if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has closed or the child care provider of such son or daughter is unavailable due to COVID-19 precautions.
6. The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Department of Labor.

Employees meeting one of these criteria shall report their desire to take this leave to their Department Head or Human Resources, in accordance with the Leave Processing Section detailed in this Plan. At this time employees shall not be required to provide an FMLA certification for this leave, but shall be required to provide proof of the need for such leave, which may include through a quarantine or isolation order, a note from their healthcare provider, or proof that their child's school/childcare has closed. Employees may be required to provide a healthcare provider certification at a later date.

Beginning April 1, 2020, employees shall be entitled to paid leave in the following amounts:

- For full-time employees, 80 hours.
- For part-time employees, a number of hours equal to the number of hours that such employee works on average, over a two-week period.
- There are caps on the amount of money an employee taking this leave may be compensated. The City will enforce these legally required caps.

This 80 hours of paid leave for full-time employees, or two-week equivalent of pay for part-time employees, is a separate source of paid leave required by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. During this two-weeks, employees' personally accrued leave banks will not be depleted, and employees will be paid in accordance with the legally required amounts and caps. For employees absent for reasons (1), (2) or (3) above, they shall receive 100% of their pay with a daily cap of \$511 per day or an aggregate of \$5,110 over the two-week period. For employees absent for reasons (4) or (6) above, they shall receive two-thirds (2/3) of their regular pay with a daily cap of \$200 per day or an aggregate of \$2,000 over the two-week period, and the City will supplement the remaining pay to bring them up to 100% of regular pay. For employees absent for reasons (5) above, they shall receive two-thirds (2/3) of their regular pay with a daily cap of \$200 per day or an aggregate of \$2,000 over the two-week period, and may elect to supplement the remaining one third (1/3) pay from available paid leave banks.

If employees exhaust this two weeks of pay and cannot return to work and their absence is related to reasons (1), (2), (3), (4), and (6), the employee will first be paid through the use of any eligible sick leave or family sick leave, and if needed the City will supplement their pay to bring them up to full pay. If employees exhaust this two weeks of pay and cannot return to work and their absence is related to reason (5) above and they have been employed for at least thirty (30) days, the employee is entitled to additional leave as described below in the EMERGENCY EXPANDED FMLA section of this Plan.

The City will allow employees who are requesting this leave for school or childcare closures/unavailability to use the leave on an intermittent basis. For example, for an employee requesting this leave for school or childcare closure/unavailability who is able to work part-time due to other individuals being able to care for the child(ren), that employee shall be able to use their hours intermittently for any leave experienced until the hours they are entitled to are exhausted. However, the employee shall work with the City to schedule the intermittent leave to minimize the impact on the City's business operations as much as practicable.

Employees seeking to use this leave for any other reason other than school or childcare closure or unavailability are not permitted to use this leave on an intermittent basis.

**EMERGENCY  
EXPANDED FMLA:**

On March 18, 2020, the federal government temporarily expanded the FMLA to include a new qualifying reason for FMLA leave related to the public health emergency. *A qualifying need related to a public health emergency means that the employee is unable to work (or telework) due to a need for leave to care for the son or daughter under 18 years of age of such employee if the school or place of care has been closed, or the child care provider of such son or daughter is unavailable, due to a public health emergency.*

In addition to the City's FMLA policy already in place, the following guidelines apply to this new qualifying reason:

- The only eligibility requirement for employees to be eligible for this leave is that the employee has been employed for thirty calendar days prior to taking the leave.
- The employee shall be paid for this leave as follows:
  - a) Employees will be paid two-thirds (2/3) of the employee's regular rate of pay (as determined by Section 7(e) of the FLSA).
  - b) For employees whose schedules vary from week to week, the employee will be paid two-thirds of their regular rate of pay for those hours that the employee would have worked if the leave was not necessary. If the hours the employee would have normally worked are not apparent, the hours the employee should be compensated for will be calculated as follows:
    - A number equal to the average number of hours that the employee was scheduled per day over the 6-month

period ending on the date on which the employee takes such leave, including hours for which the employee took leave of any type.

- If the employee did not work over the 6-month period, the reasonable expectation of the employee at the time of hiring of the average number of hours per day that the employee would normally be scheduled to work.
- Under no circumstances will an employee be compensated more than \$200/day or \$10,000 in the aggregate for this leave.

## **LEAVE PROCESSING**

### **ABSENCES ELIGIBLE FOR COVID-19 LEAVE**

#### **For employees quarantined or sick with COVID-19**

The City will grant up to 80 hours of paid COVID-19 leave\* to employees who have been required or advised to quarantine by a medical provider or a county, state, or federal agency, or who have been advised by a medical provider they have confirmed or presumptively confirmed COVID-19. Employees must complete a Request for COVID -19 Leave form and provide it to Human Resources before the special pay will be granted. If the employee is unable to return to work after the COVID-19 leave has been exhausted, they will use their eligible sick leave to cover their remaining absence. Following the expiration of their eligible sick leave they will receive full pay until released to return to work.

Employees must follow CDC or Iowa Department of Public Health guidelines for returning to work after the illness.

\*all COVID-19 leave will be prorated for part-time employees.

#### **For employees caring for an individual quarantined or sick with COVID-19**

The City will grant up to 80 hours of paid COVID-19 leave\* to those employees providing direct care for an individual required or advised to be quarantined by a medical provider, or a county, state, or federal agency, or an individual who has been advised by a medical provider they have confirmed or presumptively confirmed COVID-19. Employees must complete a Request for COVID -19 Leave form and provide it to Human Resources before the special pay will be granted. If the employee continues to care for the individual after the COVID-19 leave has been exhausted, they may use eligible City-provided family sick leave. Following the expiration of their eligible family sick leave they will receive full pay until such direct care is no longer necessary. Absences longer than two weeks must have documentation certifying additional leave is necessary. Based on minimum staffing needs required to maintain operations, the City may exempt employees serving in an emergency responder role from this provision of COVID-19 leave.

Employees must follow CDC or Iowa Department of Public Health guidelines for returning to work after caring for an individual impacted by COVID-19.

\*all COVID-19 leave will be prorated for part-time employees.

**For employees with children impacted by school district/daycare closures**

This section serves as a “qualifying need related to a public health emergency” under the FFCRA.

If schools or daycare facilities where the children of employees attend are closed due to COVID-19, the City will make every effort to adjust hours, create an alternative work schedule, or identify an alternative childcare arrangement in order to maintain services. If no alternative work solutions are appropriate, the City will grant COVID-19 leave\* to cover up to 80 hours of the closure. Employees must complete a Request for COVID -19 Leave form and provide it to Human Resources before the special pay will be granted. If the employee is unable to return to work after the COVID-19 leave has been exhausted, they will receive 2/3 of their normal pay for up to an additional 400 hours. Employees have the option to use available vacation leave, floating holiday, or compensatory time to cover the remaining 1/3 of their pay, or to receive only the reduced 2/3 pay.

In general, COVID-19 leave will only be granted during the hours a child would normally be in school or daycare and only to who are not able to adjust their hours or work from home, where alternative childcare is unavailable, AND whose children include at least one of the following:

- Are under the age of 18
- Attend daycare or a K-12 school, or
- Have special needs and would be unable to care for themselves while their parents are at work.

Based on minimum staffing needs required to maintain operations, the City may exempt employees serving in an emergency responder role from this provision of COVID-19 leave and/or FFCRA family leave.

\*all COVID-19 leave will be prorated for part-time employees.

**ABSENCES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR COVID-19 LEAVE**

**For employees choosing to self-isolate**

Employees who are not required or advised by a medical provider or any county, state, or federal agency to be quarantined and choose to self-isolate must first use available vacation leave, floating holiday, or compensatory time, and then if necessary leave without pay to cover their absence. As with any form of voluntary leave, these absences must be approved by the employee’s supervisor.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

In all cases of absence, employees must provide current contact information (including phone number and email address) to their supervisor.

**ILLNESS REPORTING:** Do Not Enter a City facility if:

- If you are experiencing any of the following flu-like/respiratory symptoms,
  - Fever – over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
  - Coughing
  - Sneezing
  - Shortness of Breath
  - Any other flu-like symptom. Uncommon symptoms of COVID-19 include diarrhea, nausea, and fatigue.
  - YOU MAY NOT RETURN TO WORK UNTIL THE LATER OF THE FOLLOWING: (1) seven (7) days from the onset symptoms; (2) fever free for seventy-two (72) hours without any fever reducing medication.
- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and/or tested positive for COVID-19.
- Been around someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19. This includes living in the same household or spending time within six (6) feet of someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19.

Employees experiencing any of the above should report it immediately. Employees should call their supervisor to report these conditions.

**TRAVEL:**

As of the date of this policy all employees who travel as defined by this policy will be subject to the following requirements:

For purposes of this policy, "Travel" is defined as follows:

- Non-essential: (1) traveling to any location outside of a fifty (50) mile radius of the City or (2) attending a gathering of more than ten (10) people regardless of the location.
- Essential: (1) necessary travel that does not meet the definition of non-essential travel. The City will authorize essential travel on a case by case basis.

All City-related Non-Essential Travel as defined by this policy is suspended without prior approval of the Department Head (i.e. conferences or non-essential meetings.)

Any employee who engages in Non-essential Travel pursuant to this policy shall report their plans to travel (or if already traveling as of the date of this policy, their return plans from travel) to the Department Head. These reports shall be made via phone or e-mail rather than in person to minimize contacts and limit person-to-person exposure.

For anyone engaged in Non-essential Travel as defined by this policy and planning to return to work, you will be required to self-isolate away from work for fourteen (14) days. You will only be allowed to return to work if symptom and fever free as defined by the CDC guidelines. You are required to use

vacation, personal leave and any eligible sick leave during this time to be compensated for your normal working hours. If you need leave relating to reasons (1) through (6) outlined above, the employee may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Expanded FMLA Leave.

**MEETINGS:** No group meetings shall be held in-person for the duration of this policy without prior approval from the Department Head. All meetings shall be held electronically or over the phone. Any approved in-person meetings shall only include internal staff unless the Department Head has approved the presence of others prior to the meeting.

Public Safety employees are permitted to meet with their co-workers for regular updates and other Department-related matters throughout this public health emergency, however they should practice good hygiene and social distancing to the extent possible.

**STAFF UPDATES:** The Department Head or designee shall update all staff on developments throughout this time period.

**HIGH RISK EMPLOYEES:** If you are someone who is at “higher risk” for becoming ill from the virus (pursuant to the CDC’s guidance, see: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>), please feel free to communicate that to the Department Head. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential in your medical file and will be used solely for the purposes of determining your potential need for a leave of absence or for modifications to your work schedule and/or work environment during the pandemic.

The City will assess situations with high-risk employees on a case-by-case basis. In the event an employee is high risk and unable to report to work, the employee will either be allowed to work from home if practicable or be excused from reporting to work and receive full pay as described under the non-essential employees who are not required to work from home in this policy. If a doctor recommends the employee self-quarantine due to underlying health conditions, the employee will receive 100% of their normal salary for up to eighty (80) hours and then may use any applicable leave thereafter.

**EMERGENCY RESPONDERS:** This leave policy does not pertain to “emergency responder” employees including police and firefighters. Emergency responders are expected to report to work regardless of their circumstances unless they exhibit Coronavirus symptoms. In that situation, they should report their symptoms immediately, in a safe manner to all involved, to their Department Head, and await further instructions.

**POLICY DURATION:** The leave authorized by this policy shall expire on December 31, 2020 and no leave shall be carried forward to 2021.