

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



To: All Hospital staff, and volunteers

From: Dr. Stewart Kennedy, EVP, Regional Programs, Clinical Supports & Medical Affairs

Date: March 15, 2020

RE: Guidelines for employees unable to work due to COVID-19

Please note that staff of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Research Institute and Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation should confirm the following information with their managers.

Your health and safety is our utmost priority. That is why Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre is following Public Health Ontario guidelines regarding COVID-19 travel restrictions and self-isolation. Employees may be unable to work for a number of reasons due to COVID-19.

This information is intended to guide you with appropriate actions to take regarding COVID-19-related absences. Please note that these guidelines are subject to frequent updates as the situation evolves. You will be notified of changes as they occur.

In addition to the information below, please refer to the accompanying COVID-19 resource documents regarding:

- How to Self-Monitor;
- How to Self-Isolate.

Self-Isolation Following Travel

All staff who have traveled anywhere outside of Canada and returned to Canada on or after March 13, 2020, must self-isolate for a period of 14 days upon return. If in the last 14 days you have visited affected areas (China, South Korea, Italy, Iran, Japan, France, Spain, Germany, Hong Kong or Singapore), you must self-isolate for 14 days.

Staff who choose to travel outside of Canada as of March 14, 2020 will not be compensated by the Hospital for the isolation period.

To help employees minimize wage loss during their period of self-isolation an employee may request a payout of overtime/stat or vacation banks, if available.

Modified/Remote Work

In limited circumstances an employee who is self-isolating or quarantined may be able to perform modified work from a remote location or a flexible work schedule. Managers can

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determine if there is suitable work and make a proposal for a remote work or flexible work agreement taking into consideration a communication plan, deliverables, hours of work, use of technology, privacy and safety. Any such agreements must be approved by the department Director and Human Resources prior to commencement.

For more information about guidelines for employees unable to work due to COVID-19, please contact the Human Resources Department at 684-6218.

Illness

Employees who are ill should not attend work. Entitlement to paid sick leave is based on regular entitlements. Employees with no entitlement to paid sick leave may be eligible for employment insurance (EI) benefits. On March 11, 2020, the Federal government announced its decision to waive the mandatory one-week waiting period for COVID-19-related EI sickness benefit claims.

Child Care/Caregiver

Employees are expected to have a contingency plan for caregiver responsibilities. If there are no reasonable alternatives an employee may request an unpaid leave of absence. See policy HR-cba-04 for details.

To help minimize wage loss during childcare/caregiver responsibility period, an employee may request a payout of overtime/stat or vacation banks, if available.

Resources:

Government of Canada COVID-19 Travel Advice: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html>

Government of Canada COVID-19 Travel Health Notices: <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice#risklevels>

All Hospital COVID-19 updates are available on the iNtranet at <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information/>.

For more information about COVID-19, please contact the Thunder Bay District Health Unit at 1-888-294-6630 or www.tbdhu.com/coronavirus. More information is also available at <https://files.ontario.ca/moh-coronavirus-info-sheet-english-2020-02-18.pdf>.