



# State of Arkansas

## Updated COVID-19 Leave Policy\*

### As of January 2022

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline provisions covering leave for State employees who have COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19 and are required to quarantine. The goal of the policy is to keep state employees safe and healthy while ensuring that all essential state services remain operational.

#### **SCOPE**

This policy addresses an evolving response to COVID-19 leave issues and does not create a past practice or expectation of continuation of this policy outside of a response to COVID-19. This policy may be updated at any time.

#### **POLICY**

This policy only applies to State employees who contract COVID-19, are exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. All other State employees are required to maintain their normal work routine.

##### Close Contact to a Person with COVID-19

State employees who have had close contact with an individual that has tested positive for COVID-19 shall follow Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines regarding quarantine and testing. If a State employee has had close contact with an individual that has tested positive for COVID-19 and the State employee has been advised to self-quarantine, then the State employee (if asymptomatic) should contact his or her Department to see if working remotely is authorized by the Department. The opportunity to work remotely and the degree with which it is implemented in the Department is determined by the Secretary of the Department. In making these decisions, the Department may rely on guidance from ADH, CDC, or the employee's health-care provider. If remote work is not possible, then the State employee shall use his or her accrued sick, annual, holiday, or birthday leave. A State employee may be approved by his or her Department for leave without pay after the State employee has exhausted all accrued leave. The State employee shall not report to work until the quarantined time has lapsed. The length of quarantine is determined by the State employee's healthcare provider and the ADH.

##### State Employees Exhibiting Symptoms or Who Have Tested Positive for COVID-19

State employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 shall follow ADH and CDC guidelines regarding quarantine and testing. If a State employee has tested positive for COVID-19 or is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 and the State employee has been advised to self-quarantine, then the State employee (if asymptomatic) should contact his or her Department to see if working remotely is authorized by the Department. The opportunity to work remotely and the degree with which it is implemented in the Department is determined by the Secretary of the Department. In making these decisions, the Department may rely on guidance from ADH, CDC, or the employee's health-care provider. If remote work is not possible, then the State employee shall use his or her accrued sick leave. If the employee exhausts his or her accrued sick leave and is required to still quarantine, the Employee shall use his or her accrued annual, holiday, or birthday leave. An employee who has exhausted all accrued leave and requires continuing treatment by a healthcare provider due to COVID-19 symptoms, may be eligible for Catastrophic Leave. A State employee should contact his or her Department's Human Resources Director for more information about eligibility for Catastrophic Leave. An

\*Due to the evolving nature of the response to COVID-19 and its variants, a Governor's directive, order, amendment, or mandate supersedes any conflicting provisions of this policy.

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Department Secretaries may designate positions that are eligible to receive Extraordinary Leave. This leave requires executive approval prior to granting.