

CORE CONNECTION

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FOR LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES



March 12, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

As the State of Louisiana continues to monitor the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, the Louisiana Department of Education would like to provide this initial guidance to all employees.

In an effort to keep workplaces healthy, employees are directed to stay home if they are sick. This should be common practice within the LDOE at all times, but is essential during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 reported symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. The CDC believes at this time that symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is advising everyone to take the following proactive steps to protect their health and the health of themselves and those around them:

- Stay home if you are sick
- Cover your cough
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water, or with a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Avoid close contact (within six feet) with those who are sick

The following websites will ensure you have access to all available information related to COVID-19:

- Louisiana Department of Education: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/covid-19>
- Louisiana Department of Health: www.ldh.la.gov/coronavirus
- Office of the Governor: <https://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/89>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

The LDOE continues to closely monitor the situation and will inform staff as information pertaining to state employees is made available.

COVID-19 Dedicated Email Address

A dedicated email address has been established to handle all COVID-19 related questions from the field. If an employee receives a COVID-19 related question from the field, you should direct them to this email address: LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov.

For example, if you receive such a question by email, please use the following response and copy LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov: "I am submitting your question to our dedicated email for COVID-19 questions."

COVID-19 Related Absences from Work

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 (presumptively or confirmed)

- The employee must remain home until he/she is cleared by a medical doctor to return to work.
- Normal sick leave rules apply, please review [EP 4.2 - Leave Types and Usage](#).

If an employee has been possibly exposed to COVID-19 and has no symptoms of illness

Under this scenario, an employee may have traveled internationally, may reside with a family member who has traveled internationally, may be aware of possible exposure to someone presumptively or positively confirmed to have COVID-19, or may have been contacted by health officials to advise that such contact has occurred.

- The employee is required to report this information to his/her supervisor and Human Resources immediately.
- The employee will be required to stay at home during the designated incubation period of the virus, which is currently 14 days.
- The supervisor may allow the employee to work from home during the designated incubation period of the virus. Employees who are permitted to work remotely are required to continually update the agency on their status.
- If an employee is unable to work remotely, Human Resources and your Assistant Superintendent will make every effort to maintain the employee in paid status.
- If the employee becomes ill, the employee will be placed in sick leave status and must remain home until he/she is cleared by a medical doctor to return to work.

Travel Restrictions

Governor Edwards has declared a Public Health Emergency in response to COVID-19. Section 7 of [Proclamation No. 25 JBE 2020](#) addresses travel restrictions that apply to all state employees.

If an employee or any household members are traveling internationally, including air travel and cruise ships, the employee must inform their supervisor and Human Resources of their travel plans immediately. Upon return from international travel, it is likely you will be required to remain at home for the 14 day incubation period.