

# COVID-19 Leave

## Guidelines to be used in conjunction with Leave Policy

**Guideline Owner:** Director, Human Resources Services Centre

**Keywords:** 1) Covid-19 2) Corona Virus 3) Leave

[Intent](#)

[Organisational Scope](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Guidelines Content](#)

[Accountabilities and Responsibilities](#)

[Related Documents](#)

[Contact Information](#)

[Approval History](#)

### 1. INTENT

To provide guidance on employment arrangements and flexibilities to managing work absences related to Covid-19.

### 2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

All Employees including casuals.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
COVID -19 leave	A temporary leave category, being additional paid leave, which may be approved in situations related to COVID-19 absences from work.

### 4. GUIDELINES CONTENT

#### 4.1 COVID-19 leave

4.1.1 ECU may grant up to 75 hours of COVID-19 leave to full-time employees who:

- a) Are required to self-isolate; or
- b) have contracted COVID-19; or
- c) need to care for another person who has COVID-19 or is required to self-isolate.

4.1.2 A pro rata equivalent of hours will be provided to part-time employees.

4.1.3 COVID-19 leave will be calculated according to the rostered or ordinary hours an employee would have worked on that day.

- 4.1.4 Casual employees will be provided with a period of 2 weeks COVID-19 leave equivalent to either an average of hours worked or rostered to work (see 4.1.5).
- 4.1.5 Pay during a period of COVID-19 leave for professional casual employees is to be calculated according to the preceding four-week average of shifts worked, and for academic casual employees their rostered future shifts.
- 4.1.6 COVID-19 leave is only available after an employee's existing paid personal, (ie carers or sick leave credits) have been exhausted.
- 4.1.7 COVID-19 leave:
  - 4.1.7.1 is paid leave, with pay calculated in the same way as for annual leave, excluding loading;
  - 4.1.7.2 does not affect existing annual leave or long service leave accruals;
  - 4.1.7.3 is not accruable;
  - 4.1.7.4 is available to all employees including casuals; and
  - 4.1.7.5 will be a leave category available for use up to 1 September 2020 (subject to review)
- 4.1.8 Leave granted for COVID-19 leave will be appropriately recorded and subject to normal leave approval processes.
- 4.1.9 Supervisors should contact their HR Business Partner to discuss implementation arrangements for specific work activities, work sites or work teams.

## **4.2 Employees required to self-isolate**

- 4.2.1 Where practical, where an employee is well, working from home arrangements may be implemented where an employee, including a casual employee, is required to self-isolate because of conditions imposed by the Commonwealth or State Government. In such circumstances the employee is required to complete a [Temporary Work Arrangements form](#).
- 4.2.2 Where working from home arrangements cannot be accommodated the employee, including a casual employee may take COVID-19 leave.

## **4.3 Employees absent from work because of reasonable concern about exposure**

- 4.3.1 Some employees may seek not to attend work because of reasonable concern about exposure to COVID-19, even though the employee is not required to self-isolate.
- 4.3.2 The University when considering the reasonableness of the absence, will be informed by current information about health risks.
- 4.3.3 Following an individual assessment of risk, the University may decide to implement alternative working arrangement or other available flexibilities, including but not limited to:
  - a) allowing the employee to access their available leave; or
  - b) elect to take leave without pay; or
  - c) accommodating working from home arrangements, consistent with ECU policies and procedures.

#### **4.4 Employees who require an extended period of leave**

- 4.4.1 In the event an employee exhausts their personal and COVID-19 leave they may access TOIL and existing annual or long service leave.

#### **4.5 Evidence**

- 4.5.1 The University may seek:
- a) reasonable evidence from employees, including a casual employee, to access an entitlement to, or to substantiate their concerns about exposure to COVID-19, or to support their application for COVID-19 leave, in granting other forms of leave or salary due to conditions imposed by COVID-19, or in exercising other flexibilities such as working from home arrangements; or
  - b) choose to waive any requirement for leave evidence if satisfied an absence is justified in response to the COVID-19 situation.

#### **4.6 Working from home**

- 4.6.1 Existing working from home arrangements can be accessed to manage absences from work due to COVID-19, subject to applicable University Policy and procedures.

#### **4.7 Temporary Change of Duties and Work Arrangements**

- 4.7.1 The University may temporarily deploy or relocate employees to priority work within areas or between metropolitan campuses. Temporary changes may include the nature of duties usually performed, or the implementation of temporary working arrangements to assist with maintaining service levels.

- 4.7.2 In such a situation the University will endeavour to:
- a) Not disadvantage an employee in relation to their existing pay and conditions; and
  - b) Maintain temporary changes, though arrangements including staffing levels may change as the situation progresses.

#### **4.8 Employees not attending work without notice**

- 4.8.1 Employees, including casual employees are expected to attend work or notify their supervisor of reasons for not attending.
- 4.8.2 Employees not attending work without notification will be deemed to be on leave without pay.

## **5 ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In relation to these guidelines, the following positions are responsible for the following:

The Director, Human Resources Services Centre has overall responsibility for the content of these guidelines and its operation in ECU.

## 6 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

6.1 The policy and guidelines are supported by the following:

[The 2019 Novel Coronavirus: FAQs for ECU staff and students](#)

6.2 Other documents which are relevant to the operation of the policy and guidelines are as follows:

- [ECU Enterprise Agreement](#)
- [ECU Leave Policy](#)

## 7 CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

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## 8 APPROVAL HISTORY

Guidelines Approved by:	Vice-Chancellor
Date Guidelines First Approved:	18 March 2020
Date last modified:	2 April 2020
Revision History:	<p>30 March 2020 – amendment to 4.1.1 to clarify entitlement exists when Government COVID-19 restrictions are applied to an individual and 4.1.6 to confirm personal leave is sick and carers leave and 4.4.1 to remove reference to short leave</p> <p>24 March 2020 – amendment to section 4.3.3 to by removing reference to COVID-19 leave</p>
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