Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the 2019 Novel Coronavirus

*Latest Update: March 17, 2020, 9:30 p.m.*

This document will be updated as additional questions come to our attention. Please revisit it regularly.

Questions about the Latest UCF Updates

I understand that all UCF classes are moving online starting March 16 and students are asked not to return to campus for the remainder of the spring semester. **Should I report to work during this period of Learning and Working Remotely?**

On Sunday, March 15, UCF announced that essential campus operations are continuing, and most employees, with the exception of employees whose jobs cannot be performed remotely, are asked to begin working remotely starting Wednesday. **At this time, we do not know how long the period of remote working will continue.**

You should talk to your supervisor about whether some or all of your job responsibilities can be performed remotely, and if so, submit a COVID-19 Emergency Remote Work Agreement. You may begin remote work as soon as your department has approved your remote work plan and submitted this form to HR.

**Does my supervisor have to approve me to work remotely?**

Yes. Even though UCF announced that most employees are asked to begin working remotely, some jobs must be performed on site. Not every position is suitable for working remotely due to specific job duties that cannot be performed at home or operating requirements of the unit.

You should talk to your supervisor about whether some or all of your job responsibilities can be performed remotely, and if so, submit a COVID-19 Emergency Remote Work Agreement. You may begin remote work as soon as your department has approved your remote work plan and submitted this form to HR.

If an employee’s job cannot be performed remotely, and the employee is sent home, or stays home from work due to illness, how will he/she be paid?

The following options are available, although not all options will be available in all situations depending upon the nature of the job responsibilities and the extent of the illness:

- Use accrued leave; for example, sick leave or annual leave.
- Make up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same workweek for non-exempt (hourly paid) employees with supervisory approval. UCF’s workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. on Friday and ends at 11:59 p.m. on the following Thursday.
• Exempt employees may make-up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same pay period with supervisory approval, or if absent for a full workday, may use accrued leave.
• Request a Leave Without Pay for up to ten days with supervisory approval. If an employee is out more than 10 days, the employee will need to request a Medical Leave of Absence. The Medical Request Leave Form is located at [https://hr.ucf.edu/files/MedicalLeaveRequestForm.pdf](https://hr.ucf.edu/files/MedicalLeaveRequestForm.pdf)
• Use a combination of the options above.

My supervisor has determined that my job cannot be performed remotely, but is sending me home due to my symptoms, even though I think I am well enough to work. Do I have to use my own accrued leave to cover the hours I am not working?

Yes, you must use your own accrued leave or request an absence without pay. Depending upon the nature of your illness and your job responsibilities, you may be able to make up the work in the same workweek.

My supervisor has determined that my job cannot be performed remotely. May I choose to go home if I don’t want to be exposed to a sick coworker?

Yes, with supervisory approval you may leave work; however, you must use your own accrued sick or annual leave or request a Leave Without Pay. With your supervisor’s approval, making up the work in the same workweek or working a different schedule may be options available to you.

I am considered at high risk for complications of COVID-19, but my job cannot be performed remotely. Are high-risk employees required to report to work?

No. High-risk employees are defined as persons greater than or equal to 65 years old; those with chronic serious illnesses such as hypertension, coronary artery disease and diabetes; pregnancy; and/or immunodeficiency from medications or medical conditions. High-risk employees should work with their supervisor on plans or take sick or annual leave or request a Leave Without Pay. With your supervisor’s approval, making up the work in the same workweek or working a different schedule may be options available to you.

I’m not sick or at high risk, but I don’t want to come to work for fear of becoming ill, and my job cannot be performed remotely. Is my supervisor required to approve my request for time off?

You may request to take annual leave; however, it is subject to approval by your supervisor at his or her discretion, especially if your department is short-staffed. It is important to educate yourself about the virus and its transmission. Visit the UCF web sites listed at the top of this FAQ document.

My job cannot be performed remotely, and I do not want to work at all. What options are available for me during the period of Learning and Working Remotely?

If your unit is open and you choose not to work, you may request to use accrued annual leave; however, it is subject to approval by your supervisor at his or her discretion, especially if your department is short-staffed. If your leave hours are exhausted, your absence will be without pay.

**Experiencing Illness and other Issues During the Period of Learning and Working Remotely**
What should I do if I develop Coronavirus symptoms?

If you become ill with Coronavirus-like symptoms, including fever, cough, or shortness of breath, contact your primary care physician, who will determine whether testing or treatment is needed.

If you are ill:

- Notify your supervisor that you are ill and will not be able to work.
- Stay home as directed by your physician or until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever, or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Avoid contact with other people and avoid social gatherings as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.
- When coughing or sneezing, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue and then throw the tissue away. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve or elbow, not your hands.

When can I return to work?

You should stay home until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever, or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Can I work remotely if I am ill?

Communication with your supervisor is more important than ever when you are working remotely. You should keep your supervisor informed about your health status and decide together whether you are well enough to work remotely or need to use accrued leave to cover any hours not worked.

My job cannot be performed remotely and I don’t have enough leave to cover my absence from work due to my illness. How can I afford to stay home until I am completely well before returning to work?

To minimize the potential exposure to others, it is very important that you do not return to work until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever, or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

The following options may be available to you, although not all options will be available in all situations depending upon the nature of the job responsibilities and the extent of the illness.

- Make up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same workweek for non-exempt (hourly paid) employees with supervisory approval. UCF’s workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. on Friday and ends at 11:59 p.m. on the following Thursday.
- Exempt employees may make-up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same pay period with supervisory approval.
- Request a Leave Without Pay for up to ten days with supervisory approval. If an employee is out more than 10 days, the employee will need to request a Medical Leave of Absence. The Medical Request Leave Form is located at https://hr.ucf.edu/files/MedicalLeaveRequestForm.pdf
- Use a combination of the options above.

I have an employee who is ill and has come into work because their job cannot be performed remotely. I’m concerned about the potential for exposure to other people. Can I send this employee home?
Yes. Of greatest concern is an employee with a fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit and a cough; this employee should definitely be sent home. Other symptoms (difficulty breathing) may also be of concern; the decision to send an employee home who is exhibiting these symptoms is to be made on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, advise employees of the basic preventative measures (practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing, covering your nose and mouth with your sleeve if you cough or sneeze, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands) and post prevention and treatment information from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) throughout your work areas.


I am an OPS employee and do not accrue paid leave time. What should I know about staying home from work?

UCF leadership is researching what options might be available to support OPS employees and will provide updates as they become available. For now, the following guidelines apply:

- OPS positions are paid for the hours they actually work. Work hours are reflected on timesheets and approved by supervisors.
- Some OPS positions perform work that can be done remotely, as approved by the supervisor and depending on the needs of the department. OPS positions that can work remotely should be permitted to do so if necessary. Note that due to equipment and/or staffing constraints, some departments may not be able to accommodate OPS positions in remote work and/or may not be able to provide those OPS positions with as many hours as they might typically work on campus.
- OPS positions for which remote work is not available may have hours extended upon returning to UCF to mitigate the impact of lost work time. This option is available only if the supervisor approves it AND if the work warrants it.

Can my supervisor cancel my annual leave request that has already been approved?

Yes, your supervisor has the authority to cancel any pre-approved leave request, especially in circumstances where there are serious staffing shortages as a result of illness. Your leave can also be cancelled if you have been designated as critical or essential personnel due to the nature of your job responsibilities. The terms “critical” and “essential” are the same as “emergency” referenced in the UCF policies.

Can my supervisor schedule me to work hours or shifts that I normally do not work?

Yes, you may be asked to work more hours or different hours than normal, especially if you have been designated as critical or essential personnel or the university is short staffed as a result of an outbreak. We will attempt to provide advance notice if possible.

If a large number of employees are unable to come to work because of an outbreak, are there a maximum number of overtime hours my supervisor can require me to work?

In the event of a serious outbreak, we may all be needed to work differently to ensure the university continues to function. You may be asked to work more hours or different hours than normal, especially if you have been designated as critical or essential personnel or the university is short staffed as a result of the outbreak. Supervisors will make efforts to permit employees to take rest periods and may use their discretion in scheduling additional breaks for employees working additional hours.
My child’s school or day care is closed due to COVID-19 and my child is not sick. I have no other childcare arrangements. Can I work remotely with my child at home?

Bringing a child to work is not recommended or advisable whether you are working remotely or on site. However, we recognize the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 emergency and understand that working remotely with your child may be possible, and in some cases, necessary. Decisions can be made on a case-by-case basis by your department head or designee. If you are not able to work remotely with your child, the following options are available, although not all options will be available in all situations depending upon the nature of your job responsibilities:

- Use accrued sick or annual leave, due to the threat of exposure to illness.
- Make up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same workweek for non-exempt (hourly paid) employees with supervisory approval. UCF’s workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. on Friday and ends at 11:59 p.m. on the following Thursday.
- Exempt employees may make-up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same pay period with supervisory approval, or if absent for a full workday, may use accrued leave.
- Request a Leave of Absence (annual leave usage for pay) or Leave of Absence (without pay) if you will be out more than 10 days.
- Use a combination of the options above.

My child’s school or day care is closed due to COVID-19 and my child is not sick. I have no other childcare arrangements, and my job cannot be performed remotely. Can I bring my child to work?

Bringing a child to work is not recommended or advisable, especially as UCF is depopulating to increase social distancing. Decisions can be made on a case-by-case basis by your department head or designee, although in most areas it will be prohibited. If you are not able to work remotely, the following options are available, although not all options will be available in all situations depending upon the nature of your job responsibilities:

- Use accrued sick or annual leave, due to the threat of exposure to illness.
- Make up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same workweek for non-exempt (hourly paid) employees with supervisory approval. UCF’s workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. on Friday and ends at 11:59 p.m. on the following Thursday.
- Exempt employees may make-up the work on an hour-for-hour basis during the same pay period with supervisory approval, or if absent for a full workday, may use accrued leave.
- Request a Leave of Absence (annual leave usage for pay) or Leave of Absence (without pay) if you will be out more than 10 days.
- Use a combination of the options above.

Does FMLA apply if I contract the Coronavirus? Does FMLA apply if my spouse or child contracts the virus and I must stay home to care for them?

In most cases yes, provided the employee and family member meets the eligibility requirements. A qualifying condition is one that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider. The continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a healthcare provider or one visit and a regime of continuing treatment. If you are out for more than 10 days, you must submit a Medical Leave Request Form and a UCF Certification of Healthcare Provider Form.

FMLA requires the university to provide up to 12 weeks or 480 hours of unpaid job protected leave to an eligible employee to care for the employee’s spouse, son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or for a
serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job. An employee is entitled to FMLA if they have worked for the University for at least one year and have worked 1250 hours in the previous 12 months.

FMLA information and resources are available at:

https://hr.ucf.edu/liaisons-and-managers/manager-resources/personnel-issues/medical-leave/

OPS employees are entitled to FMLA if they meet the eligibility requirements.

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**Student Employees**

*I am a supervisor of a student employee, should I allow them to work during this period of Learning and Working Remotely?*

- Each supervisor needs to make an individual assessment of each student he/she supervises, including Federal Work Study students.
- While all student employees are generally allowed to continue working, in order to meet the university’s objective of social distancing, and because students have been instructed not to return to campus, supervisors are encouraged to allow students to work remotely if possible.
- Some student employees may be able to perform their job duties remotely. Supervisors should work with these students to determine the appropriate schedule, ensure proper resources and precautions, and provide appropriate supervision. [COVID-19 Emergency Remote Work Agreements](https://hr.ucf.edu/liaisons-and-managers/manager-resources/personnel-issues/medical-leave/) must be filed for students who work remotely.

  * University leadership is currently investigating options for Federal Work Study Students. An update will be provided in the near future.*

*I am a student employee. Can I work during this period of Learning and Working Remotely?*

You may be allowed to work during the period of Learning and Working Remotely IF your supervises permits you to work AND you do not meet one of the [CDC criteria](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) for self-quarantine due to travel restrictions.

*Can supervisors require students to work during this period of Learning and Working Remotely?*

In general, most supervisors will not require students to work during this period of Learning and Working Remotely. However, some student employees have contracts that require them to work while the university remains open. These students may be required to work and should check with their supervisors.

*Where can I find the latest information about the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the situation at the University of Central Florida?*

- UCF Student Health Services [https://studenthealth.ucf.edu/](https://studenthealth.ucf.edu/)
- UCF Emergency Management [http://emergency.ucf.edu](http://emergency.ucf.edu)
Information on COVID-19

What are the symptoms of the Coronavirus?

For confirmed COVID-19 infections, reported illnesses have ranged from infected people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill and dying. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

CDC believes at this time that symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 after exposure. This is based on what has been seen previously as the incubation period of MERS viruses.

Are screenings available on campus for Faculty and Staff?

If you are experiencing symptoms you are advised to contact your primary care physician for evaluation or go to the nearest urgent care center or hospital emergency department. UCF Health has not been identified as a screening location.

I have a staff member who has asked to wear a facemask when meeting with students, staff, and customers. How do I respond?

As a general precaution, at this time, wearing a facemask is not medically necessary. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises that when close contact (within 6 feet) with others cannot be avoided and in areas where transmission of the virus has been confirmed, facemasks may reduce the risk of getting the illness. They should be used along with other preventative measures.

What preventative measures should I encourage employees to take?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

I meet with students, staff, and customers as part of my job responsibilities. What should I do if I encounter someone who is obviously sick?

As with the flu or contagious illnesses such as colds, maintaining a reasonable distance from the person is a starting point. Do not shake hands or make other physical contact. Use a sanitary wipe after the person has left to wipe those areas of your workstation that the person has touched. There may be situations in which the meeting can be re-scheduled to a time when the person is feeling better or the business can be conducted by phone or e-mail. Do not hesitate to offer this suggestion if it is appropriate.
How do I know if I should “self-quarantine”?

Following guidance from Governor Ron DeSantis and State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees, UCF requests all faculty, staff, and students who return from a country that has a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Level 3 Travel Health Notice self-quarantine and not return to campus for 14 days upon return. If you have returned from one of these countries in the past two weeks — or will soon be returning from one of these countries, please immediately contact Student Health Services at 407-823-2509.

If you have traveled to a destination covered by a CDC Level 2 Alert, you should monitor your health and limit interactions with others for 14 days after returning to the U.S. Should you fall ill, you should immediately self-isolate and contact your healthcare provider.

I know that official university travel has been suspended. Are there any restrictions on my personal travel?

Personal domestic and international travel is strongly discouraged during this unique time in an effort to best protect you and those around you. Please be advised that employees who travel to any destinations included in the CDC Level 3 Travel Health Notice will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days upon return.

Employee Services

What assistance is available to me to help me cope with the emotional impact of an outbreak?

UCF HR is pleased to announce that we are now offering our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all non-student employees. This program provides resources to help employees and their dependents cope with these types of life events. The EAP, administered by Health Advocate, provides confidential, short-term counseling at no cost to the employee.

- Health Advocate Toll-Free Number: 877-240-6863
- Health Advocate Website: HealthAdvocate.com/members

Will my state-sponsored healthcare plan cover medical expenses associated with treatment for the Coronavirus?

Yes, you will have the same coverage that is currently available for any emergency or non-emergency illness. Please be advised that state-sponsored PPO and HMO healthcare plans do not cover telemedicine at this time.

For additional coverage details visit:
https://hr.ucf.edu/current-employees/insurance/

To contact your insurance carrier, please visit the Benefits Vendor Contact Sheet at
https://www.mybenefits.myflorida.com/health/health_insurance_plans

Can I utilize my Short Term Disability benefits during the COVID-19 emergency period?

Employees covered by a UCF Short Term Disability (STD) plan may be eligible for benefits if they are diagnosed with the illness and are sick and unable to perform the major duties of their job due to the sickness. Contact information for the STD carriers are listed below:
Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Recruitment and Onboarding During the 2019 Novel Coronavirus

General Questions - Recruiting

Is UCF still hiring?

Yes. The university remains open and is actively recruiting for positions.

How has the recruitment process changed?

Although the recruitment process has not changed, it is important to take the time to review options prior to commencing with interviews and keep in mind social distancing recommendations. Consider the following:

- If this is a first-round interview, can it be conducted over the phone or via video by leveraging Skype or Zoom?
- Are all applicants being provided with the same experience? Even if a candidate can travel to campus, he/she should be interviewed in the same format as out of state candidates.
- Are you practicing social distancing? Avoid shaking hands or other close contact with candidates whenever possible. Acknowledge the unusual circumstances and do all you can to put them at ease.
- Should you reschedule? Offer flexibility if candidates need to reschedule. With school and childcare closures and individual family care needs, there is a high likelihood that there will be candidates who will be completely unable to participate in an interview, virtual or in-person. Candidates should not be eliminated from consideration due to circumstances which may be beyond their control. Stay informed about the status of university operations. It may be necessary to adjust or delay start dates.

What should my department do if we are about to invite to campus or have scheduled candidates who are finalists in a department search for in-person interviews as required by the University’s Search and Screening Guidelines?

Conduct the remaining finalist interviews remotely by creating a process as close as possible to the other candidates’ on-campus interview experience. Should you have any questions or special circumstances, please contact Talent Acquisition (talent@ucf.edu) or the Office of Institutional Equity (oie@ucf.edu) prior to proceeding. This is a fluid situation and both offices are continuing to monitor university advisories and will make necessary adjustments.

Will there be any delays to hiring approvals?

At this time, the university is open and hire requests will continue to be reviewed and approved using the current 7-10 day guidelines.

Please be mindful that there may be delays in background check results at the county level, which may in turn impact the speed of our results from the background screening vendor. In addition, it may be more challenging to get references completed and obtain unofficial/official transcripts as universities/companies are addressing staffing during COVID-19 in various ways. It is important that any conversations with preferred candidates include the caveat that all discussed hire dates are contingent on the completion of the pre-employment review process which includes references, background investigation, credit check (if applicable), and transcripts. A hire date will not be confirmed until the candidate receives a university hire letter/welcome letter from Human Resources.
Is there remote access to the university’s applicant tracking system, PageUp?

Yes, PageUp can be accessed via mobile, tablet, laptop or desktop utilizing single sign-on credentials.

**General Questions – Onboarding**

Do I have to meet in person with new hires for the completion of the onboarding paperwork?

Most of the onboarding paperwork does not need to be completed in person EXCEPT the I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification form) and the Loyalty Oath-Rights to Inventions form.

- For employees recruited through PageUp, most tasks can be completed via the Knights Welcome Center.
- For employees not recruited through PageUp, the hiring department can email the forms that need to be completed and the employee can scan the completed forms back to the department.

Why do I have to meet the new hire in person to complete the I-9 Form?

Per federal regulations, employer must physically examine original documents presented by the employee in order to complete the I-9 form.

What do I do if the new hire has traveled to a destination covered by the CDC Level 3 Travel Health Notice?

CDC guidance requires these individuals to self-quarantine for a period of at least 14 days. Accordingly, their hire date should be delayed by 14 days and you should schedule an appointment with the new hire to complete the I-9 form after the period of self-quarantine.

Why do I have to meet with the new hire to complete the Loyalty Oath-Rights to Inventions Form?

The Loyalty Oath-Rights to Inventions Form must be notarized. As a notary for your department, you must witness the individual’s signature of the form in your presence in order for you to notarize the document. As an alternative, you can instruct the new hire to have the Loyalty Oath-Rights to Inventions form notarized by a notary outside of UCF. However, the external notary is still required to have the individual to sign the form in front of them.

I have been approved to work remotely and I am the HR Liaison in my department who is responsible for submitting ePAFs and verifying the onboarding paperwork is complete and accurate. Can I do everything remotely?

If you have access to internet and email, you should be able to complete most of the tasks remotely with the exception of completing the I-9 form and notarizing the Loyalty Oath-Rights to Inventions form, which are required to be completed in person.

How do I complete Section 2 of the I-9 form if I’m working remotely?

You will need to schedule an appointment with the new hire and come into UCF for a brief time to complete the I-9 form. Or you will need to coordinate with another colleague who is not working remotely who has access to the electronic I-9 system to meet with the new hire for completion of the I-9 form. Confer with your department to ensure that you have appropriate back-up support in your department.

I’m working remotely, and I do not have access to a scanner. I’m an ePAF Originator, how do I attach the documents to the ePAF?
The required completed forms, such as the resignation letter, onboarding forms, etc. can be emailed to you which will allow you to then attach to the ePAF.

I’m working remotely, can I submit or approve ePAFs via a mobile device?

No, you will need to log into a desktop, laptop, or tablet in order to submit or approve ePAFs.