

**Subject:** Telework guidance

On Tuesday, Morgan Smith announced [expanded teleworking opportunities](#) and the opportunity for some higher-risk employees to be on paid leave during the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to provide additional guidance regarding teleworking and time charging that is based on additional direction and clarification.

As a reminder, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the President's Coronavirus Guidelines list the following categories as higher risk for COVID-19 infection:

- Adults at or over age 65;
- Individuals with serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease (as determined or confirmed by CNS Occupational Health Service professionals);
- Pregnancy;
- Individuals who have been quarantined under CDC or other applicable guidance; or
- Individuals who are immunocompromised regardless of cause (e.g., existing illness, medications, chemotherapy, etc.) and thus have a reduced capacity to fight infection and disease.

The first question you and your supervisor should resolve is whether you are in a higher risk category. As a reminder, employees should only state that they are in a higher risk category. No elaboration is needed to the supervisor. Each site's Occupational Health Services (OHS) department will confirm, if necessary, whether the employee qualifies as high risk. The answer will determine everyone's next steps.

**Non-high-risk employees' voluntary telework guidance**

If you are not in a high-risk category but you wish to telework and can be productive from home, then you should be as productive as possible. This means working with your supervisor to determine how much telework you can do, as some of your tasks may be required to be performed on site. The baseline expectation is that exempt employees will perform a minimum of 40 hours of work each week by telework or a combination of telework and on-site work. Nonexempt employees must follow this same guidance with the exception that you cannot exceed 40 hours of work without supervisor approval. If you choose not to be on site when work is available for you, you should take personal leave, PTO, or unpaid leave to account for it. This should be coordinated with your supervisor.

If a non-high-risk employee becomes ill with something other than COVID-19 to the point that they cannot be productive while teleworking, then they must then stop charging work time and begin charging their time to personal leave, PTO, or Short-Term Disability (STD), consistent with existing CNS policies.

Finally, if a non-high-risk employee receives a diagnosis of COVID-19 while teleworking, then the employee must immediately contact Benefit Plans to file a claim for STD Leave. The normal seven-day waiting period for STD benefits has been waived for employees whose physicians have diagnosed them with COVID-19. Employees must provide documentation of that diagnosis to Benefit Plans as soon as possible.

**High-risk employees' telework guidance**

Individuals in the high-risk categories, as confirmed by our sites' OHS departments, who choose to self-isolate at home because of concern for potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus at work must first coordinate with

their supervisor and seek to maximize telework to the extent possible. But high-risk employees who (1) can identify some productive telework but less than 40 hours a week or (2) cannot telework productively at all because of the nature of their jobs have another option designed to protect them and their coworkers from exposure for the next 30 days. Such high-risk employees may charge their remaining time to charge code 46P for paid approved closures.

If a high-risk employee choosing to self-isolate at home subsequently becomes sick with something other than COVID-19, that person must then stop charging time to the 46P Leave code and begin charging to the appropriate code related to their illness, be it personal time, PTO, or STD, again consistent with existing CNS policies for employee illnesses. And again, such an employee should notify their supervisor and OHS of the illness so appropriate follow-up steps can be taken when the illness subsides. If the non-COVID-19 illness qualifies the employee for STD Leave, then they should file a claim through Benefit Plans.

As with non-high-risk employees, if a high-risk employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 while teleworking, then the employee must immediately contact Benefit Plans to file a claim for STD Leave and provide the diagnosis documents as soon as possible.

At this time, an employee in a high-risk category who cannot work productively from home because of the nature of their job can self-isolate at home and receive 46P Leave for up to 30 days.

Also, CNS must reserve the right (a) to decline or limit self-isolation requests made by, or (b) to recall into work from self-isolation, employees in high-risk categories. CNS would do so only if those employees' skills or qualifications are in limited supply and critically needed for either completing essential mission work or maintaining continued site operations at the level required by our customer. In such events, CNS would take all reasonable and practical precautions to protect the high-risk employees' safety while on site.

In sum, supervisors must make every effort to identify work that can be performed remotely and maximize employee telework to the extent possible based on each individual's circumstances. Only an employee who is in a high-risk category and incapable of performing productive work remotely may receive 46P Leave as outlined above. Our goal is to be as productive as possible and accomplish as much as possible during this challenging time, and supervisors should look for every opportunity to have every worker be as productive as possible at home.

I believe this recently authorized approach to allow paid leave for our fellow workers in high-risk categories who cannot fully telework or otherwise make productive contributions from home is a significant step in further protecting all of our workers. I want you to know that we continue to look for the best ways to enable a healthy and safe work environment while still ensuring that all of our needed job functions are being accomplished.

Thank you for your continued support, thoughts, and service as we work through this difficult period.

Diane