

Getting Paid During the Coronavirus Crisis: How a New Law Affects School Employees



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President Trump signed an emergency paid leave law that will provide relief for employees across America—including those who work in schools—dealing with COVID-19. Here's a guide to how the law may affect you.

What kind of emergency paid leave is the federal government offering right now?

Two kinds:

- Sick leave, for up to 80 hours, at full or two-thirds pay depending on the situation.
- Family leave, for up to 10 additional weeks, at two-thirds pay.

Both will last through Dec. 31.

I work at a large school district with more than 500 employees. Do employees in my school district qualify for federal paid leave?


Yes. All local and state government employees—including teachers, administrators, staff, and other school employees—are eligible.

Does federal paid leave cancel out sick leave I already have through my employer, or my union's collective-bargaining agreement?

No. Your employer may supplement your existing benefits with these provisions, or may provide additional sick or paid leave.

I'm a salaried school employee. My school is closed for the foreseeable future. I'm not sick and I don't have children. Am I eligible for federal paid leave?

No. Only school employees who have COVID-19 symptoms, are self-quarantining or seeking a diagnosis, or are caring for family members or children whose schools or day cares are closed due to COVID-19 can take

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advantage of federal sick leave. Only school employees who have children at home, either sick or because their school or day care is shut down, can take advantage of federal paid family leave.

I'm a salaried school employee, and I'm sick. I don't have children. What am I eligible for?

80 hours of sick leave, paid at your normal salary rate, up to \$511 per day.

I'm a salaried school employee, I'm not sick and my child is sick. What am I eligible for?

Federal sick leave and family medical leave. You'll get up to 80 hours of sick leave, paid at two-thirds of your normal salary rate, up to \$200 per day. Then you'll get up to 10 weeks of family leave, paid at two-thirds of your normal salary rate.

I'm a salaried employee. I'm not sick, and my child is not sick but is home from school due to the COVID-19 outbreak. What am I eligible for?

Federal sick leave and family medical leave. You'll get up to 80 hours of sick leave, paid at two-thirds of your normal salary rate, up to \$200 per day. Then you'll get up to 10 weeks of family leave, paid at two-thirds of your normal salary rate, as long as your child's school or day care remains closed.

I'm a part-time, hourly school worker. Am I eligible for federal paid leave?

Yes. You are eligible in the same way as salaried full-time employees, except that one week of leave for you will consist of the number of hours you usually work in a single week.

I'm a part-time, hourly school worker who works different hours depending on the week. How do I calculate my eligibility for federal paid leave?

Hourly workers with irregular schedules are eligible for paid leave for the average number of hours they work in a two-week period over the last six months.

Who's paying for federal leave?

Your employer will initially foot the bill, but the federal government will reimburse your employer within three months.

Source: Education Week reporting and interview with Julia Martin, legislative director for Brustein & Manasevit, PLLC.