Teaching Service

Coronavirus (COVID-19) HR FAQs

The following questions and answers are provided to assist in managing employee issues in the teaching service related to COVID-19. The situation is evolving, and advice will be updated as required.

1. **What leave arrangements apply to an employee in relation to COVID-19?**

The [COVID-19 Leave Fact Sheet](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/COVID-Fact-Sheet-Leave.docx) provides information on the leave arrangements available to teaching service employees in relation to COVID-19.

# What arrangements apply to employees who choose not to attend for duty at the workplace?

# Employees who choose not to attend the workplace should apply for some form of leave available to them. They are not eligible for any special paid leave.

# Can an employee access the close contact special paid leave whilst absent on another form of leave?

No, the general expectation is that pre-existing leave would continue. The special paid leave is designed to provide employees, who would otherwise be on duty and are required to quarantine with access to paid leave.

# Does the close contact special paid leave apply during a school vacation period?

# No, normal arrangements apply during the school vacation period as school employees are not expected to attend. Where an employee would otherwise attend for duty during the school vacation that employee may a leave option available to them.

# What arrangements apply to employees who are living with someone whose circumstances make them more vulnerable to contracting COVID-19?

This information can be found in the [school operations guide](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/Pages/production.aspx#/app/content/3336/support_and_service_(schools)%252Fcoronavirus_and_learning_from_home%252Fschool_operations%252Fschool_operations_guide).

# What arrangements apply to employees who are at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19?

This information can be found in the [school operations guide](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/Pages/production.aspx#/app/content/3336/support_and_service_(schools)%252Fcoronavirus_and_learning_from_home%252Fschool_operations%252Fschool_operations_guide).

See **question 12** in relation to employees who are pregnant.

# What arrangements are in place for an employee to attend a COVID-19 vaccination appointment?

This information can be found in the [school operations guide](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/Pages/production.aspx#/app/content/3336/support_and_service_(schools)%252Fcoronavirus_and_learning_from_home%252Fschool_operations%252Fschool_operations_guide).

# Is an employee required to receive the COVID-19 vaccination?

Vaccination requirements for employees can be found here: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/covid-19-vaccinations-teaching-service-school-council-employees/policy-and-guidelines>

# Where can I get further information regarding COVID-19 vaccinations?

Employees should speak to a doctor or pharmacist if they have questions about a vaccine.

Further information is available at:

* + the [Victorian Government COVID-19 vaccine](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine?utm_source=email+marketing+Mailigen&utm_campaign=direct+send+-+emergency++-+schools&utm_medium=email) website
	+ the [Commonwealth COVID-19 vaccine](https://list.comms.educationupdates.vic.gov.au/track/click?u=770f4d1425f14b0d9936ca688e358872&id=344467db3f5d7e8e&e=3c53a9da1cd9381b) website.

# What happens if an employee’s caring responsibilities prevent them from performing duties?

Where an employee’s caring responsibilities prevent them from performing duties at school, consideration should be given to permitting that employee to continue working remotely.

Where working remotely is not an option, or if an employee forms the view that they are not in a position to perform their duties because they are required to care for an affected family or household member, they may access carer’s leave or some other form of leave as appropriate.

# What arrangements apply to a teaching service employee in a non-school location?

The same arrangements applying to teaching service employees in a school location apply to teaching service employees in a non-school location.

# What arrangements apply to employees who are pregnant?

Where an employee is pregnant and, in the opinion of a registered medical practitioner, illness or risks arising out of the pregnancy or hazards connected with the work assigned to the employee make it inadvisable for the employee to perform their duties onsite, the employee is to be provided with suitable duties that can be performed remotely for such period as is certified necessary by a registered medical practitioner.

If the provision of suitable duties that can be performed remotely is not practicable the employee may elect, or the employer may require the employee, to be absent on leave (without deduction from any other leave credits) for such period as is certified necessary by a registered medical practitioner. Where this occurs schools should advise the Policy and Employee Relations Branch at employee.relations@education.vic.gov.au who will arrange for the leave to be processed centrally.

# Where can I get further information regarding my rights and responsibilities at work during the impact of COVID-19?

Further information regarding your rights and responsibilities at work during the impact of COVID-19 is available at <https://coronavirus.fairwork.gov.au/>

# Where can I get further assistance if I am feeling increased stress or anxiety as a result of COVID-19?

If you or your family need support, personalised over-the-phone or video counselling is available 24/7 through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This service is available to all employees and their immediate families (aged 18 years and over). This now includes school council employees and casual relief teachers. Call 1300 361 008 to make a booking or book using the live chat function on the [Lifeworks’ Australia website](https://www.lifeworks.com/au/). For more information on video-counselling through EAP, please refer to [Video Counselling Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/VideoCounsellingEAPFAQs.docx)

Other resources:

* The Victorian Government has a range of resources to help you look after your mental health: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/mental-health-resources-coronavirus-covid-19>.
* Vic Health has a range resources focused on maintaining good health: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/coronavirus-information>.
* Orygen has helpful information on self-care during coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.orygen.org.au/About/Responding-to-the-COVID-19-outbreak/For-young-people-and-families/Self-care-during-the-COVID-19-outbreak>.