

PENN MEDICINE

FAQs for Faculty and Employed Physicians with Clinical Responsibilities During Pandemic

We are profoundly grateful for the extraordinary efforts made by all of our clinicians and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, in serving our patients in a time of acute need and maintaining the integrity of our clinical operations in the face of unprecedented challenges. As we prepare to resume a broader range of patient services within our facilities, we recognize that the pandemic is not yet over, and that many of our clinicians continue to confront constraints on returning to work arising out of personal and/or family circumstances. The Office of the Vice Dean for Faculty and PSOM Faculty Affairs and Professional Development accordingly have prepared this set of frequently asked questions, drawing on PSOM and University policy, to inform faculty and employed physicians with clinical responsibilities about how Penn Medicine intends to address the resumption of services over the next several months. Further information on any of the questions below may be sought from Faculty Affairs and Professional Development. These FAQs are not intended to supplant any policy and will be revised from time to time, as circumstances change and as emergency decrees are lifted. These FAQs are current as of May 18, and are expected to be revised before September 1, 2020.

1. *What happens if I am exposed to COVID-19 at work?*

If you are exposed to COVID-19 at work, you must follow the current Penn Medicine guidelines for self-isolation based on the level of exposure found at the URL at the end of this paragraph. During the self-isolation period, your regular salary (and benefits) will continue *without your needing to use vacation or sick days*. If you need to remain out longer than 14 days, CPUP Faculty Paid Time Off and Leave Policy¹ (including sick leave and/or short-term disability coverage as well as family/medical [FML] leave) will apply.

(<http://accesspoint.uphs.upenn.edu/sites/preparedness/coronavirus/Documents/COVIDExposureManagement.pdf#search=exposure>).

2. *What if I need to miss time from work due to illness (such as COVID-19), but was not exposed at work?*

CPUP leave of absence policy will apply, and you may use your sick time (up to 22 days per year) and, if necessary, paid time off, family/medical (FML) leave, and short-term disability coverage under CPUP policy.

3. *May I take a rescheduled or newly scheduled vacation this summer?*

You should request vacation from your department chair or chief in the normal course. The chair or chief retains the right to approve or deny vacation requests based on the need for staffing and coverage. If you have been denied a scheduled vacation between March 23 and June 30 for which you saved paid time off, you will be permitted to carry over up to one week of vacation to be used in the following fiscal year.

4. *What if I need to self-isolate or quarantine after taking a vacation?*

If you travel internationally, or go on a cruise, or visit any region in which you are exposed to SARS-CoV-2 which necessitates your self-isolation upon return, the extended time away must be covered by available paid time off.

5. *I have been advised by my treating physician not to come to work until there is a reduced risk of contracting COVID-19. May I continue to work from home, doing telemedicine or other remote work?*

PSOM has encouraged departments and divisions to permit clinicians to work remotely, performing telemedicine or other remote work, so long as such work is available and Philadelphia and the surrounding counties remain subject to lockdown. Department chairs and chiefs have the discretion to assign telemedicine or other remote work sessions to providers seeking such assignments, taking into account staffing and coverage needs. It is unknown, however, to what extent and

¹ CPUP Faculty Paid Time Off and Leave Policy: <https://www.med.upenn.edu/fapd/docurepo/assets/user-content/documents/ext00274%20CPUP%20Faculty%20Time%20Off%20and%20Leave.pdf>

on what terms telemedicine sessions will be permissible after emergency decrees have been lifted. It is important to remember that for most Penn Medicine employed physicians, academic clinicians, and standing faculty with clinical expectations, seeing and caring for patients in outpatient clinics and/or hospitals is an essential function of their job duties, and the special accommodations we are encouraging departments and divisions to make during the pandemic cannot be made indefinitely.

6. *Based on my treating physician's recommendations, I have asked to work remotely. My department chair has advised me that there is enough telemedicine to permit me to work remotely part time, but not full time. What will happen to my schedule and duties?*

If your department is able to assign you to perform telemedicine sessions, we encourage you to apply for intermittent family/medical (FML) leave² to cover the remainder of your regular work schedule. If you are approved for FML, you will be able to use sick leave and PTO to cover the portion of your schedule that is not covered by remote work. If you are ineligible for or have exhausted FML, after exhausting your sick leave and paid time off, you will be expected to perform the essential functions of your position consistent with your regular schedule. After such time is exhausted, your clinical compensation will be adjusted to account for your availability to work. Standing faculty members and academic clinicians who are unable to perform regular duties in a full-time capacity are encouraged to apply for reduction in duties³ or reduced effort⁴ under University and PSOM policy.

7. *Due to the lockdown's affecting my child's school, day care, or camp, I am unable to come to work due to childcare responsibilities. What will happen to my schedule and duties?*

Penn Medicine is actively curating resources to share with faculty to promote awareness of potential options. You are encouraged to pursue all available and appropriate alternatives for child care. If your department is able to provide you with remote work, you may be able to work remotely on a temporary basis. If remote work is unavailable or insufficient to fill your regular schedule, and you cannot come to work, you must use your paid time off and up to one week of sick leave to cover your salary. After such time is exhausted, your clinical compensation will be adjusted to account for your availability to work.

8. *My department has a number of clinicians who have asked to work remotely. How will that work be assigned?*

In certain departments or divisions, there may be more requests for telemedicine sessions than can be assigned. Department chairs and division chiefs have the discretion to distribute remote work sessions equitably among persons requesting them, giving preference to clinicians with medical conditions necessitating isolation during the pandemic.

9. *Are university sabbaticals for standing and research faculty possible at this time?*

Approval of an application for scholarly leave is contingent upon adequate fiscal and personnel resources being available to meet instructional assignments and other departmental responsibilities." *Handbook for Faculty and Academic Administrators*, II.E.2

² University FMLA policy: [https://www.hr.upenn.edu/policies-and-procedures/policy-manual/time-off/family-and-medical-leave-\(fmla\)](https://www.hr.upenn.edu/policies-and-procedures/policy-manual/time-off/family-and-medical-leave-(fmla)); see also University Sick Leave and Short-term Disability policy: <https://www.hr.upenn.edu/policies-and-procedures/policy-manual/time-off/sick-leave-and-std-for-faculty-and-employees-at-or-above-position-grade-29-or-grades-e-f-g-h>

³ Reduction in Duties: <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v53/n33/or.html>

⁴ Academic Clinician Reduced Effort Policy: <https://www.med.upenn.edu/fapd/docurepo/assets/user-content/documents/AC%20Reduced%20Effort%20Policy.pdf>