

COVID-19 EMERGENCY LEAVE POLICY

Note: First responders and 911 Dispatch will be handled according to their internal policy and should contact their supervisor for direction should they meet the criteria to self-quarantine or test positive for the virus.

Benton County has authorized the following temporary policy as we enter into an uncertain future with the outbreak of COVID-19.

- During this uncertain time, if you determine you are unable to work or are uncomfortable at work, you can choose to stay home. To ensure you feel supported making this choice, we will waive unexcused absences through the end of April, but please call in as usual to let us know. In order to be paid for this time, you may use your regular paid time off options (i.e. sick, vacation, comp time)
- If your office is part of a mandated quarantine or if you're required to quarantine by a government agency or by Benton County, you will receive up to two weeks of pay, and absences during the time you are out will not count against attendance. We've chosen two weeks because it matches the recommended time for quarantines related to this virus as communicated by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).
 - *Note: Benton County will follow guidance from the CDC related to COVID-19. Benton County will require employees to self-quarantine/quarantine based on this guidance.*
- Should an employee have a confirmed case of the virus, they'll receive up to two weeks of pay. If they're not able to return to work after that time, additional pay replacement will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Additional pay beyond two weeks must be reviewed/approved by Human Resources to ensure consistency across all Benton County departments.
- FMLA will be presumed for eligible employees after three days of illness, and the certification process will be waved.

This policy is being created in response to a state of emergency related to the COVID-19 virus. Benton County officials will monitor and/or remain in contact with appropriate Arkansas and Federal offices to determine how long the emergency leave policy will remain in place specific to COVID-19, and reserves the right to extend, shorten or eliminate the policy based on guidance from those offices.

This is made in furtherance of the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency and is unanimously supported by the elected executive officials of the County.