

Dubuque County Administrative Policy

Emergency Closing Due to Public Health Risk

Effective Date : March 14, 2020 (updated May 4, 2020)

General Policy

The safety of our employees, citizens and those residing in our facilities is our number one priority in making any emergency closing decisions regarding County operations and facilities due to a public health risk.

In rare occasions, public health conditions may pose severe risks to the health and safety of our community and will require the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to close or limit the access to County facilities and operations.

Provisions

1. Essential Services and Personnel

Essential services are those functions and personnel required to maintain or protect the health, safety, or physical well-being of County personnel (staff, residents), facilities, and operations given the conditions of the emergency at hand. Certain essential services are required to be maintained in any closing. **The employees involved in these essential services are excused from work only with the specific authorization of their Elected Official or Department Head, and may not qualify for all extended Paid Absence leave and compensation.** The Elected Official or Department Head should make clear beforehand who are essential employees in emergencies, what their obligations are, and establish procedures to let them know whether they will be needed to work. Failure to report to work during emergencies by employees required for essential services may be cause for disciplinary action.

The County does not provide standard definitions of essential services and personnel due to the diversity in department missions and employee occupations/skills, and the variable nature of the emergencies. Each department is in the best position to determine its own needs and is responsible for determining designated essential services and personnel.

2. Paid Leave During Emergency Closing or Reduced Schedule

When a department closes or alters routine operations and directs employees not to report to work, employees will not be charged leave unless they had already been scheduled and approved for vacation time off. If an employee is on a scheduled day off due to vacation or personal time during an official closing or reduced schedule, the employee's time will be charged the time that was already scheduled and approved.

Only employees regularly scheduled to work on a day of closing or reduced schedule are eligible for Paid Absence. Where there is special justification, an exception may be made with the approval of the Elected Official/Department Head.

Paid Absence for the hours of an emergency closing or reduced schedule is paid at regular time. Hours paid but not worked during an emergency closing or reduced schedule will not be counted toward the computation of overtime eligibility.

Employees on a reduced schedule leave are required to be available for duty during their regularly scheduled shift. Employees who are not available to perform County duties during this leave are ineligible for the paid absence benefit.

Full Time Employee- Employees regularly scheduled to work a fixed number of hours during a closing or reduced schedule will be paid for the regularly scheduled hours lost.

Part Time Employees - Employees who work a variable schedule who are at work and are affected by an early release will be paid for the regularly scheduled hours lost. In no case may a part time employee receive payment for emergency closing or reduced schedule if such hours when included exceed the number of normally scheduled hours for the week.

Hours authorized and actually worked to maintain essential services during a closing or reduced schedule are paid in the normal way as time worked.

While the County strives to be fair and reasonable in payment for closings/reduced schedules, there is no legal obligation to reimburse employees when work is not available because of emergency conditions. The County reserves the right to determine whether to close, whether employees will be paid, and, if so, on what basis.

3. **Paid Absence Due to Illness, Family Illness, Mandatory Quarantine, or School Closings**

Employees will be placed on Paid Absence and not charged any accrued leave if they meet one of the following conditions:

- Employee is diagnosed with an illness associated with the public health risk. Employee will be placed on Paid Absence-Sick until fully released from his/her personal physician.
- Employee's immediate family member is diagnosed with illness associated with the public health risk. Employee will be placed on Paid Absence-Sick until the family member is fully released from his/her personal physician.
- Employee or immediate family member is subject to a mandatory quarantine by any public health official. Employee will be placed on Paid Absence-Sick until the mandatory quarantine is lifted or is released by the public health official.
- Employee chooses self-quarantine because the employee or immediate family member is within the current CDC definition of being at Higher Risk (e.g. older adults and/or people who have serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, or a compromised immune system). Employee will be placed on Paid Absence-Sick until the end of the declared emergency.
- Employee is unable to secure child care for dependent children. Employee will be placed on Paid Absence until the end of the declared emergency.

4. **Telecommuting**

Telecommuting continues to play a significant role during emergency situations by enabling a greater number of employees to work and supporting continuity of operations. If a facility is

subject to an emergency closing or reduced schedule, departments may attempt to assign work that can be performed away from the normal work site. Elected Officials or Department Heads have the authority to establish telecommuting arrangements and are encouraged to give serious consideration to all reasonable requests. Telecommuting will only be allowed at the Elected Official or Department Head's discretion and dependent upon the availability of proper technological resources.

Employees are expected to track their hours worked and submit this time thru their normal payroll processing.

5. **Shelter-in-Place**

Shelter-in-place procedures are conducted when employees must remain in the office in order to protect themselves and others due to a public health risk. It is anticipated that a shelter-in-place announcement would be extremely rare and likely would be in effect for a relatively short period of time. Employees should remain in their designated safe area until they are notified by agency officials that they may return to their offices or leave their worksites. During a shelter-in-place emergency, employees may be restricted to the premises for periods beyond their normal tour of duty because of events beyond the County's control. Employees subject to a shelter-in-place directive due to a public health risk will be paid regular pay. This pay will not be counted toward the computation of overtime eligibility.

6. **Board of Supervisor Authority to Amend**

During an emergency, the Board of Supervisors reserves the right to extend additional pay, leave or other benefits to employees beyond those required by administrative policy or collective bargaining agreement. The Board of Supervisors also reserves the right to amend the provisions of this policy at any time with a resolution or motion.

COVID-19 Paycodes

<u>Pay code</u>	<u>Usage</u>
Regular	All work performed that is NON -COVID-19 related
covd-r	All work performed related to COVID-19 emergency
covid-s	Employee is diagnosed with COVID-19
	Employee provides care for an immediate family member with diagnosed COVID-19
	Employee or immediate family members is under mandatory quarantined or self-isolation
	Employee or immediate family member is within the current CDC definition of being at Higher Risk (e.g. older adults and/or people who have serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, or a compromised immune system) and requests to self-isolate
covd-rs (Reduced Schedule)	Employee is not required to report to work or work remotely due to a reduced schedule (Total number of paid hours cannot exceed the employee's regularly scheduled hours)
covd-cc (Child Care)	Employee is unable to secure child care for dependent children
covd-ot	All work performed related to COVID-19 emergency above 40 hours per week (hourly employees only)
Vacation	For all scheduled and approved personal and non-COVID time off of work