

COVID-19 Emergency Leave/Pay Policy

When a public health emergency impacts County employees' work schedules and status during emergency conditions and a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency has been determined by the County Judge or Commissioners Court, the County Judge or Commissioners Court may grant emergency administrative leave with pay immediately, prior to and/or after the occurrence. During a "state of emergency", the County Judge or Commissioners Court may suspend all provisions of the County of Sabine's Personnel Policy except for those sections concerning Safety, Wages, Discipline and other issues mandated by State and Federal law.

On March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump signed a Proclamation declaring a National Emergency concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). On the same day, Governor Greg Abbott declared a State of Disaster in Texas due to COVID-19. County Judge Daryl Melton issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency for Sabine County on March 17, 2020.

The purpose of this policy is to address issues that may or may not arise due to the COVID-19 pandemic that is facing our nation, state and county. It is the goal of Sabine County to undertake every reasonable precaution for the protection of our employees and citizens. We would ask each elected official and county employee to take precautions for the protection of themselves and the citizens of Sabine County. We ask each of you to exercise extreme diligence in protecting yourself from exposure to COVID-19 at all times.

While remaining open, some offices have locked their doors to the public and are continuing to serve the citizens of the county by telephone, fax, mail, email or other media sources. We want to encourage each elected official to keep their offices staffed daily so that this will continue to happen. In keeping the offices open and staffed, the county will transition to split scheduling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the time of split scheduling, we will use emergency paid administrative leave and employees will be receiving their regular salary. County employees, with the exception of the Sheriff's Department, will be asked to report to work a minimum of five days per two-week period. These five days should equal the number of hours you would work in a normal work week. Each Elected Official/Department Head should determine and implement a schedule that would be necessary to staff their office each day from 8 a.m. through 4 p.m. to make sure the business of the county is handled. While at home during normal working hours, employees are expected to continue to provide services to the county as needed by telephone, fax, email or as requested. While on split scheduling there will be no accrued vacation or sick time.

At any time if any employee does not feel safe coming to work at their scheduled times, they shall notify their supervisor in writing and if a reasonable accommodation cannot be reached, the employee shall be allowed to use comp time for their scheduled hours. If comp time is exhausted, the employee shall be allowed to take their paid vacation time.

Emergency paid administrative leave will begin on April 11, 2020 and continue through May 10, 2020, unless sooner terminated by subsequent policy amendment.

At the conclusion of the emergency paid administrative leave, employees are expected to return to work at a full-time schedule on their next scheduled day or shift following May 10, 2020 or Commissioner's Court declaration. Failure to return on May 10, 2020 or upon notice that leave has been cancelled, either

written or verbal, will be deemed as an unauthorized absence from work or assignment which may be sufficient cause for termination.

During the emergency period as determined by the County Judge or Commissioners Court, the Sheriff's Department full-time employees shall be paid \$5 more per hour for their regular scheduled shifts and part-time employees will receive an additional \$2.50 per hour for their hours worked. If an employee is out on paid time leave (vacation, sick, comp, etc.) that was earned prior to the pandemic, it will be paid at their regular rate of pay.

If anyone believes they have been exposed or is experiencing any symptoms similar to those of the COVID-19 virus, stay at home, remain isolated, contact your health care provider, and immediately notify your supervisor by telephone or email. Please take all precautions you can so that we may remain well and able to continue to serve our citizens.