

## COVID-19 Timekeeping Instructions as of Sept. 1, 2021

This page provides timekeeping and leave guidance related to COVID-19 for MD Anderson's workforce. These timekeeping instructions, however, **do not apply to educational appointees/trainees.**

The institution's response to COVID-19 has evolved as the virus spread. Timekeepers, managers and employees should use the date ranges below and apply the instructions accordingly to record time away from work.

**Note:** COV is a new temporary time code that has been created to track Extended Illness Bank (EIB) leave used as a result of COVID-19.

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**Below, you can find COVID-19 timekeeping guidance on the following topics:**

Travel precautions	Remote work holidays
Non-direct EIB access	Occupational contact
Direct EIB access	Other absences

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## Travel precautions

### Employees

The below timekeeping guidance for any personal travel with a return date after June 28, 2021.

- **For personal travel outside of Texas (domestic or international) by air or road:**

#### **Option 1: One COVID-19 Swab Testing performed three to six days after your return:**

- Register your travel before you leave.
- ***Tests must be performed at MD Anderson. Results from home tests will not be accepted.***
- You may request pre-scheduling via Employee Health or the employee app.
- If you are asymptomatic upon your return, you may work on campus while awaiting your test and result. If your travel involved activities with high risk of COVID-19 exposure, you are encouraged to quarantine while awaiting the test result.
- If you are symptomatic upon your return, do not return to campus and work remotely, if possible, while waiting for your test and your test result.

#### **Option 2: Self-quarantine for 10 days upon your return.**

- Make sure you still register your travel before you leave.

- **For personal travel outside of Texas (domestic or international) by cruise:**

Cruises are treated differently because transmission risk can't be effectively mitigated when large numbers of people share common spaces for several days.

- Register your travel before you leave.
- Complete a mandatory 10-day quarantine upon your return and receive clearance from Employee Health before returning to work.

- Use accrued leave during quarantine if you can't work remotely. Extended Illness Bank (EIB) hours cannot be utilized.

View the updated guidelines for [COVID-19 testing](#) as well as [quarantining and returning to work](#). Please note: Any employee who is required by Employee Health to quarantine must receive Employee Health clearance before returning to work, even if they believe they have met the guidelines.

### **Contingent workers**

Travel limitation for contractors and vendors is now outside the United States. Contractors and vendors are allowed to enter buildings with a temporary badge as long as they have not traveled outside of the U.S.

Contingent worker attestation questions:

- I do not have a cough more than usual, sore throat, or shortness of breath.
- I do not have a fever.
- If I have had a respiratory illness in the past 10 days, I confirm I have had a negative COVID-19 test.
- I do not have a pending nasal swab COVID-19 test that was done for symptoms.
- If I have had a positive nasal swab COVID-19 test in the past 10 days, I confirm that I have quarantined for 10 days from the date I tested positive.
- If I live with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 by nasal swab, I confirm that I have quarantined for 10 days after last exposure.

### **Non-badged contractors:**

Contractors who do not have an MD Anderson ID badge go through the patient/visitor screening. They should be prepared to provide their name, company name, phone number, MD Anderson destination and MD Anderson contact. Departments and managers with signed vendor contracts should prescreen non-badged contract workers before they arrive on campus using [the guidelines for screening non-badged contractors and visitors](#).

These travel precautions will be updated and revised as necessary based on developments for employees and contingent workers.

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### **Non-direct EIB access**

Employees will need to use PTO accruals for the following reasons in lieu of direct access to EIB:

- Employee that is not ordered to quarantine by a health care provider due to a family member that has tested COVID positive and has elected to voluntarily quarantine and are unable to perform their work duties remotely.
- Sent home (if not ill) or if there is not enough work as of April 24, 2020
- Vacation or other discretionary time
- Refuses or fails to report for the following: o Employee Reassignment Pool Assignment; o Report to work;

- o Working off-site and required to come in to fill a shift, or;
- o Reclassified from working off-site to working on-site.

**Example A: Areas cutting back hours/not enough work**

**April 24, 2020 and after:** PTO to be used to bring the employee to their standard hours. EIB using the 'COV' code would only be entered when the employee has used all other accrued leave. Sally is scheduled for 40 hours and works 32 hours. Assuming Sally has PTO, 8 hours of PTO would be coded to bring Sally to 40 standard hours for the week.

**Prior to April 24, 2020:** Direct access to EIB using the 'COV' code was to be used to bring the employee to their standard hours. If no EIB, then PTO and other accruals to be utilized. Sally is scheduled for 40 hours and works 32 hours. Assuming Sally has EIB, 8 hours of 'COV' would have been coded.

**Example B: Employee refuses or fails to report for the Employee Reassignment Pool (ERP) assignment.**

Peter is scheduled to work 8 hours on an ERP shift on May 6, 2020 and does not report for the shift. The timekeeper will code PTO hours for the missed shift. EIB using the 'COV' code would only be entered when the employee has used all other accrued leave.

**Example C: Employee reclassified from working off-site to working on-site and does not report to work on-site.**

Mary has been working off-site and her manager notified her on April 27 that beginning May 4 her position has been reassigned back to campus. Mary confirmed she understood the request and confirmed she would be back on campus on May 4. Mary did not report to work on campus on May 4. PTO hours would need to be used to cover the May 4 hours. EIB using the 'COV' code would only be entered when the employee has used all other accrued leave.

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## **Direct access to Extended Illness Bank (EIB)**

For access to EIB for a non-COVID related absence, employees should engage with their manager, work from home or utilize applicable leave accruals, including direct access to EIB using the COV code. Employees are required to use up to 16 hours of Paid Time Off (PTO) and then they can access EIB using the COV code. Reasons would include:

- Non-COVID-19 illness or self or immediate family member
- Self-quarantine that is not stipulated by a health care provider

**Direct access** to EIB is available by using the COV code for the following COVID-19 related reasons for employees unable to work remotely:

- Being sent home from duty due to exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
- School/child care closures
- Mandated self-quarantine directed by a health care provider
- Health care provider mandates quarantine due to a family member that tests positive for COVID19
- Child (under age 18) has been sent home from daycare or school due to being exposed to another individual that has tested positive for COVID-19
- Requirement to self-quarantine if sent home from employee screening location
- Pending release from Employee Health to return to work
- Immediate family member illness or elder care
- Unable to work due to area, section, department closure or reduced hours (Prior to April 24, 2020)
- Travel based on certain departure dates
- Experience side effects after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine for the duration of absence

Employees are **not** able to directly access EIB and must use PTO for the following reasons:

- Regular discretionary time off
- Refuses or fails to report for the Employee Reassignment Pool, report to work, or working offsite, and/or required to come in and fill a shift.
- If departed on or after March 19, 2020, on discretionary leave.

**Example A: Employee unable to work due to childcare issues and cannot work remotely**

Rachel works in an inpatient area and due to the nature of her position, she is not able to work remotely and is unable to work due to school and childcare closure. Since Rachel is unable to work remotely August 25-Sept 15, direct access to EIB using the 'COV' code may be entered for this absence period.

**Example B: Employee directed to self-quarantine by a health care provider**

Christopher has been directed by his health care provider to self-quarantine for a 10-day period beginning August 26, 2021. This quarantine is not at the directive of Employee Health and is not an occupational exposure. Direct access to EIB using the 'COV' code may be entered for this absence period.

**Example C: Employee absent due to discretionary leave**

**Discretionary Leave March 19, 2020 forward:** Sally requested to take PTO beginning March 19 and will be off for three days. Since the absence begin March 19, PTO will need to be used for the absence.

**Discretionary Leave Prior to March 19, 2020:** See timekeeping instructions related to the date of departure if direct access to EIB may be utilized.

**Direct EIB Access for School, Day Cares, Childcare Providers: Effective Aug. 16, 2020**

**Overview**

For a period in which there is a government (local, county, state, federal) "mandated" school closure or an independent school district, private school, or day care dictates on-line school for a period of time or a period of complete closure, direct access to EIB using the 'COV' code is permissible.

If a parent or caregiver makes a personal choice of electing a virtual school (online) option while an independent school district, private school, or day care is open for in-person instruction, then PTO or other applicable accruals would need to be utilized and direct access to EIB is not permitted unless all other accruals have been exhausted.

Employees should note that it is a manager's discretion to approve time away, even under the circumstances of school closures. You should discuss with your manager whether or not remote work is an option and understand that may not be feasible depending on the requirements of your position. Employees should also be aware that time away for school closures does not automatically guarantee job protection.

**Q: How is this different than school closure period between March and June 2020?**

**A:** School districts, via the direction of the Texas Education Agency, are to provide parents and caregivers choices of in-person or on-line education options for school year 2020-2021. This was not an option for the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Additionally, the 'caring for a son or daughter if the school or place of care has been closed or the childcare provider of such son or daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions direct access to EIB provision using the 'COV' code was implemented when parents did not have a choice of how their children would attend and complete school. School aged children are those in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade as defined by Texas Government Code 661.206. Additionally, MD Anderson also authorizes direct access to EIB if the day care and/or childcare provider is closed.

**Q: If a parent or caregiver has chosen the virtual school option once in-person instruction commences and have exhausted all other accrued leave, can EIB then be utilized?**

**A:** Yes, once an employee has exhausted all other accrued leave, then EIB can be utilized. Employees should only use EIB in this instance when all other applicable accrued leave is exhausted.

**Q: If a parent or caregiver exhausts all accrued leave, can hours from the Major Disaster Donation Pool be used to care for a child if their school, day care or caregiver is closed?**

**A:** Yes, if an employee has exhausted all accrued time during a period in which there is a government (local, county, state, federal) "mandated" school closure or an independent school district, private school, or day care dictates on-line school for a period of time or a period of complete closure, and they meet all criteria for donated hours, then donated hours may be granted and utilized.

**Q: Can a parent or caregiver receive Reduced Salary Paid Leave (RPL) hours if they exhausted EIB for the period of a school closure?**

**A:** No, the temporary enhancements for RPL related to COVID-19 do not include school closures and are for illness or quarantine-related COVID-19 absences.

**Q: Can a parent or caregiver receive and utilize Employee-to-Employee Donated EIB hours for school, day care or caregiver closures?**

**A:** Yes, if an employee has exhausted all accrued time during a period in which there is a government (local, county, state, federal) "mandated" school closure or an independent school district, private school, or day care dictates on-line school for a period of time or a period of complete closure, and they meet all criteria for donated hours, then donated hours may be granted and utilized.

**Q: What is the definition of school aged children for the purposes of direct access to EIB using the 'COV' code?**

**A:** School aged children are those who are in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade as defined by Texas Government Code 661.206. Additionally, MD Anderson also authorizes direct access to EIB if the day care and/or childcare provider is closed.

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## **Remote work holidays**

If a person is working remotely and works on an institutional holiday, they can bank the holiday if they receive approval in advance to work the holiday.

**Example A:** Maria receives approval from Beth to work on Memorial Day and if she is a remote employee, then she can bank the number of hours worked up to a maximum of 8 hours.

**Example B:** Chris works remotely and works on Memorial Day and then notifies Patricia afterwards that he worked 6 hours. Since Patricia did not approve in advance for Chris to work the holiday, technically, Patricia does not have to approve the banking of the 6 hours of holiday.

**Example C:** Colleen receives a call on the Independence Day holiday from a clinical client she supports regarding a key system is not operational. Colleen assessed and remedies the situation. In all, she worked 5 hours. Since Colleen did not approve in advance for Colleen to work the holiday, Patricia has management discretion to approve banking the holiday. If Colleen is non-exempt, she must be paid for time worked.

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## **MD Anderson occupational contact**

If an employee suspects that they have occupationally contracted the virus, the employee should contact Employee Health. Employee Health will determine if the employee will need to be quarantined.

- If they are quarantined, the employee will be paid QID for the 10-day quarantine period.
  - Employee Health will coordinate with the HR Strategic Partners and the HR Leave Center to code QID.
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## **Other absences**

### **Employee Reassignment Pool (ERP)**

- If an employee who is working from home is asked to come in for work the Employee Reassignment Pool (ERP) or for another function and refuses to do so.
  - The employee must first use all accrued Paid Time Off (PTO), then all other accruals, including EIB. Once all accruals have been exhausted, then they will have to take leave without pay.
- If an employee/educational appointee refuses their Employee Reassignment Pool assignment.
  - The employee must first use all accrued Paid Time Off (PTO), then all other accruals, including EIB. Once all accruals have been exhausted, then they will have to take leave without pay.