

UNIFIED PERSONNEL SYSTEM

Annex Building
400 S. Fort Harrison Ave., 4th Floor
Clearwater, Florida 33756
Phone: (727) 464-3367
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www.pinellascounty.org/hr



Kimberly R. Crum
Director

TO: All Employees

FROM: Kimberly R. Crum, Director of Human Resources *KRC*

DATE: September 17, 2021

SUBJECT: **COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive and Additional Administrative Leave**

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our workforce, families, and our ability to best serve the community. Pinellas County Government is committed to strengthening a culture that respects and takes care of each other and our community. Because we believe the COVID-19 vaccine is key to keeping our employees safe and contributing to the wellness of our local community, the Board of County Commissioners, Constitutional Officers and Appointing Authorities have agreed to provide an incentive of \$750 to each fully vaccinated employee within the Unified Personnel System.

We continue to be an organization that promotes wellness and, while not part of our annual wellness program associated with our health plan, it is our hope that these additional incentives will encourage employees to get vaccinated if they haven't done so.

Vaccine Incentive Payment

The County will offer **\$750 to be paid on November 24 to employees who provide proof of their fully vaccinated status to Human Resources no later than November 8**. The one-time payment will be made to all fully vaccinated employees on the November 24 paycheck.

- Employees who are not yet vaccinated are encouraged to complete their vaccination(s) at their earliest convenience, but no later than November 8, to be eligible for the one-time payment. See <https://covid19.pinellascounty.org/vaccines> for vaccine locations.
- Your proof of vaccination is exempt from public record as it contains medical information and will be maintained confidentially in Human Resources.

Additional Administrative Leave with Pay to Eligible Vaccinated Employees

Last year through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, the County granted 80 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave to employees who were eligible under the Act. Any unused time was rolled over to become annual leave hours in January 2021 with a prorated amount for employees who started after April 1, 2020.

New employees hired during the pandemic have just begun to accrue leave time. As the pandemic persists and cases within our community are high, the Appointing Authorities have agreed to provide up to 80 hours administrative leave with pay on an as needed basis to those fully vaccinated employees who started after April 1, 2020 and are unable to work from home. These hours may be granted beginning September 20, 2021 through December 18, 2021. The County reserves the right to reevaluate this program based on community COVID-19 results at that time.

You may receive these hours on an as needed basis when you meet **each of** the following criteria:

- You are fully vaccinated by November 8.
- You test positive for COVID-19 **OR** based on CDC guidelines you must quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19.
- Your position is not eligible to work from home **OR** your position is eligible to work from home, but you are too sick to perform your duties.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who will be able to view my proof of vaccination?

Your proof of vaccination must be provided to Human Resources, Benefits Division. You may submit a copy of your card electronically by **emailing a copy (scan or photo) of your vaccination card no later than November 8 to employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org**. Alternatively, you may fax a copy of your card to (727) 464-5291, or you may visit us in person on the first floor of the Annex, 400 S. Fort Harrison in Clearwater. Your information will be confidentially maintained in Human Resources. The information will not be shared with your supervisor or the public.

Who is eligible?

All exempt and classified employees under the Unified Personnel System who are still employed on November 24.

Will this be exempt from public records?

Yes. Your proof of vaccination is exempt from public record as it contains medical information.

What happens if I do not provide proof of vaccination?

You will not receive the incentive.

Is this payment taxable?

This payment is considered taxable income, therefore appropriate taxes will be deducted.

What happens if I get vaccinated after November 8?

If you complete your vaccination series after November 8, you will not receive the incentive. If you are unable to be vaccinated due to having received monoclonal antibody treatments within the last 90 days, you may provide verification of such treatments by November 8. Once you are

fully vaccinated, you may provide proof to Human Resources as noted above and your incentive will be paid on the next available pay date.

Will these hours be granted right away?

No, eligible employees will be granted administrative leave with pay on an as needed basis.

If I received 80 hours in 2020, will I receive additional hours?

You will not receive additional hours if you received 80 hours in 2020.

If I do not show proof of vaccination by November 8, will I receive these hours?

No.

Examples

What if I started on August 1, 2020 and didn't use any of my Emergency Paid Sick Leave hours, how many hours can I receive now?

Because you started August 1, 2020 and did not utilize any COVID Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) by the end of the year, at the beginning of 2021, you received 44.5 hours (pro-rated to one ninth of 80 hours for every full month of employment) deposited into your annual leave bank. If you are fully vaccinated and in need of more hours in 2021 because you test positive for COVID-19 **OR** based on CDC guidelines you must quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19 and are unable to work from home, then you are eligible to receive up to 35.5 hours as needed. Remember, this additional administrative leave with pay is on an as needed basis, not automatic.

If I started in February of this year, how many hours will I receive?

Because you started in 2021 and did not receive the rollover hours, you may receive **up to 80 hours**, should you become eligible – you are fully vaccinated, you test positive for COVID-19 **OR** based on CDC guidelines you must quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19 and you are unable to work from home.

Is Short Term Disability (STD) an option?

Yes, if you are ill, you should apply for both FMLA and STD. If your application for STD is approved, you will be paid in accordance with the [Short-Term Disability Plan](#). If you are not ill, you are not eligible for STD. Employees hired after April 1, 2020 may qualify for administrative leave as outlined above for any unpaid time.

What if I have questions?

Please contact Employee Benefits at (727) 464-3367, option 1.

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COVID-19 Incentive and Leave

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our workforce, families, and our ability to best serve the community. Because we believe the COVID-19 vaccine is key to keeping our employees safe and contributing to the wellness of our local community, the Board of County Commissioners, Constitutional Officers and Appointing Authorities have agreed to offer the following benefits to encourage vaccination and provide leave time for certain COVID-19 absences to eligible employees hired after April 1, 2020.

See the [COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive and Additional Administrative Leave memo](#) or view below for details.

Vaccine Incentive Payment

- The County will offer **\$750 to be paid on November 24 to employees who provide proof of their fully vaccinated status no later than November 8** (see options below). The one-time payment will be made to all fully vaccinated employees on the November 24 paycheck.
- Your proof of fully vaccinated status is a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination card which shows that you have received two doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or one dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine by November 8. See submission options below.

Proof of Vaccination

Submit a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination card to Benefits **no later than November 8** using one of the following options:

- Email a scan or photo of your vaccination card to **employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org**
- Fax a copy of your card to (727) 464-5291
- Drop off a copy of your card on the first floor of the Annex, 400 S. Fort Harrison Avenue in Clearwater between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm
- Employees who are not yet vaccinated are encouraged to complete their vaccination(s) at their earliest convenience, but no later than November 8, to be eligible for the one-time payment. See [vaccine locations](#).
- Your proof of vaccination is exempt from public record as it contains medical information and will be maintained confidentially in Human Resources.
- For more info, see [FAQs](#).

Additional Administrative Leave with Pay to Eligible Vaccinated Employees

[About Us](#)
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 400 S. Ft. Harrison Ave.
 Clearwater, FL 33756
 PH: (727) 464-3367
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[Contact Us - gmap](#)

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How are we doing?
(Please take a brief survey.)

- Last year through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, the County granted 80 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave to employees who were eligible under the Act. Any unused time was rolled over to become annual leave hours in January 2021 with a prorated amount for employees who started after April 1, 2020.
- New employees hired during the pandemic have just begun to accrue leave time. As the pandemic persists and cases within our community are high, the Appointing Authorities have agreed to provide up to 80 hours administrative leave with pay on an as needed basis to those fully vaccinated employees who started after April 1, 2020 and are unable to work from home.
- **These hours may be granted beginning September 20, 2021 through December 18, 2021.**
- The County reserves the right to reevaluate this program based on community COVID-19 results at that time.
- You may receive these hours on an as needed basis when you meet **each of** the following criteria:
 - You are fully vaccinated by November 8 (NOTE: You can receive the hours prior to November 8 if you are already fully vaccinated).
 - You test positive for COVID-19 **OR** you must quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19.
 - Your position is not eligible to work from home **OR** your position is eligible to work from home, but you are too sick to perform your duties.
 - You started after April 1, 2020.
 - The leave time is between September 20 and December 18, 2021.
 - Your leave request is approved.
- For more info, see [FAQs](#).

Vaccine Incentive Payment FAQs

What is considered proof of vaccination?

Your proof of vaccination is a COVID-19 vaccination card which indicates that you received two doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or one dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine by November 8. You may submit a copy, scan or photo of your card.

Who will be able to view my proof of vaccination?

Your information will be confidentially maintained in Human Resources. The information will not be shared with your supervisor or the public.

Who is eligible?

All exempt and classified employees under the Unified Personnel System who are still employed on November 24.

Can I get the vaccine if I recently had COVID-19?

Yes. The CDC recommends that you get the vaccine as soon as you have recovered from COVID. Ask your healthcare provider.

Will this be exempt from public records?

Yes. Your proof of vaccination is exempt from public record as it contains medical information.

What happens if I do not provide proof of vaccination?

You will not receive the incentive.

Is this payment taxable?

This payment is considered taxable income, therefore appropriate taxes will be deducted.

What happens if I get vaccinated after November 8?

If you complete your vaccination series after November 8, you will not receive the incentive.

I can't get the vaccine for 90 days because I was treated for COVID with monoclonal antibodies so I will miss the November 8 deadline. What can I do?

If you are unable to be vaccinated due to having received monoclonal antibody treatments within the last 90 days, you may provide verification of such treatments by November 8. Once you are fully vaccinated, you may provide proof to Human Resources and your incentive will be paid on the next available pay date.

Do I qualify for the vaccine incentive if I'm retiring soon?

No. The incentive is for employees who are still employed on November 24.

Additional Administrative Leave with Pay FAQs

Is the additional leave time available to all employees?

The additional paid leave is only for newer employees hired after April 1, 2020 who meet certain [criteria to qualify](#).

Will these hours be granted right away?

No. Eligible employees will be granted administrative leave with pay on an as needed basis between September 20 and December 18, 2021 upon approval.

If I received 80 hours in 2020, will I receive additional hours?

You will not receive additional hours if you received 80 hours in 2020.

If I do not show proof of vaccination by November 8, will I receive these hours?

No.

Examples:

What if I started on August 1 of 2020 and didn't use any of my Emergency Paid Sick Leave hours, how many hours can I receive now?

Because you started August 1, 2020 and did not utilize any COVID Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) by the end of the year, at the beginning of 2021, you received 44.5 hours (pro-rated to one ninth of 80 hours for every full month of employment) deposited into your annual leave bank. Starting September 20, If you are fully vaccinated and in need of more hours in 2021 because you test positive for COVID-19 **OR** based on CDC guidelines you must quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19 and are unable to work from home, then you are eligible to receive up to 35.5 hours as needed. Remember, this additional administrative leave with pay is on an as needed basis, not automatic, and may be used between September 20 through December 18, 2021 upon approval.

If I started in February of this year, how many hours will I receive?

Because you started in 2021 and did not receive the rollover hours, you may receive **up to** 80 hours, should you become eligible – you are fully vaccinated, you test positive for COVID-19 **OR** based on CDC guidelines you must quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19 and you are unable to work from home. Remember, this additional administrative leave with

pay is on an as needed basis, not automatic and can be used between September 20 through December 18, 2021 upon approval.

I started in May of this year and just tested positive for COVID-19. Will I be able to use this administrative leave right away?

Starting September 20, you may use the leave if you are fully vaccinated (provided copy of vaccination card to Benefits), you test positive for COVID-19 **OR** based on CDC guidelines you must quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19 and you are unable to work from home. You may receive up to 80 hours on as needed basis upon approval.

Is Short Term Disability (STD) an option?

Yes, if you are ill, you should apply for both FMLA and STD. If your application for STD is approved, you will be paid in accordance with the [Short-Term Disability Plan](#). If you are not ill, you are not eligible for STD. Employees hired after April 1, 2020 may qualify for administrative leave as outlined above for any unpaid time.



What if I have questions?





Please contact Employee Benefits at (727) 464-3367, option 1.

Updated 9/23/21

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