

Health PEI Health Care Workers Frequently Asked Questions

HUMAN RESOURCES

Updated February 16, 2022

1. Q: Will I be paid if I have to go for testing, including when testing is required due to a workplace exposure as identified by Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC)?

A: Health PEI employees who need to be tested will not be compensated for this time. Wearing a medical grade mask and eye protection at all times will prevent transmission of COVID-19. An employee being identified as a close contact, due to workplace exposure, is a direct correlation to whether Employer provided PPE was worn appropriately. Should you have concerns relating to PPE access, please see your Manager as soon as possible. For further information pertaining to PPE, please see the Respiratory Protection section of the FAQs: <https://src.healthpei.ca/health-pei-health-care-workers-frequently-asked-questions>

2. Q: I am a HCW, have not been fully vaccinated, and am refusing regular COVID-19 testing in compliance with the CPHO order. Will I be compensated or reassigned?

A: All unvaccinated HCWs in HPEI facilities must be screened with a COVID-19 antigen test as per CPHO Order effective September 24, 2021. Effective December 13, 2021, Health PEI employees who are not in compliance with the COVID-19 Immunization and Management Policy, and who do not have an approved medical or other accommodation for not being in compliance with the Policy, will be taken by the Employer to have resigned their position effective immediately.

3. Are newly hired HCWs (including returning employees and retirees) required to be vaccinated?

As per the HPEI Covid-19 Immunization and Management Policy - New hire HCWs must provide a mandatory vaccination record upon initial hire and are not eligible for participation in the rapid testing protocol, unless approved for a valid medical exemption. Proof of Immunization is collected with all other new hire documentation and provided to the Wellness and Safety team's designate. Returning staff to HPEI would be considered New Hires and are required to adhere to the policy.

4. Q: My Manager has advised that, due to operational requirement, I may be redeployed or reassigned during the pandemic. Am I entitled to travel reimbursement?

A: Employees who are reassigned or redeployed to an alternate worksite may be eligible for

travel reimbursement based on the respective Collective Agreement and/or Treasury Board Policy, Article 17.06 (iis.peigov.).

5. Q: If HCWs are required by the Chief Public Health Office or, at the discretion of Health PEI (depending on the situation), to self-isolate (*specific to scenarios outside of a travel-related restriction), and are asymptomatic, can the HCW access sick time?

A: HCWs who are asymptomatic (not experiencing symptoms) and have been identified as close contacts and have not tested positive for COVID-19 can work isolate following testing protocols and appropriate safety measures.

A HCW who develops any symptoms of COVID-19, such as fatigue, aches, fever, cough, and difficulty breathing are to visit a testing site. Once symptomatic, HCWs can access their sick leave. HCWs without access to sick leave would be placed on unpaid sick leave and may apply for benefits at www.canada.ca .

A symptomatic HCW who tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to continue to self-isolate until deemed to be recovered. This may extend past the 10-day self-isolation period for positive cases. If the HCW becomes asymptomatic, sick leave continues for the duration of the self-isolation. HCWs without access to sick leave will be placed on unpaid sick leave and may apply for benefits at www.canada.ca .

Asymptomatic HCWs who test positive for COVID-19 are eligible to access sick leave. HCWs without access to sick leave will be placed on unpaid sick leave and may apply for benefits at www.canada.ca .

It is important for HCWs to notify their Manager/Supervisor immediately as to changes in their status. For detailed information related to your specific circumstances, please reach out to your Human Resources Manager.

6. Q: My child/dependent has been identified by the Chief Public Health Office as a close contact of an active case. Am I eligible for paid leave?

A: Where the child/dependent is asymptomatic but required to self-isolate and, is unable to self-isolate alone (either due to age or ability), the HCW can work with their Manager to request a leave of absence. Eligibility for paid leave is limited to vacation, stat, or time in lieu.

7. Q: My child/dependent cannot attend school because they are closed. As a result, I have no childcare to attend work. Am I eligible for leave? Am I eligible for compensation?

A: We recognize these closures present challenging circumstances to employees who have young children in school. Please refer to the HCW FAQ re: Childcare for options that may be available to you for support.

If all options have been exhausted, please speak to your Manager about requesting a leave of absence. HCWs may utilize their banks, ie. vacation/stat/TIL to cover this leave. Employees may also wish to request unpaid leave at this time in order to access federal funding assistance programs related to school closures. These requests will be considered as well, however HCWs should be aware of the implications of taking unpaid leaves - group insurance premiums are not cost shared for those periods of time, pension contributions are not made, and vacation/sick is not earned while on an unpaid leave of absence. Managers are encouraged to be as flexible as possible when reviewing leave requests under these circumstances.