

Entitlements for Employees required to Self-Isolate/Quarantine

Employees who have visited a location at the date and time where a COVID-19 case has visited – may be required by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to get tested and quarantine, despite not feeling unwell or not having any symptoms.

Unpaid Pandemic Leave

It is important to note that in such instances employees covered by modern Awards, including the *Vehicle Repair, Services and Retail Award 2020* or the *Clerks – Private Sector Award 2020*, are entitled to **unpaid pandemic leave** in accordance with Schedule X of the relevant modern Award.

Schedule X provides that an employee is entitled to take **up to 2 weeks' unpaid leave** if the employee is required by the government or medical authorities or on the advice of a medical practitioner to self-isolate and is consequently prevented from working (or is otherwise prevented from working by measures taken by government or medical authorities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic).

The employee must give their employer notice of the taking of leave (including the reason the leave is required) as soon as practicable, and if required by the employer - provide reasonable proof.

Unpaid pandemic leave counts as service for the purposes of entitlements under the modern Award and NES – and the employer and employee may agree that the employee take more than 2 weeks' unpaid pandemic leave.

Other Options

Paid Annual Leave?

Rather than being on unpaid pandemic leave, an employee in this situation may request to take the period as paid annual leave. Where the employee has sufficient annual leave accrued, an employer may approve this request. In certain circumstances an employer might also consider agreeing to a request for annual leave in advance (i.e., prior to the leave having been accrued). Such an agreement must be in writing and meet a number of requirements. It is therefore recommended that members considering granting leave in advance contact the IR Department for further information.

Paid Sick leave?

An employee is entitled to paid personal/carer's leave **only** in circumstances where they are unfit for work due to personal illness or injury – or in relation to carer's leave, where they are required to provide care or support to a member of the employee's immediate family or household – because of a personal illness or injury affecting the member, or an unexpected emergency affecting the member.

Therefore, an employee who is required to quarantine is **not entitled** to paid personal/carer's leave **unless** they meet these requirements.

Government Assistance?

Employees required to self-isolate or quarantine by DHHS may be eligible for the Australian Government's \$1,500 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and/or the Victorian Government's \$450 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Test Isolation Payment. Employees seeking further information on eligibility requirements can be directed to [Services Australia](#) and the [DHHS](#).

Members seeking further information or advice are encouraged to contact the Workplace Relations team on (03) 9829 1123 or ir@vacc.com.au.