

Leave provisions while unwell or self-isolating due to Covid-19

For permanent and fixed term employees

If you are unwell with Covid-19 or you need to self isolate, this short guide will help you and your manager understand your entitlement to leave.



The current TEU Academic Staff Collective Employment Agreement (CEA) contains the following clause with regards to leave due to an infectious or epidemic disease:

6.4.3 Extraordinary Sick Leave

Sick leave taken in the following circumstances (up to an aggregate of two years over the term of employment with the employer) will not be deducted from an employee's sick leave entitlement:

- (a) Epidemic Disease - Where an employee contracts a disease declared an epidemic by the appropriate health authority.*
- (b) Notifiable Infectious Diseases - When an employee contracts an infectious disease or has been in contact with a sufferer from an infectious disease and is prevented by direction of the appropriate health authority from attending work.*

The Executive Leadership Team want to provide consistent leave provisions across Unitec for employees and have decided that the above provision shall apply. In deciding this, parameters and processes have been developed in order for staff to access it:

1. For employees covered by the TEU Academic Staff CEA – as per the above clause
2. For all other permanent and fixed term employees – you may **take up to 20 days** and this will not be deducted from your existing leave entitlement.

In order to be considered for access to this discretionary leave, one of the following conditions will exist:

- you have been informed that you have tested positive for Covid-19
- you have been informed that you are a Close Contact and must self-isolate (*and were advised of this prior to the government regulated self-isolation period having expired)

* Some notifications about being a Close Contact are arriving after the government regulated self-isolation period has expired. In these instances, we recommend you seek a test and on confirmation of it being negative, you can return to work if you are feeling well and not experiencing any symptoms.

Can I work from home if I am a Close Contact?

Yes, if you feel well and are symptom free, our first preference is that you should work from home. If you are unable to work from home, you can access this leave until your self isolation period has expired and you have tested negative.

Can I work from home if I have tested positive for Covid-19?

Yes, if you have tested positive for Covid-19, you may choose to continue to work from home and/or you may access this discretionary leave provision during the period you are unwell. A mix of both working and discretionary leave is also an option if this is appropriate.

What do I need to do if I want to access this leave provision?

To access this leave provision, you must be able to verify with proof (your notification from the Public Health Service) that you have either tested positive for Covid-19 or that you are a Close Contact. Actual proof will be required for this leave provision to be applied.

If you choose not to provide the relevant proof as per the above, or you do not have it, then you will be required to access your usual sick leave provision per your employment terms and conditions (until or if verification is provided, in which case any leave debited may be considered for reversal).

In the usual way, all leave will be approved by your manager. In the instance of positive Covid-19 cases, the H&S team must also be notified.

Please note that Casual Contacts do not need to self-isolate.

What leave code do I use in PeopleSoft if I am applying for this sort of Covid-19 absence?

Employees should use the Special Leave code in PeopleSoft and within the free-text, make comment about what the purpose of the leave is for e.g. Covid/unwell or Covid/close contact-self isolating). Please note that PeopleSoft is a secure and confidential tool where your privacy will be maintained.

Please be reminded to concurrently send proof to your manager and or if you are a positive Covid-19 case, to follow the prompts for advising the H&S/Covid team so they can support you and carry out necessary contact trace management.

To do this, click here to complete the Contact Tracing notification:

<https://thenest.unitec.ac.nz/TheNestWP/our-unitec/covid-19/>