Frequently Asked HR Questions

The following is intended to answer the most common HR questions during this period of social distancing and business continuity. Resources for planning and working remotely are also contained in this communication. And all communications and information regarding Temple’s handling of COVID-19 can be FOUND HERE.

Q: I am in a high risk group due to age, health or other factors, what should I do?
A: If you are in a high risk group, talk to your supervisor about your doctor’s recommendations. If you would rather not discuss with your supervisor, please call Employee Relations (215-926-2298) or elrel@temple.edu or Absence Management (215-926-2282 or loa@temple.edu) for assistance.

Q: Will my Temple Benefits cover me in the event I get sick?
A: Yes, there are a couple of benefits in particular that you should know about during this time. First, Temple’s Teledem benefit allows you to consult with a physician remotely. In addition, testing for Corona Virus will be covered with no cost sharing to the employee. Finally, our employee assistance program (EAP) provides resources for support such as counseling references. Information on all benefits can be found here, by emailing benefits@temple.edu, or calling our benefits representatives, who remain available during this time.

Q: How do I access the resources on Temple’s Employee Assistance Program?
A: LifeWorks provides personalized well-being resources that can support you and your dependents with issues related to family, health, life, money and work. The Employee Assistance Program is offered through LifeWorks to all full-time University faculty and staff.

Free confidential counseling, consultations, community referrals, and online access to hundreds of articles, toolkits, podcasts, webinars, and much more are provided to support the university community. Services are available 24/7 on-line or via phone at 1-888-267-8126. To access these resources, after logging into the TUportal, just click on the LifeWorks Employee Assistance Program link in the TUapplications menu to be directly connected to all resources.
Q: If I have symptoms am I required to report it to Employee Health?
A: Yes. It is important from a disease containment perspective to know who may be sick in order to prevent or minimize continued transmission. Please use Temple’s Telemed option to consult with a physician remotely. Information on accessing Telemed option can be found here.

Q: Can student workers continue to work?
A: Each student should speak with their supervisor. Some may be able to continue working on campus, some remotely and others not at all depending on role. If your role is ending and you would like to know about the possibility of employment in other areas, Student Affairs will be providing information to connect students who wish to continue working with other opportunities on campus to the extent they exist.

Q: How will PDPs be handled in FY 2019-2020?
A: For this fiscal year (FY 2019-2020), rating is optional on all PDPs. It is important to acknowledge exemplary performance and properly communicate the changes required by performance that falls below expectations in the supervisory comments, but rating will be optional for submission. HR recommends that PDPs be updated and submitted by June 30, 2020.

Q: How do I apply for Unemployment Compensation?
A: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry has created the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Portal for individuals who are unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable to work due to COVID-19 related reasons, apply via the portal’s website at www.pua.benefit.uc.pa.gov. To apply for Unemployment benefits because you are unemployed due to unrelated COVID-19 reasons, go to the states’ normal website www.uc.pa.gov or via phone at 1-800-313-7284. Your eligibility for UC benefits is determined by the state and the state confirms employee status with Human Resources. You will be asked to provide the following:

- **Employer:** Temple University not your department.
- **Address:** 1852 North 10th St
- **Telephone:** 215-926-2298
- **PA UC Account #:** 71-75103R
**Business Continuity Questions**

Q:  Will HR be available during this time?
A: Most of HR will be available via the normal methods--phone and email. On campus phones will be forwarded to off campus lines so you can call the numbers you are familiar with and email your key contacts. We will be as responsive as possible.

Q:  Who do I contact for technical assistance if I am working from home?
A: It is best to discuss what you need in order to work effectively at home with your supervisor prior to beginning a work from home arrangement to ensure that there is no delay in your ability to work productively. Consider hardware needs, internet, systems access, etc. While you are working remotely, ITS remains available to help during this time as well. Go to the ITS homepage for information and resources.

**ITS warns about increasing Phishing scams during this time. Please check “From” email address carefully, do not open attachments or respond to any emails that appear suspicious. Send any concerning emails to abuse@temple.edu.**

Q: What if I can’t remote in and only have access to my Temple email?
A: Information Technology Services has been working on solutions to allow for off-campus access, everything from access files, to transferring your phone, and remote connection to your windows computer. ITS will be posting information and instructions to https://its.temple.edu/remote. ITS continues to work on several solutions to allow access to administrative applications but is expecting licensing and performance issues with remote.temple.edu and direct Citrix/VPN access. Please do as much as you can off-line and exit remote access once you no longer need that access. Consider working with others within your unit who do have access in order to get information you might need but cannot access.

Q:  How long will employees need to work remotely?
A: It's uncertain. The goal is to minimize the spread of corona virus by reducing the number of people who come into contact with one another on campus. Our Emergency Management team and University leadership are continuously evaluating the situation and advice of experts. There will be as much communication as possible as the situation develops.
Q: Will I be able to come into work if necessary to obtain documents/supplies or perform a task?

A: At this time, you are permitted to enter your workspace to obtain materials or perform tasks that necessitate an on-campus presence, but you must notify your supervisor before doing so. In addition, Campus Operations must be notified of where employees will continue to work on campus to ensure security and safety. Information will be provided on reporting on campus locations.

Q: Will employees be required to use any of their paid leave time?

A: The University will compensate employees at their rate of pay at this time. However, if there are employees who have been assigned to work remotely and are unable to due to illness or vacations, they should report to their supervisor and used the appropriate benefit time.

Q: If I become too ill or encounter other circumstances that prevent me from working remotely for either the short or long term, what should I do?

A: Contact your supervisor. Supervisors, discuss the circumstances with your employee and feel free to contact HR (loa@temple.edu or 215-926-2282) for consultation. Employees may be required to use benefit time under certain circumstances.

Q: How do I track the work of my direct report who is working remotely?

A: Discuss expectations with each employee for work and assignments while working remotely. Set priorities and ask what is needed to help them be as productive as possible. Have office phones forwarded to home or personal phones to allow for continuation in communications. If they cannot complete all of their normal duties, discuss the possibility of working on special projects or initiatives that cannot normally be prioritized. Check-ins and tracking can be done via phone, email or other means. Establishing goals, expectations and timelines will allow you both to have a clear understanding of what is expected and how it will be managed.

Q: Will pre-approved vacation and personal leaves still be charged during this period?

A: In general, normal rules apply. If an employee is working remotely, on campus or otherwise during this time, no time should be charged. If an employee is off, i.e., not expected to be available and/or working they should be charged the appropriate benefit time, vacation or personal. If an employee is sick and unable to work, sick time should apply. If an employee is unable to work from home due to the nature of work, equipment or tech needs, no time should be
Any questions should be directed to HR business partners or Employee/Labor Relations.

Q: Do I need to continue to come to work on campus?
A: Work arrangements and requirements are specific to employees and business needs. As much as possible, we are discouraging presence on campus. However, you should consult with your supervisor to understand what is required of you during this time.

Q: Will I be paid if I cannot work because my job cannot be performed off campus?
A: Full and Part-time regular employees who have been directed not to report to campus and who have been instructed by their supervisor for any reason that they cannot or should not work from home, and/or those with roles that are not able to be performed remotely will continue to be paid their regular rate of pay at this time.

Q: Are professional development programs still being held?
A: At this time, all in-person professional development programs are postponed until further notice. All employees have access to online professional development programs via templeu.bridgeapp.com. Check out the learning library!

Q: What if I am scheduled for new hire orientation?
A: At this time, the new hire orientation is being administered online until further notice. New employees will receive an email from notifications@templeu.bridgeapp.com with instructions on viewing the orientation. In addition, our Benefits Department will be contacting new employees who need to enroll in benefits.

Q: What if I don’t have childcare when I am called back to work?
A: If you do not have childcare when you are called back to work, the State has provided a website with childcare resources. This website provides a resource in identifying childcare facilities that are still operating during this COVID-19 period. The YMCA can also be a resource; you can contact Sharon Reilly at the YMCA via phone at (267) 252-3383, or email at Sharon.Reilly@philaymca.org.

If you still are unable to obtain childcare after reviewing the resources mentioned above, you are also eligible to apply for a leave of absence for up to twelve (12) weeks. For more information
regarding leave of absence, please contact Absence Management at 215-926-2282, or loa@temple.edu for assistance.
Payroll Management

The following information and resources have been prepared to communicate guidelines for ensuring employees are paid for services performed in accordance with established pay practices and directives provided by senior university leadership in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak:

Q: How do I record hours for the current biweekly payroll?
A: All non-exempt employees that have worked in the current biweekly pay period will receive a regular paycheck on payday for now using the hours recorded in the Kronos timekeeping system.

Q: What hours will be used?
A: All employees that have worked during this pay period should be recording their hours worked as they normally would. This includes but is not limited to, punching in using a Kronos time clock, online web punch, and/or submitting hours worked to your supervisor or timekeeper for manual entry.

Q: Are timekeepers and approvers responsible to review the hours worked by their employees?
A: Yes. Timekeepers and approvers are required to review and approve timecards in Kronos by the regular deadlines established for the biweekly payroll of Monday 2 PM.

Q: Will deadlines and cutoffs for payroll adjustments and time entry remain the same?
A: No. Now that the university has moved to remote operations, additional time is required to process the biweekly payroll. The normal deadlines and cutoffs have been moved from 2 PM on Monday to 10 AM.

Q: Where can I find the due dates for payroll processing?
A: The payroll schedule and due dates are located on the Payroll Management website.

Q: How will employees receive their pay?
A: Employees will be paid by their normal method of payment whether that is direct deposit, check or paycard. Paper checks are mailed directly to the permanent address on record, they cannot be picked up in the Payroll office.
Note - the university’s preferred method of payment is direct deposit at the financial institution of your choice.

Note: In the event the checks cannot be printed for those that receive a paper check, a payroll debit card will be issued and mailed to the permanent address in our system.

Q: How do I record hours worked during COVID-19 for the biweekly payroll?

1. **Working on campus** - employees that are on campus working should record their time as they normally would do via a Kronos time clock, online web punch or by submitting time manually to a timekeeper for manual entry. Submission of the time for manual entry may need to be emailed, faxed, or communicated in a timely manner.

2. **Biweekly employees identified as essential and/or given authorization to work from home**:  
   a. Are responsible for maintaining a record of all hours worked.  
   b. The hours worked should be collected preferably using an online Kronos web punch that can be accessed via the Kronos link on TUportal.  
   c. If it is not the department policy to record time via a Kronos web punch, then the department may request a web license(s) to be issued for the employees on an interim basis by sending an email to kronos@temple.edu or submitting an Administrative Systems Access request on TUportal.  
   d. Department heads must use discretion in paying employees. Exempt employees are required to be paid their regular salary. Non-exempt employees are required at a minimum to be paid for all regularly scheduled hours in a pay period.

3. **Part-time temporary employees** - must record time in Kronos or record the time worked and submit it to the timekeeper/supervisor to be entered in Kronos to be paid. Estimated hours will not be loaded for this group of employees. As stated above, employees not able to clock in via Kronos must maintain records to document all hours worked and submit them to their supervisor for entry into Kronos.

Q: What if my employees cannot record time in Kronos?

A: At the present time, full-time regular employees will receive their regular pay on pay day using the hours recorded and/or the regularly scheduled hours assigned to the job. It is recommended where possible, that all biweekly employees and timekeepers continue to record time and edit timecards in the event the time will need to be reconciled later to record leave time, etc.
Q: How will employees be paid if they are instructed not to come to work?

A: Biweekly employees should continue to record time in Kronos as usual. Employees can continue to access Kronos via the link on TUportal. Timekeepers must continue to review timecards on a regular basis.

While the Payroll Management office can obtain standard hours worked from an employee job record, recording actual time worked is preferred. In the event we are required to utilize this information to generate the payroll for biweekly employees, we will load hours for full-time regular employees. Temporary part-time workers must record their hours and submit them to their department as instructed above.

Q: How will monthly employees be paid?

A: Monthly employees will be paid in accordance with the salary on the job in Banner in accordance with the normal monthly payroll schedule. Depending on the circumstances, employees will receive their regular pay. Additional and one-time pay may be paid at a later date.

Q: How do I contact the Payroll Management Staff?

A: Although business continuity plans have been implemented, the Payroll Management department will be in the office as needed and will regularly check voice mailboxes and e-mails.

Payroll Management office phone at 215-926-2244 or e-mail hrpayroll@temple.edu. Please use designated emails that have been established for specific processes.

Q: Have new pay codes been created in Kronos to distinguish between hours worked by an employee and those paid but not worked during the stay-at-home period due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: The Payroll Management office has created a pay code (COVID19-PD) to record the hours paid but not worked by full-time biweekly employees. Effective with B1 9 starting on Saturday, April 11, 2020, the Kronos timecards for full-time biweekly employees will be populated with the new COVID19-PD pay code. As employees record in and out punches the code will be replaced with REG pay and you can view the breakdown of hours on the Totals tab of the timecard.

Timekeepers can also select the COVID-19 PD pay code to record or adjust hours worked or not worked and paid as needed. Detailed instructions will be provided on the Kronos website.
Q: How can I obtain a refund of my WageWorks (WW) commuter election since the University moved to online and alternative learning methods on March 11, 2020 which is after the 10th of the month election cutoff for April commuter benefits?

A: The university has contacted WageWorks for guidance and has obtained the following information:

WW confirmed that since they fulfill commuter orders from the various transit agencies they are considered complete once issued. Therefore, the university will be deducting elections made as of March 10, 2020 from the March biweekly and monthly pay.

*Please note - there are many agencies that have provided relief at times of disaster in the past so this we perceive could be the same. However, until this is confirmed, you may want to change your election in the interim.*

It is important for commuter program participants to call WW customer service to ensure a record is saved. This also helps WW when the time comes should the various transit agencies policies change and they can then work directly with participants should something be possible in terms of added relief.

Q: Does WageWorks have any talking points for program participants?

A: Yes. WW has also shared the following talking points for participants:

- WageWorks commuter card participants:
  - Anyone who has a WW commuter card need not worry as the balances on the cards remain until depleted so they can still access them at a later time. Participants are advised that while they are working from home they can cancel or change the load amounts on the cards so that they do not build up a high balance for the time they are not using them.

- Transit Pass elections:
  - WageWorks partners with all major transit agencies in the United States and fulfills passes for the vast majority of our clients whose ppts commute to and from work. The various transit agencies all have differing refund requirements so WageWorks policy mirrors those same requirements provided that participants adhere to what is needed to process them.

  - We are already reaching out to the agencies that do not have a refund policy to identify if they are willing to make concessions for ppts who are now working from home as a result of the coronavirus and will work with ppts directly to see if that option is going to be made available. Regardless ppts should be told to
modify orders accordingly for working from home so that any future recurring orders are modified as needed.

- We prefer participants contact our customer service directly so please remember to call us at **1-877-924-3967 or 877 WAGEWORKS** so a record of the inquiry is recorded.
- The WW compliance team is also reviewing for any guidance from the IRS that will help participants through this time. As soon as information becomes available we will share it with you.

**Q: What is the current SEPTA refund policy for commuter passes purchases through WageWorks?**

A: The current SEPTA return policy is:

Participants must MAIL (NOT IN PERSON!) passes directly to SEPTA and they will provide WageWorks with a refund. They must include their name, mailing address and a copy of their WW transaction. 100% credit - Passes returned before the 1st of the benefit month. 50% credit - Passes returned by the 10th of the benefit month. 25% credit - Passes returned by the 20th of the benefit month. Passes need to be MAILED to: SEPTA Refunds, 9th Fl 1234 Market St. Philadelphia, PA 19107 Attn: Jackie Trask

**Q: Has SEPTA provided any information regarding the Key Card?**

A: No. Information has not been received regarding the refund of electronic passes loaded to the Key Card. Amounts on the Key Card will be able to be used in future months, but WageWorks will need to await further direction from SEPTA to confirm. It is up to SEPTA how this is handled. WageWorks will honor whatever SEPTA sets forth as their return/refund policy for passes.

**Q: On March 25, 2020, the Department of Education (ED) announced that my wages would not be garnished, but money is still being taken from my paycheck. What should I do?**

A: Since the university’s monthly payroll was already processed and student loan garnishments deducted at the time of the March 25, 2020 announcement, you will receive a refund of garnished wages from ED.

Going forward with all subsequent university payrolls, student loan garnishments will not be deducted from your wages until further instruction are received from the Department of Education.
Q: Exemption from City Wage Taxes for Non-residents of Philadelphia during the COVID-19 pandemic. What should I know?

A: As you know, beginning on March 17, the university significantly altered its operations in order to comply with state and local orders to control the spread of COVID-19. The City of Philadelphia has recently provided guidance on the applicability of city wage tax during this period.

The city has advised that **non-resident employees based in Philadelphia are not subject to Philadelphia Wage Tax during the time they have been ordered to work outside of Philadelphia.** Therefore, if you are not a Philadelphia resident and you have worked outside of the city as a result of the pandemic, you should update your “Work Location” in TUportal by submitting a new PA Act 32 certification.

[Click here for additional information](#) regarding the exemption of city wage taxes for non-resident Philadelphia employees during the COVID-19 period.
**Temporary Surge Facility at Liacouras Center - Volunteering**

Remember that, even as this document was prepared, the operation at the Liacouras site continues to evolve. There could also be changes in some of the management operations and needs of the facility over time.

**Q: Is the Temporary Surge Facility (TSF) a Temple operated facility?**

**A:** City, State, and Federal agencies are combining forces to manage the TSF. While it is housed in a Temple facility, it’s not being run or managed by Temple. There are Temple employees helping to set up and prepare the facility. However, the healthcare professionals working in the facility will not be paid university employees but volunteers from around the city and region. The TSF is designed to help relieve the patient loads expected at city hospitals over the next few weeks. It is not a COVID-19 testing facility and will only take patients from the local hospitals.

**Q: I’m a Temple employee. Can I volunteer to work at the Temporary Surge Facility?**

**A:** Yes, and your skills could be invaluable. If you want to work there, you will need to volunteer. Please understand, however, that volunteer efforts undertaken by you, whether for Temple University, Temple University Health System, Inc. or related facilities, or the TSF, are done of your own free will and not as a condition of your employment at Temple University. Though it is laudable, Temple will not pay you for your volunteer service.

**Q: If I volunteer, will I be covered by Temple’s liability insurance or Workers’ Compensation insurance?**

**A:** No, you will not be covered under the university’s general or professional liability insurance or its Workers’ Compensation programs. As a volunteer, you will receive no compensation from Temple and are acting in an individual capacity. You will have the same protections and liabilities provided by law as any other private individual and will have access to your own personal insurance, if any. There are a number of laws that will protect you as a volunteer in this time of emergency, however the university's insurance will not apply.

**Q: Can my manager assign me to work at the TSF as a part of my employment as a Temple employee?**

**A:** No, with rare exceptions, working at the Temporary Surge Facility should not be made part of your university job responsibilities.
Q: Can I miss my responsibilities as a Temple employee if I volunteer?
A: Your job responsibilities at Temple University are primary and any volunteer obligations are secondary. You are free to participate in volunteer activities on your own time. If able, your supervisor may be able to make adjustments to your schedule or responsibilities provided that university business is not adversely affected. This will be an individual determination in each case.

Q: Who is staffing the Temporary Surge Facility hospital and how can I get involved?
A: The best way to get involved is to register with the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps, which will be staffing the Liacouras facility and other critical operations in the city. You can sign up for the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps at serv.pa.gov and you can direct questions to mrc@phila.gov or 215-685-6861. If you are interested in helping with this effort, you must sign up with the MRC, which will create rosters and deploy volunteers with the needed skill sets. No volunteers may show up at the site without receiving a confirmation (deployment summary) email from the Philadelphia MRC.

Q: What is the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)?
A: The Philadelphia Department of Public Health manages the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The MRC is a group of more than 3,800 medical and non-medical volunteers who train and prepare to serve the City of Philadelphia during public health emergencies. The MRC is currently supporting various COVID-19 response efforts. The Philadelphia MRC is open to anyone ages 18 and older, residing in or near Philadelphia, regardless of skill set or clinical training. In order to register, interested volunteers should visit serv.pa.gov. When choosing an organization, select “Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps”. Prospective volunteers can direct questions to mrc@phila.gov or 215-685-6861.

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