

# COVID-19 COMMUNICATION UPDATE 082520

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

As area school districts determine whether to have in-person, online, or hybrid classes, our employees who are also parents to school age children, struggle to plan how to balance work and home. There are a number of options available to you:

1. **Tele-work:** you may be able do your job from home. Work with your supervisor to see if this is an option in your department.
2. **Adjust your work schedule:** e.g., instead of working 8 – 5, consider working a split shift, early morning and early evening, leaving mid-day to be with children. Work with your supervisor to see if this is an option in your department.
3. **Emergency Paid Sick Leave (FFCRA):** pays up to 80 hours for the reasons below. This benefit can only be used once in 2020.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. is subject to a Federal, State or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;</li><li>2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;</li><li>3. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;</li><li>4. is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2);</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. <b>is caring for his or her child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 related reasons;</b> or</li><li>6. is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.</li></ol>
--	--

5. **Expanded Family Medical Leave (FFCRA):** Up to 10 weeks of paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave paid at 2/3 for qualifying reason #5 above; up to \$200 daily and \$12,000 total.
6. **Change your position to part-time:** Change your 1.0 FTE position to either 50%, 60% or 80% FTE. Part time employees pay 20% of total cost of health insurance premiums. Work with your supervisor to see if this is an option in your department.
7. **Use your accruals:** Adjust your schedule to use your accruals when involved in childcare. Work with your supervisor to see if this is an option in your department.

Complete information is found at: <https://www.spokanecounty.org/4613/COVID-19-Employee-Resources>

### **ARE FACE SHIELDS AN ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR MASKS OR CLOTH FACE COVERINGS?**

No. Face shields provide good droplet protection for the wearer, but the purpose of using a cloth face covering or mask is to protect others. Because people can be infected and actively transmitting the virus without knowing it, coverings stop the virus at the source — the mouth and nose — from getting into the air. It prevents workers from passing the virus to other workers and customers.

### **DOES WEARING A MASK CREATE A BUILD UP OF CARBON DIOXIDE FOR THE PERSON WEARING IT?**

No. That's a myth. You can find more information at the Department of Health (DOH) web page [Myths and Facts about Cloth Face Coverings](#).

### **TAKE YOUR VACATION!**

Many of us have had our summer vacation plans cancelled due to the pandemic. And between health concerns and financial stresses it may be easy to think, “I should just keep working,” or “What’s the point of a vacation, anyway?” Get those thoughts out of your head! Studies indicate that our performance nose-dives when we work for extended periods without a break. And while your plans will likely look different than last summer, you can still reap the benefits of a vacation, even if you can’t travel. It’s not too late to plan something. Identify the type of experience you want to have. What kind of setting and activities recharge your batteries? Don’t underestimate a change of scenery—even if you’re staying close to home, all you need to do is spend a little time outdoors and unplug. (Seriously, don’t check your email.) Finally, create some memories. Take pictures on your trip so you can revisit the experience when you're having a tough day back at work. (This tip is adapted from “Thinking of Skipping Vacation? Don’t!,” by Rebecca Zucker)