

This guideline has been reviewed and adjusted to reflect Southern Health-Santé Sud protocols and policies

COVID-19: Addressing your child-care concerns

We know in this rapidly changing situation you may have questions about what you can do to balance family and work obligations. We also know you may need some extra support to do so. To help you manage these challenges, we have worked hard to address questions you may have. Please feel free to contact your direct manager if you have any questions that we have not yet answered.

Do I still report for work if I have been affected by the provincial school and daycare closures?

Please discuss with your manager. You may be eligible to work from home if your position allows. We understand that some special consideration will be required for the following situations:

- a) You have a child or children under the age of 12 who you are legally responsible for.

All we require is copy of your Manitoba Health Card or your child's birth certificate. We do not need original copies. Scanned copies will do.

- b) You have a child or children over the age of 12 with special needs who requires someone to be home with them.

All we require is copy of your Manitoba Health Card or your child's birth certificate. We do not need original copies. Scanned copies will do.

Please make every **reasonable** effort to find other care for your child or children. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- i) Trying to switch shifts with coworkers and contacting your shift scheduler to see if there is any ability to change your current schedule.
- ii) Asking family, friends and coworkers to provide care.
- iii) Trying to make arrangements with your spouse or other legal guardian of the child or children to coordinate schedules. This would include your spouse or other legal guardian contacting their employer to change their schedule.

***Important to know:** If you need to change your shift schedule due to child care issues as a result of COVID-19, you need to submit the Provincial Family Status Accommodation Form available [here](#) or on all employer intranet sites.

I am a front-line healthcare provider in need of childcare. What options do I have?

See above question. If you have child care accommodation needs, please complete the [Family Status Accommodation Form](#). Once completed, please return the form to your Manager or who will then provide a copy to your Human Resources Department. For more information on Family Status Accommodations please read the updated [COVID-19 Addressing Your Child Care Concerns](#).

In addition, employees who qualify can also apply for a child care centre space by completing the [this Essential Services Worker Childcare Request Form](#)

The Department of Families advises that all health-care workers in need of child care are encouraged to access the online tool available at <https://eswchildcare.ca>. This site allows families to view available spaces, and to contact child-care centres directly to finalize arrangements. Licensed child-care centres are able to provide care for up to 16 children per centre. Larger centres with separate rooms and external entrances can accommodate up to 16 children per room. Home-based child-care providers can continue to provide care for up to eight children.

What happens if I can't find other child care arrangements and need to stay at home with my child or children?

If you need to stay home because you are unable to find child care, you can use your vacation, overtime or statutory banks to supplement lost income. The use of sick time is not available for the purpose of staying home for child care reasons. Once those banks have been exhausted, you would be placed on an unpaid leave of absence. Please visit this link to read more about [Federal assistance available to families affected by COVID-19](#).

Is working from home an option?

Yes. Upon approval from your Employer, you may have the ability to work from home due to child care constraints provided you are able to do so. If you work from home, your hours will be coded as if you are physically reporting to your regular workplace.

Please note that while you work from home on a **company** issued laptop, you are responsible for:

- Managing current workload and meeting expected deadlines
- Maintaining confidentiality of all your documents

- Logging off when you are not using your computer

Please review and sign the [Working From Home Protocols and Remote Access document](#)

As a reminder, if you are working from home, you are required to adhere to all PHIA and FIPPA guidelines as well as any applicable employer policies. Please refer to your employer's intranet website for these policies.

What if I am not able to come to work and can't work from home?

If you are unable to come to work for all or part of your regularly scheduled hours and do not have the ability to work from home, you can supplement your income with any of your vacation, general holiday or overtime banks. The use of sick time is not available for the purpose of staying home for child care reasons. If you do not have accumulated hours in these banks, your time away will be considered as unpaid and you will be placed on an unpaid leave of absence.

What if I have a sick child or children?

If you are required to stay home because of a sick child or children, you are entitled to be paid family sick/ income protection time according to your collective agreement or employer policies. If income protection is not available, you can use your vacation, overtime or statutory banks. If you do not have banked time available, you will be placed on an unpaid leave of absence and a Record of Employment will be issued.

What if my unpaid leave of absence lasts longer than 14 days?

If your unpaid leave of absence continues for longer than 14 days, you may choose to pre-pay your existing benefits for coverage. We strongly recommend that you contact your human resources department, Service Desk or your Employer Benefits Coordinator to discuss.

You can also contact your benefits provider (HEB, Blue Cross, etc.) using the following links:

Manitoba Blue Cross <https://www.mb.bluecross.ca/>
HEB Manitoba <https://hebmanitoba.ca/>