



# MONTANA STATE GOVERNMENT RETURN TO WORKSITES

## FAQ

### STAGE THREE

#### 1. I have been successfully working remotely for over a year. Why can't I continue to work remotely?

The Gianforte administration and your agency leadership appreciate the efforts of state employees to continue serving the citizens of Montana throughout the pandemic and recognize remote work has been effective and efficient for many employees.

Many of our directors have not had the opportunity to see their agencies operating as they did before, however. While no new telework agreements will be granted for now, this directive is temporary. In the coming months, the cabinet agencies will participate in a space and workforce study designed to maximize our workspaces for efficiency and productivity. Part of this study will examine remote work for state employees. We will share more about the project as it gets underway.

#### 2. What should I do if I am not comfortable interacting with others without masks?

Masks are optional for most state employees, and you may choose to wear a mask. For now, managers are also being asked to make accommodations for attending in-person meetings, such as Teams or Zoom.

Employees working at certain agencies may still be required to wear face masks because of the nature of their work; specifically, employees working at the men's and women's prisons, other correctional facilities, the Vets' Home, the State Hospital, and other DPHHS facilities. This requirement may also apply to employees working in some occupations that have close contact with citizens, such as social workers and probation and parole officers. Employees working in these facilities or occupations should follow direction provided by their agencies' management.

#### 3. If I am required to quarantine because of COVID-19 or test positive for COVID-19, will I have to use my own leave time?

You may continue to use the FFCRA leave provided by the federal law if you have not already exhausted the leave. No additional paid leave is available if the FFCRA paid leave has been exhausted.

Please review the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act Policy](#) for more information about paid leave for absences from work due to COVID-19.

You should follow the guidance of your county health department regarding quarantining.

#### 4. Is paid leave still available for COVID-19-related absences because of childcare issues?

Yes. You may continue to use the E-FMLA leave provided by the FFCRA until further notice if you have not already exhausted the leave. No additional paid leave is available if the FFCRA paid leave has been exhausted.

Please review the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act Policy](#) for more information about paid leave for absences from work due to COVID-19.

**5. I have been working a flex schedule because of reduced availability of childcare. Will my flex schedule continue to be permitted?**

Managers should be flexible with employees during this stage of return. You should work with your manager to address individual situations.

**6. How do I get a COVID-19 vaccine?**

COVID-19 vaccines remain available at no cost and are offered at local pharmacies, medical facilities, health departments, Montana Health Centers, and providers' offices. Go to [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find vaccines available near you.

**7. Where can I get information about the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines?**

The [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) provides a variety of information about COVID-19 vaccines.

Employees may also [schedule an appointment](#) at one of the state employee health clinics to discuss vaccines with a medical provider. Telehealth appointments are available.

**8. Will I receive paid leave to get a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes. You may use the Paid Sick Leave (PSL) provided by the FFCRA if you have not already exhausted the leave to receive the vaccine or for vaccine-related side effects.

No additional paid leave is available if the FFCRA paid sick leave has been exhausted.

**9. I have a health condition that makes me high risk for contracting COVID-19 or live with someone who is high risk. Will special accommodations be made for me?**

If you have concerns about your individual or family health issues and your return to your worksite, contact your agency human resources staff for further discussion and guidance.

**10. Are there still limits on the number of employees who are permitted to travel together in a car when traveling for work?**

Employees and managers should work cooperatively to address business travel concerns. If you are concerned about riding in cars with multiple people when traveling for work you may travel alone.

**11. If I have COVID-19 symptoms but feel well enough to work, can I work remotely until I am well?**

Yes. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, you should not come to the workplace. You should contact your manager to discuss your absence from work. If possible, managers should allow employees to work remotely until their symptoms subside.

**12. What resources do I have available to me for personal challenges I may be facing in the transition back to the office?**

[Employee Assistance Program](#) benefits are available to you and your household members at no cost to employees. Services include face-to-face counseling, video, and phone counseling, 24-hour crisis help, and more. For detailed information, please click [here](#).

**13. What should I do if I test positive for COVID-19?**

If you receive a positive test result for COVID-19, do not come to the workplace. You should contact your agency's HR staff and provide the names of any work-related close contacts. Your close contacts will be notified that they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, but your name will not be shared. You should also contact your county health department and follow the county health department's guidance about quarantining. You may need to contact a healthcare provider if you have questions about COVID-19 infection or if you feel unwell.

Additional information about testing positive can be found [here](#).

**14. What do I do if I am a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?**

If you are a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you should contact your county health department for guidance and follow that guidance. For additional information,click [here](#).