The language used in this document and other COVID-19 materials on this site do not create an employment contract, nor any other contractual rights or entitlements, between the employee and Coastal Carolina University. Coastal Carolina University reserves the right to modify this information at any time. The guidance is subject to change based on this evolving situation.

PAID LEAVE OPTIONS

Am I eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)?

Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) of up to 80 hours may be granted in certain circumstances. To qualify, one of the six (s) reasons below have to be met.

1. Employee subject to isolation order related to COVID-19. This does not apply if there is no work for the employee to perform.

2. Employee has been tested and confirmed of contracting COVID-19, or has been advised to self-quarantine by a health care provider.

3. Employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.

4. Employee is caring for an individual subject to or advised to quarantine or isolation.

5. Employee is caring for a son or daughter of such employee whose school or place of care is closed, or child care provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precaution.

6. Employee is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NOTE: No DOL guidance is available regarding #6 at this time.

To apply for Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL), the employee must complete COVID-19 Employee Leave Request Form. To view more details about EPSL, go to https://www.coastal.edu/hreo/covid-19/. A chart is on that page with details about the program. EPSL cannot be used intermittently unless the leave is associated with #5 above.

While EPSL is a federally mandated form of leave in association with the Family First Coronavirus Response Act, the University does not receive any federal reimbursement for qualified leave taken under this program.

If I do not qualify for EPSL, are there other leave options available?

- **Sick Leave Advance** - A sick leave advance for up to 15 days may be available to those in leave eligible positions.

- **Emergency Family Medical Leave Act (EFMLA)** - If you are caring for a child, under the age of 18, due to a school or daycare closure and this is preventing you from performing any telework that may be available to you, you can request leave under the Emergency Family Medical Leave Act. Intermittent work is allowed if caring for a child. For EFMLA,
the first 2 weeks would be unpaid. However, EFMLA can run concurrently with Emergency Paid Sick Leave. EPSL, if approved and run concurrently, would pay for the first 2 weeks of EFMLA. To apply for EFMLA, visit https://www.coastal.edu/app/hreo/benefits/leave/covid_19leaverequest.html

- **Accrued Annual Leave** – Employees may use available accrued annual leave.

- **Accrued Sick Leave** – Employees may use available accrued sick leave.

  NOTE: Sick Family is not a separate leave plan. You may use up to 10 days per calendar year of your available sick leave for the care of a family member.

**NOTE**: Employees will be placed in leave without pay if work is not available and leave is not reported. Employees should not report time as worked, if work was not performed.

### LEAVE WITHOUT PAY STATUS

**What will happen to my benefits and insurance if I go into a leave without pay status?**

If you fall into a leave without pay status, you may be invoiced for premiums.

**Will I continue to accrue leave if I am in a leave without pay status (LWOP)?**

You would only receive leave accruals for a particular month if you are in a paid status for at least half of the working days in that month. You would not accrue leave while in a leave without pay status.

**Can I choose to go into a leave without pay status in lieu of using my available accrued leave?**

You may choose to go into a leave without pay status. However, keep in mind that you would not accrue leave during that period and you would be invoiced for premiums. If you fall into a LWOP status, you will not earn service time for the period you are in LWOP status under the South Carolina Retirement Systems Program (SCRS) or the Police Officers Retirement Program (PORS) if you are a contributing member. Additionally, being placed in a leave without pay status, may impact an employee’s eligibility for insurance at the time of retirement. However, you could be eligible for unemployment benefits during that period.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

**Can I apply for unemployment because my work hours have changed or I am unable to work?**

Unemployment insurance may be available for individuals who have experienced a reduction in hours, for whom no work is available or for those who have been involuntarily separated from
employment. It is the employee’s responsibility to file a claim and to accurately report any wages received and work hour reductions (if applicable).

Please visit the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce’s (SC-DEW) website for more information at https://dew.sc.gov/covid-hub (for general information) and https://dew.sc.gov/individuals/apply-for-benefits (to file a claim). Also, there may be special programs available due to COVID-19, such as the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program. The application, eligibility and determination processes for unemployment benefits are handled solely by SC-DEW, not Coastal Carolina University, however, the university will respond accordingly to claims. The SC-DEW website is robust and addresses a variety of topics.

Are student employees eligible for unemployment?

In general, student employees are not eligible for unemployment benefits, however, there may be some exceptions. Also, some special federal financial assistance programs may be available due to COVID-19, such as Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). The application, eligibility and determination processes for unemployment benefits are handled solely by the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SC DEW), not Coastal Carolina University.

Can I collect unemployment and report leave? Can I continue to be paid by CCU and also receive unemployment benefits?

No. You cannot receive pay for work or leave from CCU and also receive unemployment benefits for the work or leave time reported. The University regularly sends employer wage reports to the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SC-DEW). Also, SC-DEW usually requests information from employers when employees apply for unemployment.

How does SC DEW define “Overpayments”?

An overpayment occurs when you receive unemployment insurance (UI) benefits for which you are not eligible. The SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SC-DEW) classifies overpayments of UI benefits in two categories: non-fraudulent overpayments and fraudulent overpayments. For more information go to https://dew.sc.gov/overpayments.

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT

Where can I find employee support services?

Information about employee support resources, such as the EAP program, essential personnel child care, leave transfer program and the Faculty/Staff Benevolence Fund, can be found at https://www.coastal.edu/hreo/covid-19/.

Please note that EAP tele-counseling is available at this time.
RETIREMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM (RIP) (SCRS/PORS participants)

How can I obtain retirement estimates if I am interested in the Retirement Incentive Plan? You should submit your application via email as noted in the RIP. Upon receipt, it will be reviewed and a member of the benefits team will forward additional information to you.

Due to the level of program interest and limited staffing availability, the benefits team will not be able to calculate retirement estimates until all information is received, which includes service purchase invoices from PEBA. PEBA offers a retirement estimate calculator at https://online.retirement.sc.gov/MemberAccess/welcome.

What should I do if I am not certain that I am eligible to participate in the RIP? You should review the eligibility criteria identified in the RIP Plan document. If you are not sure if you are eligible, you may apply. You will be notified by a member of the CCU benefits team if you meet the eligibility criteria. Applications may be withdrawn at any time prior to the execution of the Agreement and Release document.

If I apply for and am accepted into the Retirement Incentive Plan (RIP), can I be rehired at CCU following my retirement under the RIP? If you retire under the RIP, you cannot work for the University in any paid capacity for at least two (2) years. NOTE: The two (2) year condition does not apply to regular SCRS/PORS retirements which are not affiliated with the RIP.

Can Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) participants apply for the Retirement Incentive Plan (RIP)? The RIP provisions are determined by the state and only apply to members of SCRS and PORS. ORP participants are vested immediately and are able to begin accessing retirement funds at age 59 ½.

Is the University considering other retirement incentive options for ORP members? There are no other retirement incentive options under consideration at this time. However, the University may entertain other incentives, if available and viable.

OTHER ITEMS

If my position is on a basis of less than 12 months and earnings are escrowed, who do I contact if I have questions about my status?

Please contact Kimberly Sherfesee in the Office of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity at 843-349-2036.
If I have other questions or need additional information on a human resource related matter, who do I contact?

For benefits, insurance, leave or retirement questions, please contact ccubenefits@coastal.edu.

For questions on other human resource related matters, please contact hr@coastal.edu or call 843-349-2036 for assistance.

Please anticipate it may take approximately 48 to 72 hours to receive a response from HREO due to telephone and email volume.