

Message to Representatives: FFCRA Notification



Greetings from PICS!

This message is part of our regular communication as we continue to monitor and respond to the developing COVID-19 situation.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has developed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) to provide emergency paid sick leave and extended Family Medical Leave (FMLA) to people who are unable to work due to reasons related to COVID-19. Funding for this act comes from tax credits and does not impact Participant budgets. The act is effective April 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020, and becomes enforceable on April 18, 2020.

The FFCRA act states that employers are required to inform their workers about potential FFCRA benefits. As your FMS provider, PICS has attached the FFCRA poster issued by the DOL that you can share with your Workers, commonly asked questions, as well as a link to the FFCRA Worker Claim Request Form on our website.

We will continue to share updates with you as additional information becomes available regarding best practices for Employers in implementing the requirements of the FFCRA. PICS works collaboratively with local and national partners to review material as it becomes available. We are committed to providing important communications and informational materials for you and your Workers to ensure compliance with the act.

What do I need to know about the FFCRA? Am I required to offer FFCRA benefits to my Workers?

Employers with fewer than 500 Workers are required to provide paid sick leave and FMLA under FFCRA. The act is funded by tax credits so these payments will not impact Participants budget. In very rare circumstances, an Employer may qualify for an exemption. Exemptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis following established DOL guidelines.

Additional information about FFCRA, including frequently asked questions and link to the FFCRA Worker Claim Form can be found below and on our [COVID-19 webpage](#).

PICS appreciates you and your support for the individuals we serve!

During this time – *and all the time!* – PICS is here to support you. We are staying up-to-date locally and nationally on best practices in response to COVID-19. We understand these matters are complicated. If you need support or assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out. We appreciate your dedication in supporting the people we serve.

We are all in this together!

Sincerely,

PICS - Partners in Community Supports

651-967-5060

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www.picsmn.org

FFCRA – Commonly Asked Questions and Answers

What is the FFCRA - Families First Coronavirus Response Act?

- The FFCRA provides paid leave to Workers for reasons related to COVID-19. Workers can receive:
 - Up to 2 weeks of Paid Sick Time at full or 2/3 pay depending on the qualifying reason
 - Up to 10 weeks of emergency paid Family Medical Leave Act at 2/3 pay for a qualifying reason.
 - There are different rates of pay based on the situation, and PICS will help determine those amounts base on the reason for leave and pay/hour history.
- Benefits can be claimed beginning April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, with enforcement beginning April 18, 2020.

There are six qualifying reasons for FFCRA leave related to COVID-19:

1. Subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
2. Advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
3. Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
4. Caring for an individual who is subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantined as described in (2) above.
5. Caring for your own child whose school or place of care has been closed, or childcare provider is unavailable due to COVID-19 related reasons.
6. Experiencing another substantially similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Will the funds come out of the Participants budget?

- No, this leave is funded from employer taxes that would normally be paid to the government.

How does a Worker qualify for paid sick time under the FFCRA?

- The Worker's request for FFCRA leave must meet one of the six reasons listed above and on the DOL poster provided and must be related to COVID-19.

How does a Worker qualify for FMLA under the FFCRA?

- A Worker may be eligible for paid FFCRA benefits if they are caring for their child whose school or place of care is closed (or childcare provider is closed) due to COVID-19.
- The Worker must have worked for you at least 30 days.

Will a Worker need to provide documentation for their leave?

- Yes, Workers will need to complete the FFCRA Worker Leave Request Form and provide supporting documentation for the leave (i.e. quarantine notice, doctor's notice, etc).

Does the FFCRA apply to me and my Workers?

- Yes, the FFCRA applies to you because you have less than 500 Workers. In very rare cases, you could be exempted from this act. This would have to be decided case-by-case and your request would have to be sent to PICS in writing for review.
- As an employer, you are responsible to inform your Worker(s) about these FFCRA benefits. Please refer to and share the DOL poster included with this communication.
- If you have any questions, contact us using one of the below options:
 - Phone: 651-967-5060
 - Email: hr@picsmn.org

How is the paid time figured out if they are not working?

- Workers are paid based on the hours they are normally scheduled to work. PICS will help determine this amount by looking at what the Worker has been paid in the past to determine total hours payable.

How does a Worker apply to be paid under the FFCRA?

- Workers must complete the PICS Worker FFCRA Request Form. This form can be found on our website and can be requested from your Service Coordinator or by emailing hr@picsmn.org.

When will my Workers be paid for sick leave through FFCRA?

- Workers will be paid for FFCRA leave according to the payroll schedule. PICS will confirm hours and rate of pay for leave request, and will coordinate to have a paper timesheet completed.

Is FFCRA the same as unemployment benefits?

- No, Workers could be eligible for unemployment benefits when they are laid off or cannot work. The FFCRA benefit is paid for sick time related to COVID-19. A Worker could not get benefits for both FFCRA and unemployment at the same time.

Can my Worker just say they have COVID-19 symptoms and receive FFCRA benefit?

- Generally, no. A Worker must be seeking a medical diagnosis or be told by a health care provider to self-quarantine.

Where can I learn more?

- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/ffcra>
- <https://www.lssmn.org/pics/news/covid-19>