



COVID-19
EMPLOYEE UPDATES & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
(Updated 4/21/2020)

On April 15, 2020 Governor Bill Lee announced that all Tennessee schools will be closed for the remainder of the school year. Superintendent Ray shares the governor's concerns and caution to guard the health of students, teachers, and families during this pandemic. That said, there is still over a month left in the school year, and our focus remains on providing learning opportunities that meet the academic and social-emotional needs of our students. The District is using the [Roadmap to Continuous Learning](#), as an outline to deliver instruction and support students academically. Also, the [learning guides and video lessons](#) and many other [digital resources](#) on our [instructional resources](#) website are available to all students and families. All personnel should continue to work remotely following all previous guidance and the directions of their direct supervisor.

Employees should continue to visit www.scsk12.org/coronavirusfacts regularly and follow the SCS social media pages for updates and all of the latest facts regarding COVID-19. Also, make sure all of your contact information is accurate in the Employee Portal, so you receive SCS employee phone calls and texts. Below is a set of important updates and answers to frequently asked questions we have received from the staff.

Leave Time and General

1. When is the last day of employment for 10-month excessed teachers who have not secured a position by May 29, 2020?

The last day of work for 10-month excessed teachers who have not been recommended for a position for the 2020-21 school year is May 29, 2020.

2. When is the last day of employment for excessed non-instructional staff (school-support) who have not secured a position by May 22?

The last day of work for excessed non-instructional school support staff who have not been recommended for a position for the 2020-21 school year is May 22, 2020.

3. Are employees sent home due to exposure to the coronavirus (self-monitoring) entitled to paid leave?

Employees who are off work voluntarily or involuntarily due to the exposure to COVID-19 will be treated the same as any other employee who is off work due to a non-work-related illness or injury.

4. Will employees (salaried and hourly) be paid during the COVID-19 school closure period?

All school and District employees **scheduled** to work during Spring Break and the extended closure period will be compensated for scheduled workdays. No employees will experience a loss of pay as a result of the closure.

5. Does the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) apply for employees or immediate family members who may contract coronavirus?

Employees requesting leave could conceivably be protected by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), so long as FMLA-eligibility requirements are satisfied. COVID-19 may qualify as a "serious health condition" in certain circumstances under FMLA, allowing you to take FMLA leave if either you or an immediate family member contracts the disease.

6. What is the Families First Coronavirus Act (FFCRA or Act), and where can I obtain more information?

The FFCRA is a federal law enacted to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Among other things, it requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. These provisions apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. This fact-sheet from the United States Department of Labor provides more information in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). If you need further assistance, please contact your direct supervisor.

7. Does the District's On-the-Job Injury policy apply to individuals impacted by COVID-19?

Any illness or injury arising out of or in the course of employment is an industrial injury. Any contagious disease contracted at work or while traveling for work would be industrial. The District's On-the-Job Injury policy would only be implicated if travel was related to District approved business travel.

8. Does this closure impact contract, non-SCS employees, such as custodial staff and bus drivers?

Contracted services staff are employed through a variety of external vendors. Contracted employees should refer questions to their direct employer and/or supervisor.

Professional Development, Licensure, and Observations

1. Are in-person professional development sessions canceled during the school closure period?

Yes, all in-person sessions have been postponed. However, all course 3 sessions in Canvas are available for teachers to complete. In addition, the online platform offers a variety of other sessions that can be easily accessible and completed for credit hours. Teachers should contact their principal for any school-level session that could be available through one of the virtual platforms.

2. Should teachers complete the required professional development hours?

Teachers should be completing course 3 in the Canvas platform. In addition, the online platform offers a variety of other sessions that can be easily accessible and completed for credit hours. Teachers should contact their principal for any school-level session that could be available through one of the virtual platforms.

3. Are in-person Praxis support sessions canceled during the school closure period?

Yes, all in-person sessions have been postponed. However, our Human Resources team is providing virtual Praxis support. For more information, contact the H.R. team at (901) 416-5304.

4. Are teachers required to complete the portfolio guidelines?

Given the mandate from the State regarding PreK and Kindergarten portfolios, Shelby County Schools will **not** require completion of any portfolio (PreK, Kindergarten, Fine Arts, HPELW, or World Languages) for the SY19-2020 school year.

5. How will teacher observations be handled this school year?

Given the mandate from the State regarding Level of Overall Effectiveness (LOE), **no additional** school-based observations or evaluations will be completed/required for SY2019-2020 (TEAM – Principals and Assistant Principals, TEM – teachers, NIE – school-based staff).

6. How will teachers be expected to meet the professionalism requirements?

Given the mandate from the State regarding LOEs, **no professional conferences/scoring** will be completed/required for teachers this school year - SY2019-2020.

7. Where can teachers obtain more information regarding evaluations and licensure requirements?

Recently, the Tennessee Department of Education provided an update for districts on teacher evaluations and licensure. [Get additional important details here.](#)

Telecommuting or Teleworking

SCS is committed to providing opportunities for employees to continue day-to-day business during this unique emergency. Telecommuting has been implemented to allow employees to perform work functions while working remotely. Telecommuting requires a commitment from employees and heavy managerial support.

Click [HERE](#) to view FAQs specific to this topic.

Discrimination

1. How can SCS ensure that it complies with its obligations under Title VII and state law to prohibit discrimination in light of COVID-19?

Title VII and state law prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, and other protected classifications. To prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace, use only the guidance provided by the CDC to determine the risk of COVID-19. District employees should not make determinations of risk based on race or country of origin and must be sure to maintain the confidentiality of people with confirmed COVID-19. Employees are encouraged to review [this fact-sheet](#) or visit the Centers for Disease Control, Stigma, and Resilience, (last accessed March 11, 2020)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/related-stigma.html>.

2. Does the District have an obligation to prevent harassment of those suspected of being contracted by COVID-19?

The District will take steps to prevent discrimination and harassment against individuals who are disabled or perceived as disabled because they are exhibiting symptoms that suggest an employee has contracted coronavirus. The District will work to ensure the confidentiality of all employees' medical information and leave details to prevent harassment. Employees should also be mindful of their obligations under Board Policy 4010 [Harassment of Employees \(Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious\)](#). U.S. Department of Education, Letter to Education Leaders on Preventing and Addressing Potential Discrimination Associated with COVID-19, (March 4, 2020),

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USED/bulletins/27f5130>.

Safety and Health

1. Has the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provided guidance on how to handle coronavirus?

OSHA has issued a [fact sheet](#) regarding protecting workers in the case of a global health emergency. Employers should train employees on the following:

2. What are the best/common infection control procedures being recommended regarding the prevention and spread of the COVID-19?

According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control, as well as OSHA, the best procedures include the following:

- Employees should stay home if sick, especially if suffering from flu-like symptoms (fever of 100°F or higher, and cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body ache, headache, chills, unusual fatigue, diarrhea or vomiting)

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or with a hand sanitizer (that is at least 60% alcohol-based)
- Avoid touching nose, mouth, and eyes
- Cover cough and sneezes with a tissue or upper sleeve. Dispose of tissues in no-touch trash receptacles
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizers after coughing, sneezing, or blowing nose
- Avoid close contact with coworkers and customers (within 6 feet)
- Avoid shaking hands and always wash hands after physical contact
- Keep commonly touches surfaces (e.g., telephones, computer equipment, copiers, etc.) clean – use disinfecting sprays, if available
- Try not to use coworker’s phones, computer keyboards, etc.
- Minimize group meetings as much as possible (take advantage of web meetings, email, phone conferences)
- Ensure adequate room ventilation in meetings when you have in-person meetings
- Limit unnecessary visitors to the workplace
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle (attention to rest, diet, lots of fluids, and exercise)

Privacy

1. If an SCS employee is quarantined, what information will the District share with other employees?

If an SCS employee is confirmed to have exposure to COVID-19, the District will work with the Shelby County Health Department to take any necessary steps to ensure that other employees are not impacted. However, the District will comply with the confidentiality of impacted employees to the greatest extent possible.

Conclusion

The foregoing information is provided based on currently known data. The progress of this disease is constantly evolving. This information is subject to change based on evolving information. Employees are encouraged to contact their direct supervisor for any questions regarding this matter.

The Health Department has established a hotline for questions about the novel coronavirus: **(901) 692-7523**. The number is staffed during regular business hours, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After-hours calls will be returned on the next business day.

For more information about novel coronavirus, visit: www.shelbytnhealth.com or www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Sources for Current Information

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - About Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
 - What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)(PDF)
 - CDC Travel Notices
 - Resources for K-12 Schools and Childcare Programs
- United States Department of Education
 - Addressing Biological Hazards that may Impact Students, Staff, and Visitors
- Tennessee Department of Health