

COVID-19

FAQ for Staff:

What are the safety standards employees are expected to follow?

Prevention is key when any virus is potentially present, including COVID-19. These safety standards should be followed to slow the spread of infection:

- WASH YOUR HANDS VIGOROUSLY and regularly with soap and water – This is the best defense as it protects from germs you may have picked up throughout the day. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. While washing your hands is simple, you must wash long enough to make it affective. It may sound cliché, but sing “Happy Birthday” twice to get the full 20 - 30 seconds that is required for optimal results.
- Avoid close contact with people that are sick. Be aware of those in your environment who are sick and avoid them if possible. If you visit families in their homes, it's okay to call first and ask if anyone is sick and take protective measures, if so.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs can be spread from your hands into your body via these areas.
- Stay home when you are sick with a fever above 100.4; return to work is safe 24-hours after your temperature has returned to normal. You and your work here are important, but keeping those around you healthy and taking care of yourself are also top priorities. Working remotely is an option in some situations, please ask.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. Then, immediately throw the tissue into the trash. If you feel a sneeze coming on suddenly, sneeze into your sleeve to avoid spreading germs into the air and possibly infecting those around you.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe. This may include door knobs, surfaces of desks, cell phones, etc. This is something everyone can participate in – if you don't know where to find these cleaners, please ask!

What are the restrictions if an employee has traveled outside of the State of Wisconsin?

Until further notice, Advocates' employees If you've been to a country where the Coronavirus disease COVID-19 is prevalent (Visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for a list of these countries.) and you are sick with fever, cough or difficulty breathing, seek medical advice immediately. Call your primary care clinic and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

If you have mild to severe respiratory illness with **symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath** call your primary care provider right away! Notify your manager of your symptoms and stay home.

Advocates requires the COVID-19 symptoms checklist be completed before employees enter any site. If an employee is displaying symptoms they may not enter the building or provide services until symptoms subside plus 5 additional days quarantine.

Where should I send my expense, timesheet, etc.?

Please submit timesheets, expense forms with receipts, mileage reimbursements, etc. to info@advocateswi.com

When I return to work will I perform my same job?

Some positions have been temporarily or permanently eliminated due to COVID-19. When the planning team has determined the need for staff to return to work after layoff, Human Resources will reach out to the staff member to discuss the return to work plan, including the return date and Job Description if the position has changed.

Part of the planning is also confirmation that the employee has practiced safety guidelines, including practicing social distancing, wearing a mask when outside of the home, limiting outings and not engaging in social outings/gathering in groups larger than 10 individuals. Human Resources also reviews the OPT-IN expectations that staff are required to agree to until further notice, in order to return to work.

Who will be called back first?

The Planning team will be prioritizing client need and who is most suited for the work needed.

I was wondering about federal supplements being given to businesses who have to give 2-week quarantined to staff. Does advocates not fall under that mandate?

Sick Leave. Under the Act, a private sector employer may be required to pay its employees emergency paid sick leave. If so, the Act allows employers a credit against the 6.2% employer share of payroll tax in an amount equal to 100% of the "Qualified Sick Leave Wages" that are paid under the Act. With respect to any individual employee, the credit is limited to \$511 per day (in the case of sick leave to care for themselves) or \$200 per day (if the sick leave is to care for a family member or child whose school is closed) for a total of 10 days.

Family Leave. The Act also provides employers with a similar credit for employees utilizing the Act's family leave program. Employers are allowed a separate credit against their payroll tax obligations in an amount equal to 100% of the "Qualified Family Leave Wages" that are paid under the Act. The credit is limited to \$200 per day and \$10,000 in the aggregate for any individual employee.

So what about the ones who just started with you? Can we file unemployment

All employees who have been laid off are eligible to file for unemployment regardless of length of employment with the organization.

What is the plan for clients?

Casey Coughlin and Sabrina Myrick are leading the team communicating with schools, parents and counties to identify and ensure plans for individual clients. Employees on temporary lay off will be called back as the client census returns to normal. This could take days, weeks or months. Advocates is following the lead of our state and local governments around safety and closures. The impact of school closures on the organization is not yet known. Contact Sabrina with scheduling questions (920)770-7130.

Who is communicating with parents? Foster Parents? What should I do if one reaches out to me?

Casey Coughlin is leading the team communicating with parents. If parents reach out to you with questions, please direct them to Casey Coughlin, (920)883-5979

What is the anticipated return date for the temporary lay off? Is it permanent?

Employees on temporary lay off will be called back as the client census returns to normal. This could take days, weeks or months. Advocates is following the lead of our state and local governments around safety and closures. The impact of school closures on the organization is not yet known.

If I opt for a voluntary layoff, what is the return date? Will I have a job when it ends?

Again, the full impact of the pandemic on the organization is not known. Advocates values all employees. Your leadership team is working to mitigate the negative affects of the crisis on our staff, community partners, clients and families. Employees on temporary lay off will be called back as the client census returns to normal. This could take days, weeks or months. Advocates is following the lead of our state and local governments around safety and closures. The impact of school closures on the organization is not yet known.

How do I file for unemployment benefits if I am laid off?

Employees experiencing layoff are encouraged to file for unemployment insurance benefits using the information found [here](#).

Can I return to work if I travel outside of Wisconsin or the U.S.?

To reduce transmission of COVID-19 among staff and clients, and sustain safe business operations Advocates is requiring a mandatory 14-days return to work waiting period for any employee who travels outside the state of Wisconsin. Considerations will be made for employees who may live across the Michigan border. If you have traveled outside of the state within the last 14-days, or plan to travel outside of the state, please notify your manager immediately.

I am laid off, what should I do with my organization issued keys, phone, laptop and other company property?

Advocates will be implementing distance/virtual learning for some clients; some of those families may not have access to technology, so Advocates is requesting the return of all property so devices can be temporarily reissued to students, as needed. Keys, phones and laptops will be reissued as laid off workers are called back. If you are on temporary layoff, please return Advocates property, especially laptops, as soon as possible. For maximum cost savings measures and per contractual agreements, account access for employees on layoff will be immediately suspended (Kaleidacare, Office365, Relias).

How will I get my paycheck if I am not working?

Paychecks for employees who are on temporary layoff will be mailed to the employee's home address via U.S. Mail. Please confirm your current address by emailing info@advocateswi.com.

Can I still provide respite while I am laid off?

Yes! Please contact Kayce Murphy or Casey Coughlin for scheduling or to certify your home for respite or foster care placement licensure opportunities. *Advocates is seeing an influx in emergency respite services as the pandemic continues; this service is essential as we continue to support families.*

What happens to my benefits when I am laid off?

Anyone laid off had their insurance covered 100% by Advocates through March 31st. Beginning April 1, Advocates will continue to pay the employer portion of the insurance, while the employee resumes paying their portion. Payments can be made with money order, personal/bank check and mailed to: AHTL, PO Box 5699, De Pere, WI 54115. (update 3/31/2020)