

## **Public Health Emergency Leave (PHEL)**

On March 12, 2020, the Commonwealth of Virginia announced the availability of the Public Health Emergency Leave (PHEL), which provides employees with up to eighty (80) hours\* of leave when the State Health Commission and Governor declare communicable disease of public health threat conditions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Under what circumstances can I use PHEL?**

Employees may use PHEL to attend to their own medical needs or the medical needs of an immediate family member being tested or treated for COVID-19.

### **Who is eligible for PHEL?**

All state employees, covered or not covered by the Virginia Personnel Act, are eligible, including student wage employees, non-student wage employees, graduate assistants, and adjunct faculty. Leave will be pro-rated based on number of hours normally worked, not to exceed the maximum number of hours. Affordable Care Act (ACA) considerations and the 1,500-hour threshold still must be taken into consideration.

### **How do I use PHEL?**

1. Notify your supervisor of your leave.
2. Follow your normal leave recording procedures.
3. Provide medical documentation to human resources before returning to work or telework.
4. If you are eligible for the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP), you must file a short-term disability claim.
  - a. Please contact the Kim Steiner at [kim.steiner@sw.edu](mailto:kim.steiner@sw.edu).
  - b. Please call the Reed Group at 1-877-928-7021.
5. If you are in the Traditional Sick Leave program, and eligible for Family and Medical Leave (FMLA), you should file an FMLA claim.
  - a. Contact the Kim Steiner at [kim.steiner@sw.edu](mailto:kim.steiner@sw.edu).

### **What happens if I or my family member does not recover from COVID-19 after I exhaust the 80 hours of PHEL?**

You should contact Kim Steiner, [kim.steiner@sw.edu](mailto:kim.steiner@sw.edu) to discuss your personal situation. Visit the [sw.edu/covid19](http://sw.edu/covid19) website to find current information on the evolving coronavirus outbreak and the actions the college is taking to mitigate the spread of the disease.

\*The hours of PHEL are pro-rated for part-time employees. Example: 0.5 FTE will be granted 40 hours of PHEL for a two week leave period.