State of Maine | Executive Branch

PRESS RELEASE

Department of Administrative and Financial Services

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Contact: Kyle Hadyniak, Director of Communications

Department of Administrative and Financial Services, (207) 624-7800

State Government Augments State Employee COVID-19 Leave Options

Increased family leave and paid sick leave are effective April 1st.

AUGUSTA – In an effort to provide state employees more flexible leave options as Maine faces the COVID-19 challenge, the State of Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services (DAFS) is augmenting paid and family leave policies for state employees effective April 1st, 2020.

The changes are part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which applies to public sector and most businesses and includes the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) and the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA). These laws provide eligible employees with 10 days of paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for COVID-19-related absences. Highlights of these changes include:

- The 10 days of Emergency Paid Sick Leave may be used if the employee or someone the employee is caring for is under a required COVID-19 quarantine, or the employee has COVID-19 symptoms and is awaiting diagnosis.

- The 10 days of Emergency Paid Sick Leave may be used to care for a child due to a COVID-19 related school or daycare closure;

- The Expanded Family Medical Leave may be used for up to 12 weeks (10 weeks paid) of an employee's available FML leave to care for a child due to a COVID-19-related school or daycare closure.

Healthcare workers and emergency responders, including Unemployment Compensation workers, are exempt from these leaves. Employees are covered by the EFMLEA only after they have been employed for 30 days, but are eligible for paid leave under the EPSLA from their first day of employment. Further guidance on these changes will be available on the DAFS website in the coming days.

Maine State government provides critical services to the people of Maine and many of those services – like food assistance and unemployment insurance – are more important than ever as COVID-19 impacts Maine and its people. At the direction of the Governor, each Commissioner continues to prioritize the services their department provides and adjust their workforce accordingly to protect State employees and limit potential exposure to the virus. Additionally, departments continue to limit public-facing interactions and have encouraged Maine people to avail themselves of online and over-the-phone services. In many instances, offices have closed their forward-facing office spaces to the public. With today's heightened level of response to COVID-19, State government will continue to expand work from home opportunities and continue to assess the need for some employees to report to work.

DAFS is one of the state's largest departments, and is responsible for, among other things, workforce management, budget planning and control, information technology management, and state economy analysis.

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