

AN ACT providing paid leave to local government employees without utilizing accumulated leave time and supplementing Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, an employee of a political subdivision of the State, or an agency, authority, or instrumentality thereof, shall not be required to utilize accumulated leave time if the employee provides documentation, within three work days of an initial absence, that verifies the employee is:

(1) diagnosed with COVID-19;

(2) directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to a suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19; or

(3) undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations.

If the employee does not provide documentation pursuant to this subsection, then the employee shall utilize accumulated leave time.

b. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, an employee of a political subdivision of the State, or an agency, authority, or instrumentality thereof, shall not be required to utilize accumulated leave time if the employee provides documentation, within three work days of an initial absence, that verifies the employee is caring for an immediate family member who is:

(1) diagnosed with COVID-19;

(2) directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to a suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19; or

(3) undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations.

If the employee does not provide documentation pursuant to this subsection, then the employee shall utilize accumulated leave time.

c. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, an employee of a political subdivision of the State, or an agency, authority, or instrumentality thereof, shall not be required to utilize accumulated leave time if the employee provides documentation, within three work days of an initial absence, that verifies the employee is staying home with a child due to the closure of a preschool program, elementary or secondary school, or child care center that is related to COVID-19.

If the employee does not provide documentation pursuant to this subsection, then the employee shall utilize accumulated leave time.

d. An employee that was previously subject to documentation requirements under the employer's standard operating procedures due to excessive absenteeism or abuse of sick leave shall not be disciplined for future absences that occur as a result of being

suspected of or diagnosed with COVID-19 or as a result of an absence to care for an immediate family member impacted by COVID-19.

e. As used in this section:

“COVID-19” means the coronavirus disease 2019, as announced by the World Health Organization on February 11, 2020, and first identified in Wuhan, China.

2. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, an employee of a political subdivision of the State, or an agency, authority, or instrumentality thereof, shall receive full pay, without having to utilize accumulated leave time, for any absence that is documented pursuant to section 1 of this act.

3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall be retroactive to March 9, 2020.

STATEMENT

This bill provides that an employee of a political subdivision of the State would receive fully paid leave, without having to utilize any accumulated leave time, if the absence is related to COVID-19.

An employee subject to the provisions of the bill would have to provide documentation to that verifies the employee is, or is caring for an immediate family member who is:

- (1) diagnosed with COVID-19;
- (2) directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to a suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19; or
- (3) undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations.

An employee subject to the provisions of the bill would also receive fully paid leave, without having to utilize any accumulated leave time, if the employee is absent in order to stay home with a child due to the closure of a preschool program, elementary or secondary school, or child care center that is related to COVID-19.

If the employee does not provide documentation, as required under the bill, then the employee would have to utilize accumulated leave time.

Provides paid leave without utilizing accumulated leave time for local government employees under certain circumstances.