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**TO:** Pastors/Administrators/Parish Business Managers/Finance & Operations Managers/Principals

**FROM:** Human Resources

**DATE:** October 15, 2021

**RE:** Extension of the Massachusetts COVID-19 Temporary Emergency Paid Sick Leave

#### **OVERVIEW**

An Act Providing for Massachusetts COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave (MA EPSL) was enacted by the Legislature and signed by Governor Baker, effective May 28, 2021. On September 29, 2021, the Governor approved extension of the act. All employers are required to make paid leave time available to employees for COVID-related illnesses, quarantine, and vaccinations, and then may apply for reimbursement from the state.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATES**

This law was effective as of May 28, 2021 and has now been extended through April 1, 2022 or until the exhaustion of \$75M in program funds, whichever is earlier.

#### **REASONS FOR LEAVE**

Employees can take leave for the following reasons:

- To take care of themselves or get medical treatment due to a COVID-19 diagnosis or symptoms, or to get or recover from a COVID-19 immunization
- To quarantine as required by a local, state, or federal public official, a health authority having jurisdiction, the employee's employer, or a health care provider

Employees can also take leave to care for a family member in any of the above situations

- Covered family members are an employee's spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, a parent of the employee's spouse or domestic partner, or a person who stood *in loco parentis* to the employee when the employee was a minor child

\*In general, employers may not require employees to use other types of available paid leave before they use COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave, or require employees to find someone else to cover the time they will miss while using COVID-19 emergency Paid Sick Leave.

\*Employers may not interfere with an employee's ability to use COVID-19 MA EPSL or retaliate against an employee for taking COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave.

#### **HOW MUCH MA EPSL ARE EMPLOYEES ENTITLED TO?**

- 40 hours of leave for employees who regularly work at least 40 hours
- For part-time employees, leave amount is based on average number of hours the employee works
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**REQUESTS FOR MA EPSL**

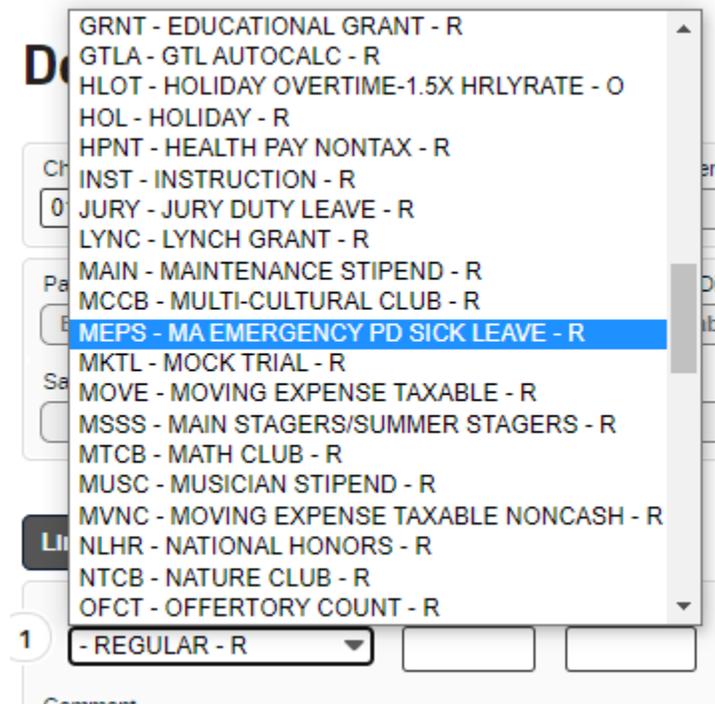
Employers may require employees to submit COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave requests in writing and may require employees to provide medical and other documentation related to the request.

**NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES IS REQUIRED**

You are required to provide notice of this to your employees. There is no specific deadline for posting, so we recommend posting this notice as soon as possible. For your convenience, the state’s updated required poster is attached with this communication.

**HOW TO CODE IN PRIMEPAY**

In PrimePay, a new earnings code for the Mass. Emergency Paid Sick Leave, “MEPS,” has been pushed out to all AB/ABZ divisions and is available for immediate use. For compliance, tracking, and potential future reimbursement reasons, the regular Sick code must not be used for MA EPSL purposes; instead, the MEPS code must be used for time taken per this new law.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If we receive additional information from the state, we will share updates with you; but we encourage you to access additional/updated information as well as FAQ’s via the following link:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-temporary-emergency-paid-sick-leave-program>

As of this writing, the latest updates were posted to this website on 10/15/21.

For further information, or if such a leave is requested, you may contact Human Resources at 617.746.5825, or you may email your inquiry to [hr@rcab.org](mailto:hr@rcab.org).