

FAQs for Employees

Rev. 3/13/20

Wittenberg's primary focus is the safety and well-being of all members of our community, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors. As such, the University is moving all classes to remote delivery methods beginning Monday, March 23 with hopes of in-person classes resuming April 6, health conditions permitting. At this time, the university will remain open and continue normal daily operations to the extent possible.

This FAQ has been prepared in three sections – 1) General, 2) Employee Specific and 3) Supervisor Specific questions. It includes guidance regarding remote work, hiring, and benefits during this period. Much of the information below is based on expert guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Ohio Department of Health, and the Clark County Combined Health District. With this in mind, we recognize that some University policies and practices may need to be adjusted to account for changing circumstances. In such cases, these adjustments will be determined by University leadership. As the situation continues to evolve, changes & updates will be communicated rapidly. Please be diligent about reading university communications related to COVID-19 for the most up to date and current information.

For specific questions not covered by this FAQ, faculty and staff are encouraged to contact their supervisor and work together with HR to address them.

Section 1: General FAQ's

Additional questions can be answered by reviewing information shared on [Wittenberg's COVID-19 information webpage](#).

When can I return to work if I have had COVID-19?

You will be given specific instructions by your healthcare provider and/or local public health clinicians based on the most current CDC and Ohio Department of Health guidance. Please understand that this guidance continues to evolve and may change several times over the next few weeks and months.

What should I do if I encounter someone who is obviously sick?

As is best practice with other respiratory illnesses such as seasonal influenza, maintaining a reasonable distance (approximately six feet away) from the sick person is a starting point. Also:

- Do not shake hands or make other physical contact.
- Offer the individual a tissue and ask the person to cover their mouth and nose if they should need to cough or sneeze.
- Use a sanitary wipe after the person has left to wipe those areas of your work station that the person has touched.
- There may be situations in which a meeting can be rescheduled to a time when the person is feeling better or the business can be conducted by phone, e-mail, or video chat. Do not hesitate to offer this suggestion if it is appropriate.
- If you believe an employee is ill and should not be working and they have not informed their supervisor you should do so in order to reduce the risk to others in the workplace.

Section 2: Employee FAQ's

What if my child's school/day care is closed due to an incident of COVID-19 and my child is not sick. I have no other childcare arrangements. Can I bring the child to work with me?

Bringing a child to work under these circumstances is not recommended or advisable—and may, in fact, be prohibited in many work areas. Decisions on the appropriateness of a work environment for children can be made on a case-by-case basis by the department chair/director, in consultation with Human Resources.

If you must stay home with your child and are unable to work remotely, you are encouraged to use paid or unpaid leave. Please work with your supervisor in order to determine if [working remotely](#) is an option.

Can my supervisor make a temporary change to my job assignments so that the University can continue the primary (essential) functions during a communicable disease outbreak?

Yes, your supervisor has the right to temporarily reassign employees to work outside their usual classifications/responsibilities to the extent they are qualified and can safely perform the work. While this situation may not be ideal – both for employees and their departments – it is important that we are all willing to adjust our “normal” work in the event of an emergency.

Reassignment may include deploying employees with certain necessary skill sets outside their departments. Depending on the circumstances, the University will notify employees who are designated as performing essential functions, as well as when and where they should report to work.

Can my supervisor make a temporary change to my assigned shift and/or assigned work schedule during a communicable disease outbreak?

Yes. Your supervisor may temporarily adjust employees' work schedules to meet operational demands, based on business needs and circumstances, so that the University can appropriately respond to the situation. These adjustments may be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon operational considerations. Your supervisor should work closely with you to discuss any changes to your assigned shift and/or work schedule and any questions or concerns you may have with the changes.

Can I work from home in order to continue operations?

In the event that the University deviates from normal operations, employees wanting to [work from home](#) should contact their supervisor and receive authorization before working from home. Supervisors have the right to approve or disapprove an employee's request. Working from home may not be applicable in all circumstances due to the nature of the job or the equipment required to work. Human Resources will consult with any department interested in exploring these options.

Can my supervisor require me to work or remain at work during a public health emergency?

Generally, the University will work to balance the preferences of employees with guidance from CDC and the Ohio Department of Health, and the need to maintain business continuity. Your supervisor retains the right to schedule work and assign duties to employees. If an employee is unable to report to

work as scheduled due to illness or injury, the supervisor should follow the standard departmental procedure regarding medical documentation (sick leave, FMLA).

A healthy employee may ask to leave work early or stay home. The supervisor can determine if this request can be accommodated based on department needs. If a staff member is directed to report to or remain at work, is otherwise safely able to do so, and refuses the directive of a supervisor, then normal corrective action procedures may be followed as appropriate. These procedures may be implemented either immediately, or once the emergent situation has stabilized and upon consultation with Human Resources.

What types of leave are available during this time?

The following options are available depending upon the nature of the job responsibilities and the extent of the illness (please note that not all options will be available in all situations):

- Use accrued paid leave as appropriate and per the policies outlined in the [Staff Manual](#) (vacation, sick, personal, and/or PTO as applicable)
- Make up the work during the same work week with supervisory approval
- Request to work a different schedule with supervisory approval
- Request leave without pay with supervisory approval and HR guidance

Normal leave policies will be applied until (and unless) a decision to change them for the emergency event is made by University leadership and communicated to campus.

What would happen to my pay if I have no sick leave or vacation (annual) leave available and need to be off work?

Unpaid leave may be requested and granted consistent with policy for the respective employment type.

As stated above, any changes to normal paid leave practices made by University leadership during an emergency event will be communicated to faculty and staff by the University.

Can I be sent home if I am sick? Only for flu-related illnesses? What if I don't think I have a flu-related illness?

The University is required to maintain a safe and healthy environment, and has broad discretion over when and where an employee is to work. For this reason, employees may be sent home if they are sick.

Of greatest concern is an employee with a fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and who exhibits cough and respiratory symptoms; this employee is likely to be sent home. Other symptoms (coughing, sneezing) may also be of concern; the decision to send home an employee who is exhibiting these symptoms should be made on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, employees are encouraged to practice basic preventative measures (practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing, covering your nose and mouth with your sleeve if you cough or sneeze, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands).

With respect to determining whether someone has the flu or flu-related illness, supervisors will follow the appropriate guidelines from the [CDC](#).

Can my approved vacation time off request be canceled?

Yes, your supervisor may reconsider the approved vacation time off request based on operational needs, and particularly during times of emergency.

Are healthy employees allowed to stay home to avoid possible exposure/infection?

If a healthy employee chooses to stay home to avoid possible exposure, they are expected to follow departmental processes to request time off or work remotely. To be considered an authorized absence, the time off, or remote work arrangement must be approved by the supervisor in advance.

What should I do if I have an underlying health condition or am immunosuppressed and want or need to stay home?

Your health is a top priority and you should consult with your health care provider. Please contact Human Resources to discuss what options are available to you regarding your particular circumstance and they can further assist.

If I have recently traveled, do I need to be cleared by my doctor before returning to work?

If you have traveled to an area with known cases of COVID-19, we recommend calling your healthcare provider to inquire about any follow up that might be needed. It is important to check CDC guidance and local authorities' information often. Because the COVID-19 situation is evolving rapidly, affected areas could issue new travel restrictions or guidance at any time and without prior notice, which could affect or interrupt your travel, or require self-quarantine when you return home.

What happens if my child is sick?

We encourage parents, families, and caregivers to have a plan to stay home when their child is sick and consider alternate care options in order to limit the spread of illness to others. We understand during this limited period, employees may be balancing sick family members and work. Please work closely with your supervisor regarding potential options for remote work, time off or flexible work schedules for these situations.

Should I continue to report to work at my usual work location?

At this time, the University is continuing limited daily operations and employees should continue to report to work at their usual work location and scheduled time unless they have made other arrangements with their supervisor, including [working remotely](#).

Wittenberg will closely monitor federal and state guidance as the situation continues to evolve, and will provide more information if circumstances change. All departments have been asked to establish plans for continuity of operations, but special attention will be given to essential university functions.

What are the expectations if I work from home?

Employees are expected to be available by the agreed-upon communication method (e-mail, phone, etc.) as determined by their supervisor and as appropriate with their regular work responsibilities. The

supervisor should work closely with their employee regarding their expectations for the employee's work schedule, tasks, deadlines, and communication expectations during the remote work period.

What if I'm sick when working from home?

Your health is a priority. Employees who are unable to work due to illness should utilize sick time off and report their absence to their supervisor as they would if they were at work. Working from home is not intended to be used in place of sick time off when an employee is ill. Please work closely with your supervisor regarding expectations for reporting time off and/or options for handling work responsibilities while you are ill.

What if I want to work from home, but I don't have the necessary computer equipment or internet access to perform my job?

You will need to continue to report to work at your usual primary physical work location. Please work with your supervisor to discuss what options, if any, are available in order to complete your work duties from home.

Does FMLA apply if I contract COVID-19? Does FMLA apply if my spouse, child or parent contracts COVID-19, and I must stay home to care for them?

If you meet the eligibility criteria for FMLA (you have worked 12 months for the university and have worked 1,250 hours in the preceding 12 months) and have an FMLA-qualifying medical condition or event for yourself or an immediate family member and you are off for more than 3 days, FMLA will apply. Please review the FMLA policy in the [Staff Manual](#) for additional information.

If I have met the criteria for FMLA and must stay home because I have contracted COVID-19 (or my spouse, child or parent has contracted COVID-19, and I must stay home to care for them), how will I be paid?

Remember, FMLA leave itself is unpaid leave. However, per the University's policy, compensatory time off (sick, vacation, personal time) will run concurrently with FMLA leave as applicable. Non-exempt Support Staff must record available sick, vacation or personal hours taken on their timecard and in the comments section write FMLA. Exempt Administrative Staff must record sick or vacation time taken on their monthly leave card and in the comments section write FMLA. Faculty must coordinate with the Department Chair and HR to record available sick time.

Please review the FMLA policy in the [Staff Manual](#) for additional information

How do I submit a request for FMLA?

An FMLA request can be sent through email to hure-mail@wittenberg.edu. You will be sent the Notice of Rights & Eligibility signifying if you are/are not eligible for FMLA and the Physician's Certification form to give to your doctor for completion. The Physician's Certification form must be emailed back to HR at hure-mail@wittenberg.edu. Once the Physician's Certification form is received in good order, the FMLA Designation form will be sent to the employee and supervisor.

What if I'm injured while working from home?

Generally, the intent of Workers' Compensation statutes is not to cover claims presented for communicable and contagious diseases. However, the employee *may* be covered by workers' compensation for work-related *injuries* that occur in the designated workspace, including the employee's home, during regularly scheduled work hours. In the case of injury occurring during regularly scheduled work hours, the employee must *immediately* report the injury to the supervisor and HR and complete an Accident & Injury Report form and email to hure-mail@wittenberg.edu.

The Accident & Injury report will be reviewed and evaluated by HR and the university's third-party administrator to determine whether the claim meets the criteria to be classified as workers' compensation.

I am on the Wittenberg employee health plan through Anthem. Are there any changes to coverage I need to know related to COVID 19?

As of today, March 13, 2020, there are no changes to the Anthem plan resulting from COVID-19. COVID-19 claims are billed & paid as diagnostic. This means that members on the university plan seeking treatment will be billed for the cost of treatment & prescriptions until the deductible is met. However, as things continue to evolve there could be state or federal mandated guidance. *If so, the university health plan will follow all public health emergency mandates for COVID-19 coverage issued by the State of Ohio or Federal Departments.*

Please keep in mind these important Plan features & guidelines:

- **[Anthem's LiveHealth Online](#) provides care 24/7.** We are encouraging Wittenberg Anthem members to take advantage of virtual visits for only \$59 per visit. The cost will apply toward deductible. If the Physician is unable to help you online, the fee is waived.
 - To use [Anthem's LiveHealth Online](#) you must first "Sign Up" using your computer or download the [mobile app](#). We encourage you to **DO THAT NOW - before** you or a family member gets sick so that it's ready to go. Then, when you need to see a provider, simply log in and select the doctor you wish to see.
 - Remember, dependents age 18 or above must create their own account as required by HIPAA. This is perfect for your college students or young adults still.
- When seeking medical treatment, use in-network providers & facilities whenever possible.
- If you suspect COVID-19 and **a healthcare provider recommends testing**, please follow the [CDC guidelines](#).
- Use the Emergency Room only in emergency situations.

I am on the Wittenberg employee health plan through Anthem but don't have enough money in my Health Savings Account (HSA) to cover healthcare costs.

High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP's), also known as Consumer Driver Health Plans (CDHP's), are designed around the idea that when employees take on more responsibility for their own healthcare there is greater opportunity to control costs. With that in mind, **if you are sick, use LifeHealth Online, see your personal physician, or go to an Urgent Care facility. In extreme or emergency situations go to**

the Emergency Room. *Not seeking care when you need it because you are on a High Deductible Health Plan is not a responsible action for your personal health or the health of those around you.*

Use your Health Savings Account (HSA) to pay for healthcare costs.

- Remember that members already received an employer contribution in January and will receive another one in April.
- If you don't have enough money in your HSA, you are permitted to increase your contribution up to the IRS contribution limit. See HR for assistance.
- If you prefer to make payments to providers that is also acceptable. As you accumulate HSA funds through your payroll contributions or through employer contributions, make regular payments to providers until the bill is paid off.
- Don't be afraid to negotiate your costs! Sometimes, providers will take a percentage off the bill simply for paying it off in full. If you pay it off using your own savings, you can reimburse yourself once funds are in your HSA.
- Download the Chard Snyder mobile app from Google Play or the App Store to view account balances and transaction details, submit and review claims, or upload paperwork.
- Contact Chard Snyder through Live Chat from the Chard Snyder website or send an email to askpenny@chard-snyder.com

We also encourage you to regularly check for the most up-to-date & accurate information on COVID-19 by visiting the [CDC coronavirus homepage](#) which includes [Resources for Households](#) and information on [Prevention & Treatment](#).

I am on the Wittenberg 403(b) Savings & Retirement plan through TIAA and my retirement account has been affected. What should I do?

If you have questions or concerns about your TIAA 403(b) retirement plan, contact the TIAA customer service team at 800-422-4661. Additionally, you can log into your account at www.tiaa.org.

What should I be aware of with regard to Cyber Crime at this time?

Using COVID-19 as the subject of an attachment, or in conjunction with an email or a website for delivery of ransomware/malware, is rapidly increasing. Always be mindful of what you click! If you don't know or trust the source, don't open it.

Be mindful of phishing scams that use the importance of COVID-19 to dupe employees to turn over information (cyber) and/or money/assets (crime).

I'm so worried about this! Who can I talk to?

HR and our qualified vendors are here to help answer your specific benefit questions. Reach out to us with your questions or concerns.

1. **HR questions:** Contact us at hure-mail@wittenberg.edu or 937-327-7517.
2. **Healthcare questions:** Contact Anthem's member services team at 833-639-1634 or USI's Benefits Resource Center at 855-874-6699.

3. **Health Savings Account (HSA) or Flexible Spending Account (FSA) questions:** Contact Chard Snyder's member services team at 800-982-7715 or askpenny@chard-snyder.com.
4. **Retirement Account questions:** Contact TIAA customer service team at 800-842-2776.
5. **Employee Assistance Plan (EAP):** For those times when you're feeling overwhelmed or need to talk to someone about concerns over your health, a family member's health, your future retirement, or any other number of worrisome things employees can **utilize the free [Employee Assistance Plan \(EAP\)](#) through MetLife**. MetLife, contracts with LifeWorks U.S., Inc. to provide **no-cost** EAP Services to Wittenberg employees and immediate family members. The EAP Program is a confidential counseling and referral service providing support through a national network of highly trained practitioners. The program includes up to 5 telephonic or video consultations with licensed counselors per issue, per calendar year. Employees and their immediate family members can call **1-888-319-7819** to speak with a counselor or to schedule an appointment, 24/7/365. Web and mobile app services are also available. Please see the [Employee Assistant Program](#) flyer for additional information.

Section 3: Supervisor FAQ's

As a manager or supervisor, can I make a temporary change to employees' job assignments so that my department can continue our primary (essential) functions during a communicable disease outbreak?

Yes, a manager and supervisor have the right to temporarily reassign employees to work outside their usual classifications/responsibilities to the extent they are qualified and can safely perform the work. This includes employees with the necessary skills that are needed to work outside their departments/divisions. Depending on the circumstances, the University will notify these employees that they are designated as performing essential functions and when and where they must report to work.

Can I make a temporary change to an employees' assigned shift and/or assigned work schedule during a communicable disease outbreak?

Yes. Upon appropriate business needs and circumstances, a supervisor may temporarily adjust employees' work schedules to meet operational demands. This adjustment may be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon operational considerations. A supervisor should work closely with the employee to discuss any change to assigned shifts and/or work schedules.

Can I allow employees to work remotely or work alternate schedules in order to continue operations?

Yes. In reviewing your staffing situation related to a declared emergency situation, allowing your employees to [work remotely](#) may be a viable option during this critical period. However, this may not be applicable in all circumstances due to the nature of the job or the equipment required to work. You should document any arrangements to remote work in writing. Supervisors may contact Human Resources for help in determining if this is an appropriate option.

Are there issues I need to consider regarding employees working remotely in an emergency situation?

The University is not currently mandating that employees work remotely, but supervisors should assess their business priorities now when considering whether work arrangements, including remote work, are viable options. It is important for the department to find ways to enable employees to perform their job functions while away from the central work location.

Human Resources can assist supervisors in evaluating and approving alternate work arrangements. Supervisors should always authorize the employee in writing (email will suffice) to work remotely.

Human Resources and Information Technology Services have a variety of resources available should a supervisor or employee want to consider a remote work arrangement. Preplanning is recommended.

What right does a supervisor have to require that an employee report to work or remain at work during a public health emergency?

A supervisor retains the right to schedule work and assign duties to employees. If an employee is unable to report to work as scheduled due to illness or injury, the supervisor should follow the standard departmental procedure regarding medical documentation (sick leave, FMLA). Please consult with Human Resources should you require further clarification.

A healthy employee may ask to leave work early or stay home. The supervisor can determine if this request can be accommodated based on department needs. If a staff member is directed to report to or remain at work, is otherwise safely able to do so, and refuses the directive of a supervisor, normal corrective action procedures should be followed as appropriate. These procedures may be implemented either immediately, or once the emergent situation has stabilized, and upon consultation with Human Resources.

What types of leave are available for employees to use during this time?

The following options are available although not all options will be available in all situations depending upon the nature of the job responsibilities and the extent of the illness:

- Use accrued paid time off (vacation, sick, personal, and/or PTO, as applicable) – see [Staff Manual](#)
- Make up the work during the same workweek with supervisory approval
- May request to work a different schedule with supervisory approval
- Request leave without pay

Timely processing of unpaid time off is critical.

Normal leave policies will be applied until (and unless) a decision to change them for the emergency event is made by University leadership and communicated to campus.

What would happen to employees' pay if they have no sick time off or vacation time off available?

Unpaid time off may be requested and granted in accordance with existing policy.

Otherwise, any changes to normal paid time off practices made by University leadership during an emergency event will be communicated to faculty, staff, and students by the University.

Can we send people home if they are sick? How will we determine whether people are sick?

The University is required to maintain a safe and healthy environment, and has broad discretion over when and where an employee is to work.

Employees may be sent home if they are sick. Of greatest concern is an employee with a fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit and a cough; this employee should definitely be sent home. Other symptoms (coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or diarrhea) may also be of

concern. The decision to send home an employee who is exhibiting these symptoms is to be made on a case-by-case basis.

If a staff member is sent home, what options are available to stay in “paid” status?

The staff member must use applicable time off should it be available, and depending on the illness and the job responsibilities, they may make up the work in the same workweek. Otherwise, they should use unpaid time off. It is recommended you consult with Human Resources regarding pay status if you have questions.

Can I cancel an approved vacation time off request?

Yes, the supervisor may want to reconsider the approved vacation time off request based on operational needs.

An employee informed me that their child’s school/day care is closed due to COVID-19, and their child is not sick. The employee has no other child care arrangements. Can the employee bring their child to work?

Bringing a child to work under these circumstances is not recommended or advisable—and in many work areas it may be prohibited (laboratories, for example). Decisions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the department head. Paid or unpaid time off may be available if the employee must stay home and is unable to work. You should work with your employee to determine if work can be performed from home.

Are healthy employees allowed to stay home to avoid possible exposure/infection?

If a healthy employee chooses to stay home to avoid possible exposure, they are expected to follow departmental processes to request time off or remote work. To be considered an authorized absence, the time off, or remote work arrangement, must be approved by the supervisor in advance.

What should I do if I have an underlying health condition or am immunosuppressed and want or need to stay home?

Employee health is a top priority and employees should be encouraged to consult with their health care provider. Please contact Human Resources to discuss what options are available to employees regarding their particular circumstance and they can further assist.

As a supervisor, can I modify the university’s leave policies?

No, the university’s policies regarding leaves are still in force and may only be modified by University leadership as the situation warrants.

If an employee requests to stay home in order to self-isolate, what should I do?

Wittenberg University is not currently mandating employees to stay home if they are healthy or asymptomatic. Employees may make a request to their supervisors to work remotely or approve vacation time off if they choose to remain home to self-isolate while they are healthy.

I am a manager of student employees. What should I consider during the university online instruction period?

Supervisors of student employees should following the guidance outlined by Jon Duraj in the email sent to supervisors on March 12, 2020. Additional information can be found [online here](#) under Student Engagement and Events.

I am a hiring supervisor who needs to hire a new employee or I have a position that is currently posted. What should I consider during this period?

The University currently remains open while classes are being delivered via remote methods, however, we realize there may be hiring supervisor or candidate concerns during this time that impact the recruitment process. We encourage hiring supervisors to contact Human Resources for specific guidance.

Does FMLA apply if an employee contracts COVID-19? Does FMLA apply if the spouse, child or parent contracts COVID-19, and the employee must stay home to care for them?

If the employee has met the eligibility criteria for FMLA (they have worked 12 months for the university and have worked 1,250 hours in the preceding 12 months) and have an FMLA-qualifying medical condition or event for themselves or for an immediate family member and they are off for more than 3 days, FMLA will apply. Please note that contracting COVID-19 could also impact other health conditions that might be covered by FMLA as well. Please review the FMLA policy in the [Staff Manual](#) for additional information.

If the employee contacts you about an FMLA request, direct them to send an email to hure-mail@wittenberg.edu.

I've noticed some extreme or worrisome stress-related behavior or actions in my employees. What should I do?

1. **HR related questions:** Contact us at hure-mail@wittenberg.edu or 937-327-7517.
2. **Healthcare related questions:** Contact Anthem's member services team at 833-639-1634 or USI's Benefits Resource Center at 855-874-6699.
3. **Health Savings Account (HSA) or Flexible Spending Account (FSA) questions:** Contact Chard Snyder's member services team at 800-982-7715 or askpenny@chard-snyder.com.
4. **403(b) Retirement Account questions:** Contact TIAA customer service team at 800-842-2776.
5. **Employee Assistance Plan (EAP):** For those times when you're feeling overwhelmed or need to talk to someone about concerns over your health, a family member's health, your future retirement, or any other number of worrisome things employees can **utilize the free [Employee Assistance Plan \(EAP\)](#) through MetLife**. MetLife, contracts with LifeWorks U.S., Inc. to provide **no-cost** EAP Services to Wittenberg employees and immediate family members. The EAP Program is a confidential counseling and referral service providing support through a national network of highly trained practitioners. The program includes up to 5 telephonic or video consultations with licensed counselors per issue, per calendar year. Employees and their immediate family members can call **1-888-319-7819** to speak with a counselor or to schedule an appointment, 24/7/365. Web and mobile app services are also available. Please see the [Employee Assistance Program](#) flyer for additional information.

This is a working document based upon current policies. It may be revised as new information becomes available related to operations during a disaster or pandemic, or based on further direction we may receive from University leadership, the Board of Directors, the State of Ohio and/or other civil authorities. You should familiarize yourself with this and other disaster-related materials in order to be optimally prepared in the event of a disaster or pandemic.