

## **WSCFF “Best Practices” for Sick, Paid Administrative Leave & Workers Compensation.**

*We recognize that the Washington State Department of Health has suggested that a first responder, who has tested positive for COVID-19, can return to work if they wear a mask. We are strongly requesting that members who have tested positive and have not been symptom-free for 72 hours or do not feel well for any reason, not go to work. The uncertainty of how this disease is spread is concerning to us, and we would rather have our members not in the work environment.*

### **Options for Leave:**

#### **Sick Leave**

- o Normal sick leave or injuries for yourself or a family member
- o The care of a family member

#### **Paid Administrative Leave**

- o Members who have flu-like symptoms, not yet tested.
- o Members who tested positive for COVID-19
- o Members who have been placed in quarantine (prior to any symptoms)
- o Members who have been placed in isolation (after symptoms occur)
- o Member fails employers self-check guidelines

### ***For reference on our position of Paid Administrative Leave:***

*The Department of Labor and Industries is encouraging employers to continue to pay workers who are quarantined because time loss under workers’ compensation does not cover a worker’s entire income. Whether or not to file a claim is always a worker’s choice. For workers who are under quarantine and on paid administrative leave, there is no barrier to filing a claim in the event they get sick. The claim determination is not impacted by the paid administrative leave status.*

### **Members who have tested positive for COVID-19 / Workers Compensation: State or Sel- Insured**

- You are encouraged to complete your department’s appropriate exposure forms and follow the guidelines for workers compensation.
- Documentation will be critical and having a positive test may determine the outcome.
- If in doubt, submit the L&I form and seek coverage.
- Your employer cannot stop you from filling out the form and submitting it for consideration

*The president’s nationwide emergency declaration (under the [Stafford Act](#)) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic frees up more than \$40 billion in emergency federal funds to help combat the virus, and specifically allows state and local governments to be reimbursed up to 75 percent for emergency protective measures under the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Public Assistance Program. The IAFF is working to increase the reimbursed amount from 75% to 100%.*

***Local leaders should communicate fire department needs, including necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and overtime and backfill, to their local elected officials and stress that these needs must be included in their requests for reimbursement under the FEMA Public Assistance Program.***

*In addition to the Stafford Act, Washington State is providing a 25% match for eligible costs. The authorization was based on negotiations between the Military Department of Finance, the State Coordinating Officer for the Declaration, and the Office of Financial Management assistant director for budget.*

*This same authorization information has been disseminated to hundreds of public entities across the State by PA staff members. The federal and state match language will be reflected in the grant agreements established with eligible applicants to the Public Assistance program.*

***Remember to document all exposures and injuries in [PIIERS](#) - the exposure tracking program created by WSCFF members for all first responders.***