

Item 4: Department of Consumer and Business Services /

Department of Administrative Services

COVID-19 Leave Fund for Quarantined Workers

Analyst: Matt Stayner

Request: Increase the Federal Funds expenditure limitation for the Department of Administrative Services established at the April 23, 2020 meeting of the Emergency Board by \$30,000,000 from funding made available to states through the Coronavirus Relief Fund and establish a \$30,000,000 Other Funds expenditure limitation for the Department of Consumer and Business Services, for funding from the Coronavirus Relief Fund received by the Department of Administrative Services and transferred to the Department of Consumer and Business Services to establish a Quarantine Time Loss program providing financial assistance for sick leave to certain workers that were not extended sick leave benefits under the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA).

Description: The proposed program intends to span the gap left by the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act for those workers who did not qualify for the federal program's 80 hours of paid sick leave or were otherwise excluded from employer sick leave and are required to quarantine due to contracting or having been exposed to COVID-19. This includes workers at companies with 500 or more employees, health care workers at hospitals, and first responders. Qualified program beneficiaries would receive a flat, per-day payment of \$120 for each day of quarantine that the employee would otherwise be scheduled to work.

To expedite the payment to impacted workers, the payment is predicated solely on the completion of an application for program benefits that includes, along with additional items that the program administrator may require, a statement by the applicant attesting to the following qualifications:

- Applicant is being directed by a health care professional or contact tracer to quarantine and identifies that individual in the application.
- Applicant is unable to work because they are quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a health care provider), and/or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis.
- Applicant is not currently receiving or seeking time loss payments through an active worker's compensation claim related to their COVID-19 status.
- Applicant is not seeking unemployment benefits covering their lost time.
- Other COVID-19 leave is not available to applicant due to one or more of the following:
 - Their employer has claimed exemption from the paid emergency COVID-19 sick leave provisions of the FFCRA.
 - Their employer is not subject to the provisions of the FFCRA and has provided no COVID-19 sick leave benefits for the year 2020.
 - The employee has exhausted the COVID-19 sick leave benefits any of their employers have provided for quarantine purposes for 2020.
- Applicant does not anticipate earning more than \$60,000 individually in 2020, or their household income will not exceed \$120,000 in 2020.
- Applicant agrees in writing to reimburse the state of Oregon the full value of any Quarantine Time Loss payments found by agency staff to be secured through fraudulent means.

The program is to be limited to the funding provided and is inclusive of both benefit payments and administrative costs. Payment of benefits to applicants are subject to the availability of funds provided. DCBS may verify statements attested to by applicants, but the initial payment of benefits is not predicated upon such verification.

Recommendation: The Co-Chairs of the Emergency Board recommend increasing the Federal Funds expenditure limitation for the Department of Administrative Services established at the April 23, 2020 meeting of the Emergency Board by \$30,000,000 from funding made available to states through the Coronavirus Relief Fund and establishing a \$30,000,000 Other Funds expenditure limitation for the Department of Consumer and Business Services, for funding from the Coronavirus Relief Fund received by the Department of Administrative Services and transferred to the Department of Consumer and Business Services to establish a Quarantine Time Loss program providing financial assistance for sick leave to certain workers that were not extended sick leave benefits under the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA).