

American Rescue Plan Act Guidelines

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) which was signed into law on March 18, 2020, had two major provisions:

1. The Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) – provided an additional 80 hours of sick for qualifying reasons for COVID-related absences
2. The Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA) – expanded traditional FMLA to include the need for leave to care for the employee’s child if the child’s school or child care provider was closed due to COVID-19

Both acts were temporary measures put in place by the U.S. Department of Labor, and both expired on December 31, 2020.

Athens State University voluntarily extended both of these measures through March 31, 2021.

Although the 80 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave provided under the provisions of the FFCRA are no longer available as of April 1, 2021, the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) allows for the continuation of the Expanded Family Medical Leave until September 30, 2021. Under the provisions of the ARPA, the University will continue to provide up to 12 weeks of FMLA/unpaid emergency and family medical leave to eligible employees for any of the following qualifying reasons:

1. Employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
2. Employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
3. Employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
4. Employee is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine;
5. Employee is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19;
6. Employee is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretaries of Labor and Treasury.
7. Employee is obtaining a COVID-19 vaccination;
8. Employee is recovering from any illness related to receiving the vaccine;
9. Employee is seeking or waiting for test results or a medical diagnosis for COVID-19, or the employer has requested the employee to obtain the same.

These provisions will provide up to 12 weeks of protected unpaid leave under FMLA for eligible employees. Employees are required to take their accrued sick leave concurrently with the unpaid FMLA as outlined in the [Family Medical Leave Act Policy](#). Additionally, employees may take their paid annual or personal leave after their sick leave is exhausted. Leave guidelines are outlined in the University’s [Leaves with Pay Policy](#).

Please contact Human Resources with any questions that you might have.