Did you Get COVID while teaching on-campus and need to take time off work?

If you miss work due to a positive COVID diagnosis, you may be able to receive L&I benefits which can reduce the amount of sick leave you need to use while you are off work. Faculty who test positive for COVID-19 due to close contact at work qualify for worker's compensation based on Governor Inslee's May 11, 2021 guidance in the Health Emergency Labor Standards Act ([HELSA](#)). You will need to report any absence from work to your Chair and to Human Resources, but you will also need to file a claim with Washington State Labor and Industries to receive these benefits. Presumptive coverage for COVID-19 ends when the both the state and federal public health emergencies have ended. Health care and frontline workers will continue to be eligible for presumptive coverage until the president of the United States declares an end to the federal public health emergency.

What do I need to do?
1. Most import is to get a PCR test to document your COVID diagnosis. You do not need a doctor's verification if you manage your illness at home, however you will need to have a positive COVID test from one of the following:

   - A pharmacy.
   - A county health department or other temporary testing facility.
   - Other commercial locations that are providing testing.

   L&I cannot accept a self-administered home test. The test must be performed and recorded by a medical provider or one of the parties in the list above. L&I will accept both Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests for verification that you have contracted COVID-19, so long as it is administered by one of the above providers.

2. If you will be absent for 5 or more days, you should contact Gretchen Bird in Human Resources.

3. To file a claim with L&I use the link here https://lni.wa.gov/claims/for-workers/file-a-claim/
   L&I will contact you and you will need to answer some questions to rule out the possibility that you contracted COVID somewhere other than work, and you will need to provide documentation of your COVID test. Be sure to look for and follow up on any correspondence from them. They will also contact BC to notify them that you will be receiving benefits.

   You will have three options for being paid while you are unable to work:

   - receiving a portion of your wages from L&I (these are called "time-loss" benefits and are typically approximately 60% of an employee's salary)

- using your sick leave (and receiving full wages) in lieu of worker's compensation pay;
- or using a combination of both Worker's Compensation pay and Sick Leave pay; you will receive full pay but will use less of your accrued leave.

Example: L&I determines that I am eligible under HELSA and that I am eligible for 60% of my normal pay for the 5 days I was out sick. I have three options:

- I receive 60% of my pay from L&I, do not get paid from BC and do not use any accrued leave
- I use 5 days of accrued leave and receive my full pay from BC and do not receive anything from L&I
- I receive 60% of my pay from L&I, and I use 2 days of accrued leave and receive 40% of my pay from BC

This seems like a lot of extra work, what is the benefit?

The benefit of filing with L&I is that you will reduce the amount of sick leave that you will need to take while you are out of work. Sick leave can have a cash value under certain circumstances, and retaining your bank of leave may be of benefit to you.

Do I need to file for L&I if I am going to use my leave to cover my absence?

No. If you are fine with using your accrued leave to cover your time out of work, fling with L&I will not provide any additional benefit – though it will help with tracking the number of employees at BC who contract COVID on the job.

I had COVID 4 months ago can I still file with L&I?

Yes, you can! And you should. Though you will still need a positive COVID test from one of the authorized providers to document your illness. If your claim is approved, the college can restore some or all of your sick leave.