

We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic situation, associated public health advice and provincial/territorial measures. At this time, we are temporarily amending the 'Other Leave with Pay' (699 Leave) guidance related to the COVID-19 pandemic which came into effect November 15, 2021, to respond to the emerging situation with the Omicron variant. This temporary change will be reassessed on an ongoing basis as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.

Temporary Changes to 699 leave

Effective December 20, 2021, the following temporary changes are being made to the guidance on the use of 'Other Leave with Pay (699)' for reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic for caregiving responsibilities.

Requests for 'Other Leave with Pay (699)' will continue to be assessed based on whether the employee remains available for work, taking into consideration their vaccination status and in accordance with the *Policy on COVID-19 Vaccination for the Core Public Administration Including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Policy on COVID-19 vaccination)*. Canada's progress in vaccinating its population and in implementing effective public health measures, including widely available COVID-19 vaccines and rapid tests, allows the Employer to return to the standard application of the provisions of the collective agreements and terms and conditions of employment. This means that 'Other Leave with Pay (699)' will only be available under exceptional circumstances and for temporary usage, and generally, in the context of the guidance below, after the following conditions have been examined:

- the employee would otherwise be available for work
- options have been explored for
 - flexible work hours
 - remote or alternate work
 - paid leave, available through [collective agreements](#) or [terms and conditions of employment](#) ^{*[1]}

Managers need to examine individual requests relating to 'Other Leave With Pay (699)' on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with their Labour Relations Advisor.

The employee has caregiving responsibilities

There may be employees who face caregiving challenges. An employee may find themselves in circumstances in which:

- an unexpected loss of caregiving arrangements for a child, a family member or a dependant in their care has occurred and is due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- a child, family member or a dependant in their care is diagnosed with COVID-19, or is required to self-isolate;
- a child, family member or a dependant in their care does not have access to attend school in person and their online education and learning activities requires their supervision*

^[1] when responding to a query or determining an employee entitlement to leave, managers must refer to the appropriate collective agreement article or terms and conditions of employment.

To help manage these responsibilities, the employee should:

- attempt to make alternate care arrangements
- discuss remote work or flexible/alternate work hours

If the employee cannot make alternate arrangements, paid leave options as applicable as per their collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment, such as leave with pay for family-related responsibilities when the request is for someone in their care, should be used first. If the employee would otherwise be available for work, 'Other Leave with Pay (699)' can then be considered.

Managers need to examine individual requests relating to 'Other Leave With Pay (699)' for family-related responsibilities on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with their Labour Relations Advisor.

* 'Other Leave With Pay (699)' will not be available if the employee has access to school, daycare or community services for someone in their care, but has chosen to keep them home.

It is generally expected that the employee will continue to work some hours during the week if they are granted 'Other Leave With Pay (699).'

Vacation leave usage reminder

The employee should also schedule their vacation leave allotment that has been earned this year. It is important to remember that employees should take all their vacation leave in the year it is earned. Scheduling vacation leave in advance means it is set aside and used for that purpose. Employees should discuss leave options with their manager. For instance, if employees usually take some time off as vacation leave during the holidays, we would expect them to take it again this year. 'Other Leave with Pay (699)' is not available for regularly scheduled breaks due to statutory holidays or school breaks.

November 15, 2021 guidance on the use of 699 leave that remains in effect

Requests for 'Other Leave with Pay (699)' will continue to be assessed on whether the employee remains available for work, taking into consideration their vaccination status and in accordance with the *Policy on COVID-19 vaccination*.

There are no changes to the November 15, 2021 pandemic related guidance on 'Other Leave with Pay (699)' for other 699 leave eligibility categories. If employees face difficulty completing some of their scheduled work for reasons related to the pandemic, departments and managers are advised to discuss with their employees possible flexible work arrangements (i.e., remote work, alternate or flexible hours per the collective agreement or [terms and conditions of employment](#)).

OTHER 699 LEAVE ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES

The employee is symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19

If the employee is experiencing symptoms that could mean they are infected with COVID-19, they must follow the guidance of their local public health authority. The employee does not

report to a worksite; if possible works remotely. The employee must get tested as soon as possible. If remote work is not available, or they are too sick to work, they are expected to use their existing sick leave credits.

If they have tested positive for COVID-19, they must follow the guidance of their local public health authority. The employee does not report to a worksite; if possible works remotely.

If they are too ill to work some or all of their hours, they are expected to use their existing sick leave credits.

If they do not have enough sick leave credits, they may be advanced sick leave credits in accordance with their collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment.

The employee is required to self-isolate and is asymptomatic

If the employee is required to isolate or quarantine, they should arrange to be tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible and in accordance with public health recommendations. They should not go to their worksite.

'Other Leave With Pay (699)' will be provided for a reasonable time period to receive the results of this test if they cannot work remotely or if remote work is not available.

They may be eligible for 'Other Leave With Pay (699)' if:

- they require time off to get tested
- their work requires them to be onsite, and
 - remote work is not possible, and
 - they have been instructed to isolate or quarantine by a medical practitioner or public health authority

'Other Leave With Pay (699)' will not be available if they have travelled for personal reasons and are required to isolate or quarantine.

Note: If they test positive or are too ill to work, they are expected to use their sick leave credits.

The employee is at high risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19 infection, or the employee has a duty of care for someone who is at high risk.

If the employee continues to be high risk, as confirmed by their medical practitioner, and they remain available to work in accordance with the *Policy on COVID-19 vaccination*:

- the accommodation process must be initiated as soon as possible, if it is not already underway. 699 leave was provided up until and including November 14, 2021. After this date, departments should consult with departmental representatives on alternate work arrangements or other measures to enable the employee to work.

If the employee has a duty of care for someone who is high risk, and they remain available to work in accordance with the *Policy on COVID-19 Vaccination*:

- the accommodation process must be initiated, if it is not already underway. 699 leave was provided up until and including November 14, 2021. If there is no possible measure that can be made to allow them to work (e.g., remote work, alternate duties), leave options could also be available as per their collective agreement or terms and conditions of employment.

The employee is not equipped to work remotely or their worksite is not open

In very limited situations, 'Other Leave With Pay (699)' could be granted if:

- they do not have access to the tools (equipment, software, internet) to work remotely.
- their work requires them to be onsite, however
 - their building is closed, or
 - there are restrictions on the number of employees that can be onsite at one time, or
 - alternate duties, or alternate work locations, are not available to them.