

713 – Paid Quarantine Leave for First Responders

Section 713.01 Purpose	This policy shall provide guidance for compliance with Texas Local Government Code Section 180.008(b), which provides for paid leave, continuation of benefits, and expense reimbursement for an employee subject to quarantine due to a possible or known on the job exposure to a communicable disease as per <i>Texas Health & Safety Code Section 81.003(1)</i> .
Section 713.02 First Responders	<p>This policy applies only to Fort Bend County employees who work as first responders. As defined by Section 180.008(b), first responder shall include a persons employed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detention officers, responsible for care and custody of individuals incarcerated at the County jail, • emergency medical technicians, certified under Chapter 773 of the Health and Safety Code, • peace officers, as described by Article 2.12 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and/or • fire fighters, as certified by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection, Chapter 419 of the Government Code
Section 713.03 Conditions	<p>For certain highly contagious and dangerous communicable diseases, the local health authority may order quarantine to prevent further spread of the disease. Paid leave and benefits provided by this policy are only available to a first responder who is ordered to quarantine or isolate for the period required by the local health authority or a supervisor working in accordance with the local health authority's guidance, due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while on duty.</p> <p>A possible or known exposure occurs when, using the best information and guidance available at the time, it is determined that an employee was placed at risk of contracting a communicable disease while on duty (such as by prolonged exposure to a person known to be infected by a communicable disease).</p> <p>An employee may be required to provide sufficient information to establish on duty exposure, and or proof of an order to quarantine, in order to qualify for the benefits as detailed in Section 713.04 below.</p>
Section 713.04 Compensation and Benefits	If a first responder is ordered to quarantine under the conditions of Section 713.03 above, the employee will be placed on paid leave with no reduction of accrued leave balances for the duration of the quarantine period. The employee is also eligible for continuation of all customary benefits as if the employee were not on leave. Employees may also be eligible for reimbursement of expenses incurred due to quarantine, such as lodging, medical, and transportation.

Policy Approved and Adopted By:
Fort Bend County Commissioners Court
September 28, 2021