

COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES:

Documenting and Tracking Employee Issues

Employee Relations professionals are constantly adapting to manage the public health crisis. Here's what we learned this week from our community of employee relations experts about how they are handling employee matters related to COVID-19.

Most organizations are documenting and tracking employee issues related to COVID-19

ER Issue Categories	Documenting	Tracking
Accommodations - COVID-19	82%	76%
Behavioral Issues - COVID-19	86%	71%
Exposure - Work - COVID-19	88%	100%
Exposure - Family/Community - COVID-19	87%	87%
Leave Management - COVID-19	95%	95%
Performance - COVID-19	91%	64%
Policy Questions - COVID-19	69%	92%
Policy Violations - COVID-19	83%	83%
Time & Attendance - COVID-19	85%	92%
Travel to High Risk Area - COVID-19	69%	92%
Wage & Hour - COVID-19	70%	90%

"We combined the exposure between work, community/family. We also have confirmed negative test, confirmed positive test and pulled out COVID 19 specific discrimination, harassment, retaliation and other policy violations to track the issue types."

The majority of organizations are also documenting and tracing COVID-19 related investigations

Investigation Categories	Documenting	Tracking
Discrimination - COVID-19	75%	83%
Harassment - COVID-19	75%	83%
Retaliation - COVID-19	82%	82%
Unfair Treatment Accommodation - COVID-19	88%	63%
Unfair Treatment Wage & Hour - COVID-19	88%	63%
Other - COVID-19 (see comments)	83%	67%

Some additional ideas...

"We're also tracking COVID-19 labor activity-related cases. For example: petitions for hazard pay, threatened walk/sick outs, posts on social media that comment on CV-19 and impacts on terms and conditions of employment and information being shared with employees from labor union (i.e., <https://cwa-union.org/covid-19>)."

And some have had fewer or no investigations since the start of COVID-19...

"Our investigations have dropped off since this crisis began. I believe employees have been so focused on other things that the issues that would typically rise to the level of investigation aren't being reported or have subsided."

"We haven't had issues in these categories occur yet, but if we did, we would document/track them per our normal processes."

Share any new or creative practices you have implemented to ensure the safety, security and wellbeing of employees during these uncertain times

Protecting Employees.

"Our stores will be installing plexiglass shields at all points of sale (except self-checkout)."

"We are moving employees' desks to spread out. Implemented 2 weeks paid leave for COVID-19. We are encouraging use of the EAP for employees experiencing anxiety, etc."

"Employees are not allowed to come into the office without SVP approval. Putting together training on presenting remotely and best practices for managing remote."

"We have made structural changes to enable social distancing for employees required to work onsite (essential manufacturing per federal critical infrastructure guidelines)."

"ER specifically has proposed and received alignment from E-Staff to:

- *Lead with Compassion at this time and halt any current active performance management (i.e. improvement goals and active PIPs till May 1;*
- *Delay any involuntary terminations related to restructures and the like till May 1.*
- *Uphold our culture and continue business as usual, addressing any behavior issues in the workplace including engaging in investigations and related discipline actions up to and including termination of employment within normal practices."*

"We're continuing to redefine who is an essential onsite worker."

Supplementing Pay.

"Lastly, we just announced a special one-time lump payment to all hourly associates that will be paid, tax-free, on 3/31."

"Stipends are provided in each paycheck to help buy safety supplies such as sanitizer/gloves."

"We're paying employees that cannot work from home or where there is no work available for two weeks, will assess it every 2 weeks."

"We're looking at possibly modifying an EE Catastrophic Assistance Program to possibly provide aid in certain circumstances during this time."

Extending Benefits.

"Additionally, we've opened up our online medical service (Teladoc) to all employees (including those who are not insured through our company's health care plan)."

"We have provided an "emergency pay" benefit for employees who we ask to stay home if they exhibit COVID-like symptoms, so they don't have to draw down their PTO accruals. We have expanded our childcare benefit for people who are required to work onsite."

"We're working with our benefits teams to provide more telemedicine options and not have people come onsite to use our health centers."

"We are offering free Tele-Health for employees."

Maintaining Connections.

"We are working on launching a program to enable our retail employees to remain connected to their teams, the company and their consumers during our COVID-19 retail closures. The program will offer voluntary opportunities for retail employees to engage in certain digital activities."

"We've held many creative trainings for managers to support virtual working, having fun, working with kids at home, virtual happy hours and birthday celebrations."

Thinking Differently.

"We have implemented A/B work schedules for those who must report, work from home exclusively for others, enhanced pre-boarding and off-boarding activities, mandatory essential workers."

"Our Educational Training department has helped to develop home activities for kids to give to our employees. We have adopted creative scheduling. Our Executives are donating portions of their vacation accruals to other employees to cover any time off that they need."

"We set up a pay code to track time that someone is out (examples of circumstances would be CDC/agency quarantine, COVID-19 exposure, suspected/awaiting test or physician directed quarantine, positive confirmed case, etc.)."

"We're expanding the scope of HR professionals that can track possible COVID19 cases and track them consistently in HRA for a global picture of our company."

**Looking for more best practices and guidance around
managing employee issues related to COVID-19?**

Visit the [HR Acuity COVID-19 resource center](#).