MEMO

Date: April 8, 2020

To: Harris Health System Employees

From: Omar C. Reid
              Senior Vice President, Human Resources

Subject: Families First Coronavirus Response Act Notice

The Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act and the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act were recently passed as part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) addressing employee absences related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Congress recognized the critical role of health care workers in the fight against COVID-19 and serving the local communities. With that in mind, the Department of Labor issued guidance making clear that health care employers can and should consider its staffing needs during this public health emergency, and granted authority for such employers to exclude employees from coverage under these laws.

Harris Health System has carefully considered several options as it relates to ensuring we maintain necessary staffing levels, and at this time we have decided that all employees are vitally important to our mission and purpose to serve our patients and community during this pandemic. **As a result of the critical role all of you play, leave benefits created under the FFCRA will not be available for use by Harris Health System employees.**

We have expanded our current benefits and identified new benefits to help meet your needs during this pandemic. This includes expanding our dependent care options through our Care@Work benefit and partnering with the Greater Houston YMCA in their Essential Personnel Childcare program (details are attached). In addition, we will not approve corrective action due to Attendance Policy violations for certain COVID-19 related absences. We are listening and will continue to look for ways to support you.

These are unprecedented times, presenting new challenges daily. We cannot thank you enough for the commitment, dedication and compassion you have shown to our patients and community. If you have any questions, please contact your Human Resources partners.