



## PC-POL-0026 – Pandemic Leave Policy

People, Culture & Communication

<b>DOCUMENT NO.</b>	PC-POL-0026	<b>VERSION NO.</b>	4.0
<b>DATE</b>	19 Aug 2020		
<b>SECURITY CLASS</b>	PowerNet Employees & External (with NDA's)		
<b>REVIEW CATEGORY</b>	1 Year - High Risk	<b>REVIEW DUE</b>	28 Feb 2021

## Approvals

<b>CREATED BY:</b>	David Stevens GM People, Culture & Communication	20 Mar 2020	SIGNATURE
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	David Stevens GM People, Culture & Communication	19 Aug 2020	 SIGNATURE

## Version History

VERSION	APPROVED BY	DATE
1.0	GM People, Culture & Communication	20-MAR-20
2.0	GM People, Culture & Communication	06-APR-20
3.0	GM People, Culture & Communication	20-APR-20
4.0	GM People, Culture & Communication	19-AUG-20

## Version Change Table

VERSION	PAGE	PARAGRAPH	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE
2.0	4	Purpose	Update to purpose
	4	Aims	Addition of section
	5	Accountabilities	Updates to Leaders, GM People, Culture and Communication and SLT Accountabilities
	5	5.1	Addition of COVID-19 Declaration
	6	5.1.2	Addition of Government alert level system
	7 - 9	5.3	Numerous changes
	3.0		
4.0	4-5	Accountabilities	Updates to Leaders, GM People, Culture and Communication accountabilities
	7	5.3.1	Deletion of Wage Subsidy information and replaced with COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme information. Change to 'Standard Fortnightly Pay' payment approach to Relevant Daily Pay (RDP) rate.
	8	5.3.3	Deletion of Wage subsidy information and updates made
	11	Appendix	Updates to Promapp process

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## 1. Purpose

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The purpose of this policy is to:

- To provide appropriate support to employees who are required to or request to stay away from work during a recognised Pandemic when unwell, potentially contagious, or susceptible to illness.
- To manage situations when an employee may run out of work during the Government COVID-19 alert levels.

## 2. Aims

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The aims of this policy are to:

- Prevent or reduce the risk of potential spread of illness;
- Reduce any intended incentive for staff that feel unwell to come to work during a recognised pandemic period;
- Comply with PowerNet's health and safety obligations to all workers and visitors;
- Meet the intent of the Government COVID-19 alert system;
- Ensure that PowerNet maintains delivery of critical functions as a provider of an essential service for the community; and
- Balance the financial impacts of leave in specific circumstances, both to PowerNet and the employee.

## 3. Scope

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This policy applies to all PowerNet employees and contractors working in PowerNet's offices/depots for the duration the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic or until otherwise notified.

PowerNet reserves the right to review and amend this policy at any time. Any updates will be notified to all employees and contractors.

## 4. Accountabilities

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Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking all reasonably practical steps to adhere to the requirements of this policy, the agreed actions documented in PowerNet's Workplace Corona Virus (COVID-19) Pandemic Plan.</li><li>• Comply with the requirements of <a href="#">PowerNet's COVID-19 Declaration (PC-POL-0027)</a>.</li></ul>
Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring staff health and wellbeing.</li><li>• Take all reasonably practical steps to ensure themselves and their teams are adhering to the requirements of this policy.</li><li>• Considering and acting on requests for leave and work from home where appropriate.</li><li>• Approving leave entries of "C-19____COVID-19 Leave", or</li></ul>

	<p>“Special paid leave” and advising the Payroll and HR Systems Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of employee communications related to this policy.</li> </ul>
COVID-19 Manger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining a list of people in self-isolation and working from home</li> <li>• Providing timely advice to leaders and SLT as required.</li> </ul>
GM People, Culture & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing timely advice to leaders and SLT as required.</li> <li>• Approving amendments of this policy.</li> <li>• Considering requests for annual leave advances in consultation with SLT members.</li> <li>• Consider requests for Special Paid leave in conjunction with SLT Leaders.</li> </ul>
SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring staff health and wellbeing and adherence to this policy</li> <li>• Considering requests for annual leave advances in consultation with the GM People, Culture and Communication</li> <li>• Approving requests for discretionary leave.</li> <li>• Ensuring PowerNet complies with its health and safety obligations.</li> </ul>
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval and distribution of employee communications related to this policy.</li> </ul>

## 5. Procedure

### 5.1 Self-Isolation and Symptoms

Self-isolation is the Ministry of Health requirement to prevent or contain a pandemic outbreak by self-isolating yourself at home for 14 days. The self-isolation period is 14 days from the date of last contact with a person or persons known or suspected of carrying the COVID-19 virus.

If you have developed symptoms of a high temperature (at least 38°C), cough, shortness of breath or sore throat, sneezing and a running nose, temporary loss of smell seek medical advice by first phoning Healthline’s dedicated COVID-19 number 0800 358 5453 and if necessary, phoning your GP or medical centre.

**Note:**

- Employees should adhere to the steps outlined in the [COVID-19 Declaration \(PC-POL-0027\)](#).
- Employees and contractors must not under any circumstances present to work if they have the above symptoms. If in doubt, call your leader.
- To protect the health of front-line healthcare professionals and the general public do not visit a medical centre or hospital without first phoning in advance.

All PowerNet employees and contractors must not put themselves or others at risk if they are unwell or have developed symptoms associated with or similar to COVID-19.

### 5.1.1 Self-Isolation procedures

- Discuss directly with your leader in the first instance if you are wanting to self-isolate, have been directed to isolate by health authorities or are required to self-isolate in accordance with Ministry of Health requirements.
- Your leader will alert the COVID-19 Manager in order to coordinate and maintain a staff register of people in isolation.
- If you have been in self-isolation, you will be required to provide a medical clearance to your leader confirming you are clear to return to work.

### 5.1.2 Situations when self-isolation will apply

There are two types of self-isolation (1) Precautionary and (2) Confirmed. These are detailed below and their leave implications are explained further in 5.3.

#### (1) Precautionary –

- When the Government has mandated staying at home, for all but essential work, as part of the New Zealand COVID-19 alert level system.
- When PowerNet requests that you self-isolate as part of the pandemic contingency plans as you are in a critical role or because you may have had exposure to someone who is confirmed with COVID-19 but are not experiencing any symptoms.

Employees may be required to self-isolate in any of the following situations:

- If the Government mandates staying at home as part of the COVID-19 alert level system and they are not engaged in work deemed essential to PowerNet's 'lifeline utility' service.
- They have returned to New Zealand after 15 March 2020 from anywhere in the world, and are required to self-isolate.
- They are or have been in contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or someone who is showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- They are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- They request to self-isolate because of their individual circumstances.

To prevent the spread of illness, where one of the above situations applies to a team member and they do not wish to self-isolate, PowerNet reserves the right to formally require the team member to remain away from work for up to 14 days or more.

PowerNet also reserves the right to formally require any staff to remain away from work. In such circumstances, essential functions such as system control and field faults service would be preserved. For Staff directed to remain away from work, an approved 'Work from home' plan should be agreed between the leader and team member. If working from home is not possible, leave provisions in accordance with 5.3.1 below would most likely apply.

To assist with monitoring of potential team member and contractor exposure to COVID-19 and management of risk, all team members and contractors will be required to notify PowerNet if they have recently or are intending to travel outside of New Zealand or have family members who have recently or are intending to travel outside of New Zealand. This will apply until further notice.

## **(2) Confirmed –**

- When you have undertaken an approved test confirming you have the COVID-19 virus or you have been in direct contact with someone who has been suspected or confirmed with the COVID-19 virus and the Ministry of Health have advised you not to come to work and to self-isolate.
- To prevent the spread of illness, where the above situation applies to a team member and they do not wish to self-isolate, PowerNet reserves the right to formally require the team member to remain away from work until a medical clearance is provided to the leader confirming the person is safe to return to work.
- An approved 'Work from home' plan should be agreed between the leader and team member. If working from home is not possible, leave provisions in accordance with 5.3.2 below would apply.

## **5.2 Employee unable to come to Work for other reasons**

PowerNet recognises there may be situations when team members are unable to come to work for other reasons outside their control for example the closure of childcare or school facilities.

Under these circumstances, the team members and leader will be expected to make every effort to consider whether the team members can work from home or if alternate work hours to fulfil their role requirements could be accommodated. If this is not feasible, leave will apply as outlined in Section 5.3 below.

## **5.3 Leave Provisions**

### **5.3.1 COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme**

PowerNet can apply on behalf of an employee who is unable to work because Ministry of Health guidelines recommend they stay at home, and they can't work from home. The 'eligible groups' include employees who either:

- are at higher risk if they get COVID-19, and [Ministry of Health guidelines](#) recommend they stay at home while public health restrictions are in place
- have come into contact with someone who has COVID-19 and must self-isolate for 14 days (as required by [Ministry of Health guidelines](#))
- have household members who are at [higher risk if they get COVID-19](#) and the Ministry of Health recommends the employee also remains at home to reduce the risk to them.

The COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme is a four week payment. If the employee is unable to work from home for longer than four weeks, and the employee continues to be in the 'eligible group', PowerNet can re-apply for the scheme on the employees behalf. The Leave Support scheme payment values are:

- Working less than 20 hours per week, \$350 (before tax) per week.
- Working more than 20 hours per week, \$585.80 (before tax) per week.

Before making an application on an employees behalf PowerNet will:

- Discuss whether other leave types such as sick leave is more appropriate, if not;
- Discuss the Leave Support scheme application with the employee,
- Determine if medical evidence is required to support the employee meeting the 'eligible group' criteria.
- Get the employees consent to the relevant points outlined in the declaration (information about the employee being provided to the Ministry of Social Development with respect to this application) ; and
- Confirm if PowerNet agrees the employee falls into one of the eligible groups to qualify for the COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme.

For employees who meet the 'eligible group' criteria for this scheme, PowerNet will:

- Pass on the COVID-19 leave support scheme payment<sup>1</sup>
- 'Top up' the employees pay using PowerNet special paid leave to 80% of the value of the employees relevant daily pay (RDP) rate.
- With employee approval, use employee annual or alternative leave to top up to 100% of their RDP rate<sup>2</sup>.

Employees who meet the 'eligible group' should discuss this with their leader and Human Resources Partner, then input "**C19L\_\_\_\_\_COVID-19 Leave**" on their timesheet or into PowerNet's leave system.

Refer to step 2.0 of "Management of Self-Isolation" Promapp process in Appendix 1.

- <sup>1</sup> If the employee's usual wages are less than the subsidy value, they would receive their normal fortnight pay only.
- <sup>2</sup> Where the employees leave balance is insufficient to 'top up' to 100% for the period, the SLT member in consultation with the GM People, Culture and Communication may approve annual leave in advance. This will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

### **5.3.2 Leave when isolated due to potential COVID-19 contact and directed to self-isolate by PowerNet (unable to work from home)**

If the team member is unable to work from home, then up to 10 days special paid leave will be provided at PowerNet's discretion, the employees relevant daily pay rate.

If an employee is already receiving leave as outlined in 5.3.1 this leave would not apply.

Refer to step 2.1 of "Management of Self-Isolation" ProMapp process in Appendix 1.

### **5.3.3 Leave when an employee is sick, or a family member is sick (non-COVID related)**

Normal sick leave entitlements will apply when team members or their dependents are sick.

Refer to step 2.2 of "Management of Self-Isolation" ProMapp process in Appendix 1.

### **5.3.4 Leave when an employee or their dependent is diagnosed with COVID-19 and is sick**

Normal sick leave entitlements will apply when team members or their dependents are sick.

Refer to step 2.3 of “Management of Self-Isolation” ProMapp process in Appendix 1.

### **5.3.5 Leave when an employee cannot attend work due to closure of schools or childcare or they would prefer to self-isolate for personal reasons**

In situations where team members cannot come to work due to closure of schools or childcare facilities, working from home will be the first preference followed by other work arrangements such as alternate working hours.

If that is not feasible, leave will be approved by the leader and may include annual leave or leave without pay.

Refer to step 2.4 of “Management of Self-Isolation” ProMapp process in Appendix 1.

### **5.3.6 Leave when an employee would prefer to self-isolate for medical reasons**

In situations where an employee would prefer to self-isolate due to personal health reasons, they should provide medical evidence supporting this request to their leader.

Exploring work the employee is able to complete in isolation would be the first preference, and/or working from home. If neither are possible, leave as outlined in 5.3.1 above would likely apply.

### **5.3.7 Leave when an employee would prefer to self-isolate for personal reasons**

In situations where team members would prefer to self-isolate for personal reasons, working from home will be the first preference. If that is not feasible, leave will be approved by the leader and may include annual leave or leave without pay.

Refer to step 2.5 of “Management of Self-Isolation” ProMapp process in Appendix 1.

## **5.4 Working from Home**

If a team member is unwell, then they will be encouraged to rest in order to support their recovery and help them get back to full health as soon as possible.

However, a team member who is in isolation or unable to come to work for other reasons may request to work from home. In such cases the leader will discuss with the team member what tasks or projects can be worked on from home and this will be agreed via a ‘Work from home’ plan. Please note that simply answering emails periodically would not be considered as working from home.

Employees working from home will be expected to maintain communication with their leader including continuation of regular check-ins via Skype, Zoom or teleconference and day-to-day communications as required.

## **5.5 International Travel**

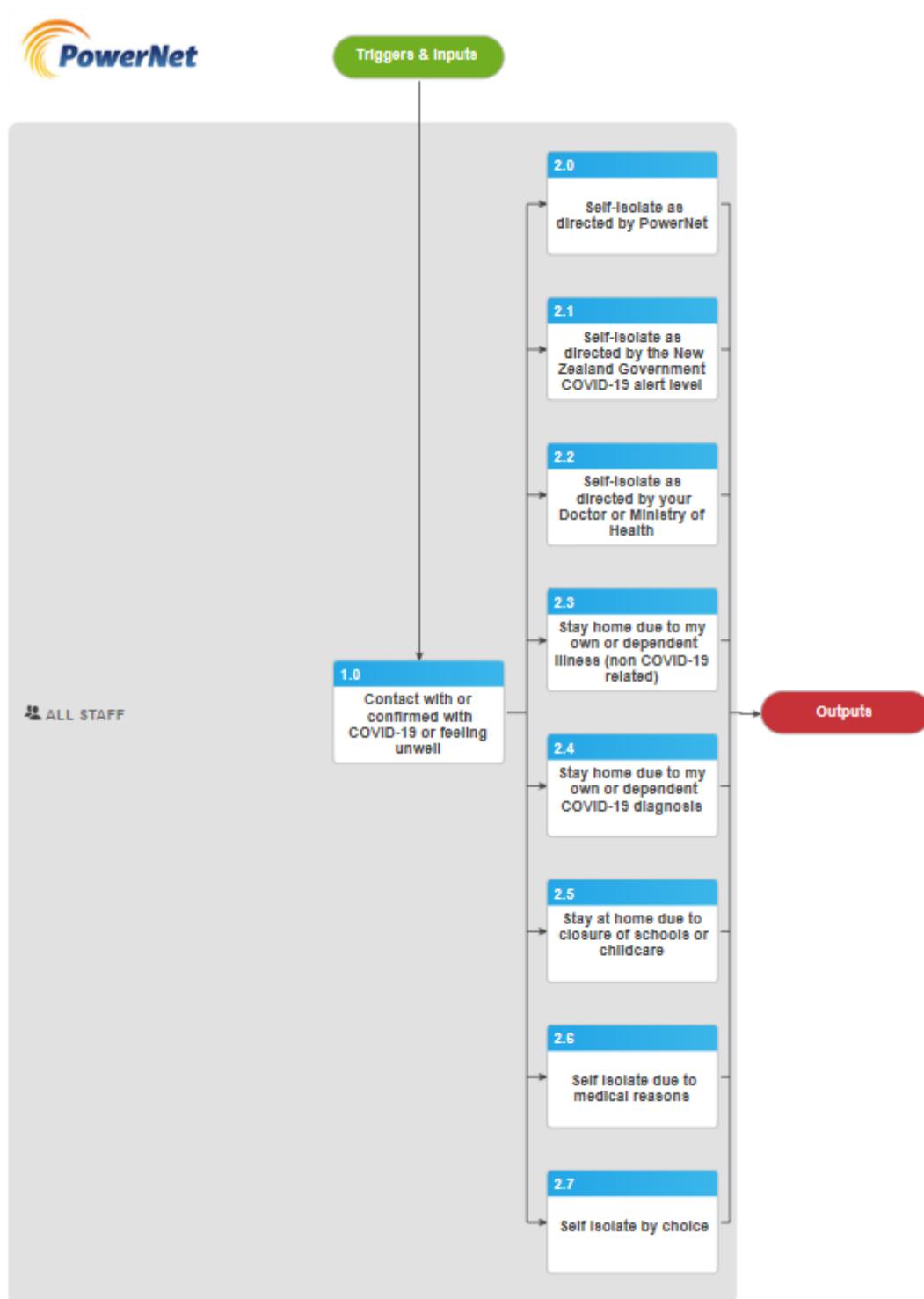
PowerNet expects all staff to check the Ministry of Health website in relation to travel advice and before going on overseas travel.

- PowerNet will assume no liability for discretionary leave support in situations when a team member is aware of the risk of travelling overseas (as determined by PowerNet or the Ministry of Health) and still decides to travel.

- Staff intending to travel overseas for personal reasons must complete a 'Request to work from home' form in advance of their departure with their leader. Travel is at the team members' risk. If they or a direct family members contracts COVID-19 while travelling then sick leave applies. If sick leave is exhausted, leave options such as annual leave or unpaid leave can be requested.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: ProMapp process for Management of Self-Isolation



## Management of Self-Isolation In Progress v7.1 [VIEW v7.0](#)

Map

Procedure

Edit

### Summary

#### OBJECTIVE

To assist with the management of team members who are required or choose to self-isolate during a pandemic

### Procedure

#### 1.0 Contact with or confirmed with COVID-19 or feeling unwell

ALL STAFF

- a Contact your Leader in the first instance, or COVID-19 Manager - Faye Mcleod [027 809 3464](tel:0278093464)
- b Call Healthline [0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453) or your Doctor and seek their advice
  - + **NOTE** What do I do if you or your family begin to feel unwell?
- c Report back to your Leader in the first instance, or the COVID-19 Manager

#### 2.0 Self-isolate as directed by PowerNet

ALL STAFF

-  [WEB LINK](#) PC-POL-0026 - Pandemic Leave Policy
- + **NOTE** Who will advise me if I can work from home?
- + **NOTE** If I can work from home, how do I get paid?
- + **NOTE** What if my Leader advises I can't work from home?
- a Maintain regular contact with your Leader

#### 2.1 Self-isolate as directed by the New Zealand Government COVID-19 alert level system

ALL STAFF

-  [WEB LINK](#) COVID-19 Alert level table
- + **NOTE** What happens when the alert reaches level 4?
- + **NOTE** What if I need to go into the office or Depot?

#### 2.2 Self-isolate as directed by your Doctor or Ministry of Health

ALL STAFF

- + **NOTE** What does this mean?
- a Contact and update your Leader in the first instance, or the COVID-19 Manager - Faye Mcleod [027 809 3464](tel:0278093464)

## 2.2 Self-isolate as directed by your Doctor or Ministry of Health

ALL STAFF

- + **NOTE** What does this mean?
- a Contact and update your Leader in the first instance, or the COVID-19 Manager - Faye Moleod [027-809-3464](tel:027-809-3464)
- b Follow medical advice, self-isolate for 14 days as per Ministry of Health requirements
  - 📄 **WEB LINK** Ministry of Health - Self Isolation
- + **NOTE** Am I allowed to work from home?
- 📄 **WEB LINK** PC-FRM-0019 – Request to Work Home Form
- + **NOTE** If I work from home, how do I get paid?
- c Register as needing to self-isolate with the Healthline - Call [0800-358-5453](tel:0800-358-5453) so that PowerNet can apply for the Government COVID-19 leave payment on your behalf
  - + **NOTE** What if I'm unable to work from home?
  - + **NOTE** What code do I use on my timesheet or on-line leave entry?
- d Obtain Medical Certificate and discuss with your Leader if you are able to return to work
- e Maintain regular contact with your Leader

## 2.3 Stay home due to my own or dependent illness (non COVID-19 related)

ALL STAFF

- + **NOTE** What does this mean?
- + **NOTE** How do I get paid?
- 📄 **WEB LINK** PC-POL-0009 - Leave Management Policy
- a Maintain regular contact with your Leader
- b If you are on sick leave, obtain Medical Certificate prior to returning to work

## 2.4 Stay home due to my own or dependent COVID-19 diagnosis

ALL STAFF

- + **NOTE** How do I get paid?
- a Maintain regular contact with your leader
- b Obtain a medical certificate prior to returning to work

## 2.5 Stay at home due to closure of schools or childcare

ALL STAFF

- a Work from home if possible
- b Talk with your leader if you need to arrange other work arrangements or work alternate hours
  - + **NOTE** How will I get paid?
  - + **NOTE** What if I can't work from home?

## 2.6 Self Isolate due to medical reasons

ALL STAFF

- a Talk to your leader
- b Contact your doctor to get a letter or medical certificate and send to your leader
  - + **NOTE** Am I able to continue working?

## 2.7 Self Isolate by choice

ALL STAFF

- + **NOTE** What does this mean?
- a Contact your Leader in the first instance, or COVID-19 Manager - Faye Moleod [027-809-3464](tel:027-809-3464)
- b Complete the "Work from Home" Application Form
  - + **NOTE** What if my application is approved?
  - + **NOTE** What if my application is declined?
- 📄 **WEB LINK** PC-FRM-0019 - Request to Work from Home Form
- c Maintain regular contact with your Leader