Bern, March 9, 2020

Spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) - Precautionary legal measures of employment concerning employees of the University of Bern

Due to the current spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and based on the decision of the Cantonal Government of 04.03.2020, the following applies to employees of the University of Bern:

**Workplace**

In principle, employees will continue to work at their workplace. However, in the event of danger to the health of employees, superiors are authorised to order that work be done from home (homeoffice).

The assessment of the danger situation is based on the Federal Council's assessment of the situation as well as the measures and recommendations of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH), the cantonal authorities and the guidelines of the Executive Board of the University. When in doubt, employees should clarify immediately with their superiors about whether they must work from home.

Superiors will also take the necessary organisational measures to ensure that employees are able to work from home to the extent that it is possible in an emergency.

Persons who usually record their working hours will also record them when working from home. If they do so, they shall note “Home Office” in the “comment” section.

**Paid short leave**

If work cannot be carried out at the workplace due to domestic quarantine measures/security measures (or quarantine measures abroad in case of ordered business trips) or the closure of units (e.g. libraries), and if working at home is not possible for functional or operational reasons, the managing directors will grant paid short leave for the time required.

In the event of illness (coronavirus) of close family members or quarantine measures for employees' own children or children living in the same household, the managing directors may also grant these employees paid short leave for the time required. However, these employees are held
responsible for organising other care options and making themselves available again to their appointed unit as soon as possible.

If public transport is restricted because of the coronavirus and the workplace cannot be reached, the managing directors also grant paid short leave for the time required. However, before granting paid short leave, the possibility of working from home shall be considered.

During paid short leave persons who usually record their working hours will record the time quota in the time recording system.

Suspected illness (coronavirus)

Persons with symptoms of influenza (fever, cough, shortness of breath) must stay at home and contact their doctor by telephone. If the employee in question is actually ill, the usual rules for absences due to illness apply: any absence due to illness must be reported to superiors during the first day. A medical certificate must be submitted after the fifth working day at the latest. Further salary entitlement is based on Art. 52 PV ("Gehaltsausrichtung bei Krankheit").

If, however, the employee's initial suspicion of illness is subsequently not confirmed, the employee is still entitled to the undiminished salary for the duration of the absence from work.

Period of validity

These current precautionary legal measures of employment will be initially valid until 31 March 2020, and the Federal Council or the cantonal governing body (Kantonaales Führungsorgan, KFO) will decide on the continuation of these measures in due course, based on ongoing assessment of the situation.

Reporting of absences due to the coronavirus

Persons who are absent from work due to the coronavirus shall be reported immediately to info@pers.unibe.ch by their superiors stating the reason: quarantine/security measure and/or illness. The return to work shall also be reported accordingly. Thank you.

More information and directives of the University of Bern in relation to the coronavirus can be found here: www.unibe.ch/coronavirus

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