

EXEMPTIONS, DIRECTIVES AND REMUNERATION - COVID-19 – AUGUST 28, 2020

***71. Which exemptions apply to school staff members? (Extract from question 71 Q&A dated August 28th)**

Below is a list of the vulnerabilities to COVID-19 recognized by the public health authorities:

- One or more of the following chronic diseases:
 - “uncontrolled” or “complex” chronic cardiac or pulmonary disease, serious enough to require regular medical follow-up or hospital care;
 - “uncontrolled” or “complex” diabetes, serious enough to require regular medical follow-up or hospital care;
 - Chronic “complex” liver disease (including cirrhosis) or kidney disease, serious enough to require regular medical follow-up or hospital care;
 - “uncontrolled” or “complex” hypertension, serious enough to require medical follow-up or hospital care;
 - Significant obesity (i.e. BMI of 40 or over).
- A medical condition that causes decreased clearance of respiratory secretions or a risk of aspiration (e.g. cognitive disorder, spinal cord injury, convulsive disorder, neuromuscular disorder, etc.).

This list of diseases involving a risk of complications from COVID-19 is taken from the interim recommendations published by the INSPQ. Please click on the following links for further details:

- <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/publications/2914-protection-travailleurs-immunosupprimees-covid19>
- https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/2967_protection_travailleurs_s_ante_maladies_chroniques.pdf

Regarding the age-based criterion, the risk of complications is significant for people aged 70 or over. Below is the directive issued by the public health authorities:

The risk of complications from COVID-19 increases gradually with age and for some medical conditions. Although the science is still evolving, it now seems clear that the risk of complications is significantly higher after 70 years of age. These people must be informed of that risk.

72. Should pregnant women automatically be withdrawn from the workplace?

No. We refer you to the COVID-19 document (SRASoCoV-2): Interim Recommendations on Preventive Workplace Measures for Pregnant and Nursing Workers (<https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/covid/2912-pregnant-nursing-workers-community-transmission-covid19.pdf>).

Pregnant women are considered to be vulnerable, and specific preventive measures are needed in the workplace.

The INSPQ recommends that schools should immediately implement measures for pregnant workers, for the duration of their pregnancy, and regardless of their immune status, in order to:

- ensure at least two metres of physical distancing from students and co-workers;
- install an adequate physical barrier for work performed within two metres, such as a glass separator. Personal protective equipment (mask, goggles or visor) is not considered to be a physical barrier.

Below are the directives and remuneration applicable to school staff members, based on the various possible situations arising from COVID-19: