



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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March 16, 2020

To: All Department Heads

From: Sachi A. Hamai

EMERGENCY GUIDANCE REGARDING COVID-19 FOR MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES

In response to the Board's declaration of emergency concerning the disease caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), the Chief Executive Office (CEO), the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and the Department of Human Resources (DHR) issue the following guidance for managers and employees as we work through the challenge of maintaining operations during the COVID-19 emergency, while simultaneously keeping our workforce protected and safe. This guidance is based upon the information we have to date and may change based on legislation now pending at the state and federal levels of government. Additional guidance may be forthcoming; we will immediately communicate any changes and updates to you.

As an initial matter, I want to remind you of the recommendations of our Director of Public Health that any employee diagnosed with COVID-19, exposed to others who have been diagnosed, or experiencing symptoms of the illness, **self-quarantine**. This is imperative to the health of our workforce and our communities.

As Los Angeles County employees, we are the public's safety net and must remain dedicated to providing comprehensive and quality services to our communities, which is so desperately needed at this time. However, we cannot fulfill this core mission unless our dedicated County employees, and their families, are also as safe and healthy as possible.

Therefore, effective immediately, departments are strongly encouraged to implement the following practices to assist in mitigating the spread of the novel coronavirus at work, and to support our employees who may be impacted by COVID-19-related issues. Management retains discretion to make daily decisions regarding the County workforce and operations and is requested to remain flexible during this immediate crisis.

Employees Age 65 and Above and People with Chronic or Underlying Health Issues

With the exception of healthcare and safety personnel—who should contact their respective departmental HR directors for specific guidance—in accordance with Governor Newsom’s recommendations, the following employees are encouraged to self-isolate, and should work remotely in furtherance of self-isolation:

- Any employee 65 or above;
- Any employee with an underlying health issue, such as blood disorders, chronic kidney disease, asthma, chronic liver disease, compromised immune systems, pregnancies in the last two weeks, metabolic disorders, heart disease, or other conditions that make them more susceptible to serious illness.

Telework

During this emergency, the Los Angeles County Telework Program (CTP) is an effective workplace option for employees, including those who may be experiencing mild symptoms of illness; have a need to be at home with an ill or vulnerable family member; have no alternative arrangements for dependents in the case of closure of schools, child care, or elder care; or those infected and feeling better, but under quarantine and not yet released to work. All requirements for telework training and certification are **waived during this emergency, and until further notice.**

Telework is not feasible for all County jobs; therefore, managers are encouraged to modify assignments for employees with such jobs. Modifications that might allow the employee to work from home could include a focus on online training; completing paperwork; fielding customer service calls; or addressing questions via email. Modifications should be made within reason and at the manager’s discretion.

Flexible Schedules

Managers are encouraged to modify employees’ work schedules when appropriate to create social distancing at work, or to accommodate the need for employees who need to be with dependents due to schools, day care, or elder care facility closures.

Leave

The County provides paid leave options in various forms of accrued leave (i.e., sick leave, vacation, paid time off, partial pay sick, short term disability) depending upon the length of the leave. During the pendency of this emergency and until further notice, DHR has **waived the medical certification requirement** for employees who are ill and must remain home during this emergency. Each of the County’s medical carriers offers telemedicine services; employees are encouraged to use telemedicine as much as

possible to preserve in-person medical resources. As the situation progresses, DHR and DPH will issue further guidance to managers on medical clearances to return to work.

If an employee cannot work during this emergency due to their own illness or the illness of a parent, spouse, domestic partner, or child, managers should contact their Departmental Human Resources Manager immediately to discuss options. Further instruction regarding time coding will be forthcoming from DHR.

Disaster Service Worker

All healthy County employees can be deployed, at any time, as disaster service workers. The OEM is currently working with each Departmental Emergency Management Coordinator and DHR, to coordinate these efforts. Departments are expected to release the employees requested by OEM during this emergency.

Keeping Managers and Employees Informed

We recognize that these are uncertain times for everyone and tensions are high. I want to assure you that the County is taking active steps to stop the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the health and safety of our employees and all County constituents. We will continue to operate under the guidance outlined by DPH, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The CEO is committed to keeping all managers and employees informed during this very dynamic situation. We will be providing daily public information updates to the County family and the public.

The latest and most up to date information about COVID-19 symptoms and resources can be found at:

Department of Public Health – <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention – <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Employee-specific resources on telework, paid leave, and other information—including this memo—can be found at: <https://employee.hr.lacounty.gov/directors-message-2/>.

I want to thank all our department heads for your immediate attention to the matters above, and for your efforts to protect and support our employees and the 10 million residents we are privileged to serve.