

March 18, 2020

Via email and USPS


Luis Schmidt
Business Representative
AFSCME District Council 36
514 Shatto Place
Los Angeles, CA 90020

Dear Luis,

On March 10, 2020, the Long Beach City Council ratified the City Manager's Proclamation of Local Emergency and the Long Beach Health Officers Declaration of Local Health Emergency regarding the serious threat of an outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). In light of the evolving situation surrounding COVID-19, LBT is looking at bus service scheduling alternatives and providing for paid time off for employees quarantined as a result of COVID-19. Please note, these programs are intended for a limited duration only, in direct response to the Local Emergency. As such, in accordance with government code 3504.5, LBT is hereby providing notice of known changes and the opportunity to meet in good faith upon request at the earliest practicable time.

Please see the attached Modified Service Delivery Plan and Temporary COVID-19 Leave Program. As time is of the essence, should you have any further questions or want to discuss, I need to hear from you by 10 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, March 19, 2020. I would prefer to hear from you today, Wednesday, March 18, 2020. Otherwise, I will need to issue the attached to employees by tomorrow, Thursday, March 19, 2020, so LBT can begin the process of implementing the modified shifts.

Sincerely,



Kenneth A. McDonald
President and CEO

Attachment

Cc: Irma Rodriguez Moisa, AALRR



**Proposal Regarding Response to COVID-19
AFSCME District Council 36 Temporary Modified Service Delivery Plan
and
Temporary COVID-19 Leave Program
March 18, 2020**

I. Background

On Wednesday, March 4, 2020, the City of Long Beach declared a local health emergency because of the possible spread of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) in the City. The emergency was declared to strengthen the City’s preparedness and ability to respond to the coronavirus threat. Moreover, Los Angeles County declared a state of emergency the same day for the same reasons.

On Friday, March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency over the coronavirus disease. On the same day, Long Beach Unified School District suspended classes for all K-12 students through Friday, April 17, 2020. This action followed the suspension of in-person classes by California State University, Long Beach and Long Beach City College.

On Sunday, March 15, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom called for more stringent action over the coronavirus pandemic. Long Beach Mayor Dr. Robert Garcia followed suit and directed bars, taverns and similar establishments to close and restaurants to limit their capacity to 50 percent. These actions are targeted at minimizing exposure to the coronavirus.

II. Position

The health and safety of Long Beach Transit’s (LBT) employees and customers is the agency’s top priority. Therefore, minimizing employees’ exposure to others who may be affected is one of the strongest defenses against the ongoing spread of the coronavirus. Moreover, LBT provides this temporary modified service delivery plan and COVID-19 leave program to allow employees to remain at home under specified circumstances.

III. Temporary Modified Service Plan

A. Effective Sunday, March 22, 2020, LBT will implement the following actions to maintain essential transit services:

1. LBT will operate a modified seven-day schedule, i.e., Sunday through Saturday from 6 a.m. until 9 p.m.

2. Shifts will consist of Group A and Group B and will be assigned alternate weeks to work
3. Transit Service Supervisors and Maintenance Supervisors will be assigned by seniority an a.m. or p.m. shift consisting of a five-day work week to coordinate with Operator shifts
4. Each Transit Service Supervisor and Maintenance Supervisor will be assigned two consecutive days off within a seven-day period
5. Transit Service Supervisors and Maintenance Supervisors will be paid 80 hours over the two-week period, even though they will only be assigned to work on alternating weeks
6. Other non-direct customer interfacing Supervisory positions work schedules may be maintained

B. Modified bus and work schedules will continue until Saturday, April 25, 2020, unless extended by the LBT President and CEO.

IV. Temporary COVID-19 Leave Program

A. Effective Thursday, March 19, 2020, LBT will award up to 80 hours of paid leave to qualified LBT employees. This leave cannot be cashed out, converted to other leave or banked for any other reason. Employees qualify for the leave under the following circumstances:

1. Employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19
2. Employee has been directed to self-quarantine by a U.S. Government Agency or Licensed Medical Doctor
3. Employee is impacted by school or child care closures (child under 14 years old and/or disabled) (must provide documentation)

B. Employees may request COVID-19 Leave as early as is reasonably possible and shall request the leave by the same method as requests for other leaves due to illness. Employees will also be allowed to use their own existing sick accruals, if any, after they exhaust the 80 hours of COVID-19 leave.

C. LBT may require that an employee take an employer-paid COVID-19 test and provide the result of the test to LBT. Employees shall not be disciplined for taking COVID-19 leave. Employees who are no longer symptomatic must notify their Supervisor of their ability to return to work and may request to return to work. LBT may request medical certification by an LBT approved medical doctor to return to work.

D. An Employee on the alternating work schedule, who becomes eligible for the temporary COVID-19 leave, shall be removed from the alternating work schedule and shall be subject to the temporary COVID-19 leave requirements stated directly above in IV. C.