

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Mayor's Office



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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: All Employees
FROM: James R. Engler
DATE: March 17, 2020
SUBJECT: 3rd Policy Statement re: Covid-19

As we move into a new phase of our response to the Covid-19 situation with only essential staff reporting, we are modifying our policy statement.

Self-Quarantine – We continue to emphasize the need to self-quarantine as the primary method of reducing exposure risk. Employees who meet any of the following criteria must notify their appointing authority or designee immediately and will be required to self-quarantine for a period of two weeks (14 days).

However, since non-essential staff will be carried on Covid E-Time, we will not require employees to use personal leave time during the period the City is operating on an essential services mode.

- have symptoms of Covid-19 (fever, dry cough, shortness of breath) who are being evaluated as a person under investigation for Covid-19;
- have traveled **or live in the same household as someone who has travelled** (within the past two weeks) to a Tier 2 or 3 country (upon return to US) as defined by the CDC; or,
- have come into close contact with an individual who has been diagnosed with Covid-19.

Employees who have received a diagnosis of Covid-19 should follow the direction of their health care provider and quarantine directions of the Department of Public Health. This may require self-quarantine for longer than the required 14 days and requires confirmatory negative tests before an employee will be cleared to return to work.

At-Risk Employees – Employees with a medically-documented greater risk of harm from the virus, such as those with compromised immune systems should inform their appointing authority. Where appropriate, the appointing authority should take this into consideration when assigning essential functions and consider if it is possible to assign such functions in a work from home assignment.

Physicians' Notes – Though the City is not requiring notes during the 14-day quarantine period, we recommend that you contact your health care provider either electronically or by phone to discuss your situation. Employees must complete the full quarantine period and may not return to work prior to the end of the quarantine period.

Work From Home (WFH) – Where possible, employees on self-quarantine who are well enough to work may work from home for all or some of this time in accordance with the [Enterprise Policy: Temporary Expansion of Virtual Work Policy in Response to Covid-19 Outbreak](#).

In addition, pursuant to this policy, employees may request to work from home to care for dependent children due to Covid-19-related school or day care closures. All requests must be reviewed and approved by the appointing authority. **The appointing authority should consider these requests when assigning essential duties. The City is working to identify childcare options for essential personnel and, once known, will provide that information to the impacted personnel.** When reviewing requests, the appointing authority will consider whether the employee's job assignment is appropriate for remote work and can be accomplished using existing departmental resources. New IT resources to enable remote work will be prioritized for essential city operations only.

Sick Leave Policy – During the essential staff mode, employees will not be required to use personal leave time. However, the following will apply once normal operations commence.

- Employees impacted by Covid-19 quarantines/illnesses may use accrued leave, including sick leave, for the entire two-week period without providing a sick note. The City will advance employees without sick leave up to 10 days sick leave during the self-quarantine period as well as those considered “at-risk” as described above, upon written request.
- Employees may use accumulated leave, including sick time, to care for a dependent who is in self-quarantine or in the case of school or daycare closure for their children. Accumulated leave including any advanced sick days may be used intermittently. If the employees are able and authorized to work from home, they may use work from home time during this time period. Should an employee exhaust their accumulated leave due to school or daycare closures related to Covid-19, the City will advance up to 10 additional sick days.

Official travel – all official international travel within the next 60 days on behalf of city government is now suspended. Additionally, all non-essential official travel within the next 60 days to domestic locations for which there is significant community spread of Covid-19 is also suspended.

Meetings – All meetings of more than 10 people should be held virtually or postponed.

School and Day Care Closures – If the appointing authority approves in writing or via policy, employees may bring their children to work if there is a school or day care closure that impacts their child and no other childcare arrangements can be made. All such requests must be assessed by the appointing authority to assure the environment provides the flexibility and safety to grant the requests and will not disrupt the workplace. Sick children with infectious illnesses, such as chickenpox, head lice, or conjunctivitis, shall not be brought into the workplace at any time. Appointing authorities may determine that some units, programs, or worksites can accommodate children while others cannot.

We ask supervisors to provide flexibility with work schedules during this time period as employees may experience hardships due to the closure of schools and after school programs.

Emergency Messaging – We strongly encourage employees to opt-in to receiving emergency messages regarding any ongoing City issues by providing cell phone numbers if they want text message updates. Updates will also be provided by email, and, in some cases, by phone. We also recommend that all employees stay up to date on the status of Covid-19 both internally and in the City by visiting the City's site dedicated to the Covid-19 outbreak: phila.gov/covid-19 and opting into text messages by texting COVIDPHL to 888-777.