

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: July 29, 2020

To: Aram Sahakian, General Manager
Emergency Management Department

From: Personnel and Uniform Workplace Safety Protocols Committee

Subject: **PERSONNEL AND UNIFORM WORKPLACE SAFETY PROTOCOLS - V1.5**

As Mayor Garcetti continues to monitor the Safer at Home order, a safe and healthy workplace for employees and visitors is the top priority for the City. Without exception, each workplace must be prepared with safety measures in place before employees return.

This document is consistent with Federal, State, and local regulations and guidance and best practices based on what is known about how the virus spreads today. At this time, the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about six feet).

In addition to the departmental Reconstitution Plans for the gradual and safe return of employees to their workspaces, the following uniform workplace safety requirements to resume services were established to assist departments with their planning. Updates (*italicized below*) will be made as more employees return and new information emerges.

I. Telecommuting

- Maximize and continue telecommuting and teleconferencing opportunities whenever possible to reduce exposure risk.
- Establish telecommuting guidelines for employees as each operation demands (e.g., check in/out, scheduled check-ins, and action item checklists utilizing [this link](#) for resources).
- Vulnerable staff (per LA County Department of Public Health¹) should be assigned work that can be completed from home whenever possible. Those who choose to work in the office can do so; arrangements shall be made to ensure their safety.

II. Employee Health and Safety and Entry to Departmental Workplaces

- Require ADA-compliant signage establishing protocols for health and safety to be posted at each entry way and distributed to all employees.
- Employees are required to wear a **face mask** that properly covers both the nose and mouth in the workplace if they are outside of their individual office, workstation or immediate job site area (e.g., in common areas and hallways or aisles on floors) and if the employee is in close contact with others (e.g., conversation with another employee or in elevators with others) and outdoors (e.g., in parking lots, while waiting at the bus stop). Exceptions must be made for those who are unable to wear face masks for medical reasons. **Note:** Employees who are exempted from wearing a face mask due to a medical condition should wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield.*

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p0625-update-expands-covid-19.html>

- ❑ *Members of the public are required to wear **face coverings** that cover both the mouth and nose.* Exceptions must be made for those who are unable to wear face coverings for medical reasons. **Note:** Those exempted should wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield.
- ❑ Departments shall procure and provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies for employees, at a level appropriate to job duties. Departments should maintain a supply of disposable face masks in the event an employee does not have a face mask.
- ❑ Employees shall be encouraged to frequently wash their hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds, to avoid touching their face, and to use alcohol based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
- ❑ Employees shall be allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands and to walk outside (while maintaining social distancing) to remove their face masks.
- ❑ Every employee should conduct a Daily Self Check screening prior to reporting to work. Signage will be posted at the entrance(s) of all buildings to remind employees.
- ❑ For departments implementing temperature screening, the following protocols are recommended:
 - ❑ Employer-administered temperature checks are not mandated by County Order, except for high-risk areas/facilities. Therefore, require high-risk facilities/areas (e.g., LAFD, LAPD, Correctional Care, Medical Services) where healthcare workers and first responders work to have the following protocols in place:
 - ❑ Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings² for all workers, virtually or in-person, at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or other workers entering such establishments. Department to determine who will screen employees.
 - ❑ Follow the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidance regarding confidentiality of medical records from health checks.
 - ❑ Make employee health screenings as private as possible.
 - ❑ Conduct in-person checks consistent with Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) guidelines.
- ❑ Require signage on safety requirements, such as handwashing, physical distancing and what to do if employees are feeling sick, to be posted in the workplace. *See Signage Catalog using [this link](#).*
- ❑ Require only authorized employees and visitors to access the workplace, limiting access of contractors and vendors to specific work areas.
- ❑ Update departmental websites with information about revised access, process and protocols with notification that these may create delays in service before increasing employee presence in the workplace more than 10%.
- ❑ A mechanism for employees to offer suggestions or submit individual concerns within their workplace should be created.
- ❑ *Require all employees, especially supervisors, to understand the City's protocol for responding to a COVID-19 incident as outlined in the Personnel Department Notification and Cleaning memo, dated July 20, 2020, using [this link](#).*

III. Building-wide issues in high rise and other facilities

- ❑ Require signage, HVAC and other building system recommendations, and physical distancing requirements in common areas, e.g., lobby, stairwells, elevator cabs and waiting areas, to be consistent with CDC, and local public health recommendations, before increasing employee presence in the workplace more than 10%.
- ❑ Elevators must be limited to 1 to 4 occupants per ride depending on the size of the elevators, standing in diagonal corners maintaining social distancing protocol as much as feasible. Face masks must always be worn while riding in an elevator.

² Symptom screening includes asking questions such as “Is your body temperature 100 degrees or higher? Do you have cold or flu-like symptoms? Have you tested positive for COVID-19, and have not completed isolation and recovery? Have you had close contact with a person with COVID-19? Have you lost your sense of taste or smell?”

- ❑ Employees should be discouraged from touching any elevator buttons (inside and outside the cab) with their bare hands, but should use an elbow, pencil, or gloved hand and to use stairs when possible while wearing gloves to hold the stair railings or wash hands immediately following stair use without touching the face. Directional signage on elevator floors should be utilized, if available. Departments in multi-tenant, high rise buildings are asked to coordinate their plans, so they do not impact the operations of other departments.

IV. Physical Distancing Measures

- ❑ Minimize the number of employees in the workplace by evaluating departmental occupancy and capacity to maintain six feet of physical distancing between employee work or break areas, and six feet of physical distancing between visitors and employees.
- ❑ Work with employees to adjust work schedules to achieve maximum social distancing by providing for staggering work shifts, rotation between being in the workplace and telecommuting e.g., A and B shifts. Avoid overlapping shifts or rotations, if possible.
- ❑ Use videoconferencing or teleconferencing when possible for work-related meetings and gatherings. If in-person meetings are essential, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces continuing to maintain a distance of six feet apart and limited to 10 or fewer participants wearing face masks.
- ❑ Consider installing physical barriers, six-foot visual cues such as floor marking and colored tape, circulation modifications, layout adjustments, and furniture removal to achieve six feet of physical distancing within workplaces or public counters. Space reconfigurations and modifications including the use of plexiglass and other barriers such as full-height shielding should be limited solely to those workplace areas where physical distancing cannot be achieved by other means.
- ❑ Departments must submit completed requests for protective barriers or other modifications to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for resource determinations. All submissions must:
 - 1) Be submitted on the [EOC Request Form](#), which requires an identified funding source; and
 - 2) Include the completed Physical Distancing Measures Checklist for Physical Barriers (utilizing [this link](#)) with signed confirmation that either the Departmental Safety Engineer or the COVID-19 Department Safety Officer or designees has reviewed and approved the request.
- ❑ EOC staff will process the submitted department request. EOC staff may contact departments to address any questions or issues. Once the review is completed and accepted, the request will move forward for purchasing.
- ❑ Direct employees not to share work tools or equipment, including office equipment. If equipment is shared, employees should be directed to conduct cleaning and disinfection between uses.
- ❑ Direct employees to refrain from entering another employee's work area to search for items or borrow equipment.
- ❑ Minimize non-essential out-of-state employee travel.

V. Customer-facing Departments/Public Counters

- ❑ Require signage (before increasing employee presence in the workplace more than ten percent) at each public entrance of the facility to inform all customers should: avoid entering the facility if they have COVID-19 symptoms; maintain a minimum six-foot distance from one another; wear mandatory face coverings to enter the building; sneeze and cough into a cloth or tissue or, if not available, into one's elbow, and not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact.
- ❑ Inform customers or visitors they must, at their own expense and provision, wear face coverings that cover both nose and mouth and practice appropriate physical distancing consistent with public health protocols or they will be refused service.
- ❑ Instruct employees to maintain at least six feet distance from customers and from each other, except employees who may momentarily come closer when necessary to accept payment, deliver goods or services, or as otherwise necessary.

- ❑ Utilize teleconferencing, appointments, and reservation systems, develop no-touch drop-off or electronic submittal of documents, make curbside service available where feasible.

VI. Employees working in the field

- ❑ Discourage tool and equipment sharing, if possible. If not, require tools and equipment to be sanitized before between uses.
- ❑ Limit the number of employees in a City vehicle to two (the driver and one passenger). The passenger should sit in the back seat opposite the driver of the vehicle. If there is only the cab of a work truck, it is recommended that the other employees drive their own vehicles to the work location and be provided with mileage pay.
- ❑ Vehicles should be cleaned and sanitized in between usage by employees.
- ❑ Employees shall be allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands and walk outside or away from their work area (while maintaining social distancing) to remove their face masks.
- ❑ *Employees shall wear face masks which must cover the nose and mouth when interacting with the public.*

VII. Training

The Personnel Department has distributed training materials to all employees on the following:

- What is COVID-19, symptoms, how to prevent, how it is spread
- City procedures/policies for preventing the spread of COVID-19
- What to do and when to seek medical attention
- General hygiene - hand washing, cough and sneeze etiquette
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Use of PPE
- Cloth and disposable face masks
- Social distancing
- Safe work practices
- Stress management

Departments must require every employee receive the above informational training on COVID-19. Department may supplement this with additional training/information as it pertains to their operation and/or facility. Maintain documentation that each employee has completed such training. Please utilize this [link](#) for access to the required training.

VIII. Cleaning

- ❑ *GSD will continue to provide COVID-19 disinfection services at City facilities under the Personnel Department Guidelines Citywide Notification and Cleaning memo, dated July 20, 2020 (utilize [this link](#) for access to memo).*
- ❑ Department plans should include guidance for employees to keep their personal work areas sanitized, including assigned vehicles, copy machines and specialized tools and equipment. Departments shall provide cleaning materials and gloves to employees for these purposes.
- ❑ Employees should be encouraged to regularly wipe down their personal workstations and equipment during their shifts.

IX. Sick Leave/FFCRA Policies

- ❑ Require employees exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms to stay home. Symptoms may include frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell.

- ❑ Employees who were recently exposed to COVID-19 or someone they live with had been recently diagnosed with COVID-19, may be directed to stay home.
- ❑ Employees directed or ordered to go or stay home due to COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms will receive paid administrative leave. Employees can telecommute if they feel well enough to do so.
- ❑ Physician note requirements will be temporarily relaxed, and employees shall be encouraged to stay home if they are sick.
- ❑ On April 1, 2020, the federal government passed the FFCRA which regulates paid leave requirements for employers. Subsequently, the City released a memo updating the leave policy in compliance with the FFCRA. Please see [this link](#) for a copy of the City's COVID-related leave policy to be in effect for COVID-related leaves taken through December 31, 2020.

X. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and free COVID-19 test registration

- ❑ Departments should make available the City's EAP program which is available for employees feeling anxious about exposure to the coronavirus or those returning to work. Employees needing assistance should be encouraged to contact the City's Employee Assistance Provider, Optum at (800) 213-5813.
- ❑ Departments should make available in the workplace the following link for registering for free COVID-19 testing: <https://corona-virus.la>

XI. Withdrawal Plan (resurgence)

- ❑ All positive COVID-19 cases must be reported to the Medical Services Division (MSD) immediately using [this link](#). If you have any questions, please contact Joanne O'Brien, MSD, at joanne.obrien@lacity.org.
- ❑ In the event that three or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days, the department shall report this outbreak to the MSD or the Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821.
- ❑ In the event of a second COVID-19 outbreak, departments must have plans to scale back services and begin returning the majority of employees to telecommuting, paid administrative leave, and/or other safety measures in a short time frame.
- ❑ Reconvene the Personnel and Workplace Safety Task Force to provide assistance, as needed.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact Personnel Department Assistant General Manager Deborah Caruso at (213) 473-9055.