

The State of California is acting quickly to protect public health and safety as we respond to novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The state is mobilizing every level of government to prepare for and respond to spread of the virus. Our department will follow all guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local public health departments to ensure the safety of our employees as the situation evolves. We will be sending out additional communications regarding meetings and other operational issues as we receive guidance from the administration.

### **What You Should Do**

- Stay informed by visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website [here](#) and the California Department of Public Health website [here](#). Both websites are updated daily with the latest information and advice for the public.
- In order to reduce the spread of viruses (including COVID-19) at work, some important and necessary steps can be taken by all employees to protect themselves and those around them:
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.
  - Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Stay away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.
  - Follow guidance from public health officials.
- If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 because of your age or health condition, it is important for you to take precautions to reduce your risk of getting sick. Actions employees can take, in addition to the above steps, to reduce the risk include:
  - Stay away from large gatherings and crowds.
  - Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.
  - Clean and disinfect your home to remove germs; practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
- If you feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, and have traveled internationally or were in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the 14 days before you began to feel sick, seek medical care. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- In response to this new virus, remember to be respectful, fair, and without bias in your interactions with all persons. Do not assume someone of a particular national origin, race, or background is more likely to have COVID-19.

## **What You Should Know**

- If an employee is subject to quarantine or self-monitoring from a local public health department, they will be provided Administrative Time Off (ATO) and telework will be considered, consistent with department policy. All requests for ATO must follow the department request and approval process. However, an employee who chooses to travel after knowing the risks and becomes subject to quarantine will not be provided ATO and the employee should contact their department's human resources office regarding leave options.
- Sudden school closures could disrupt work schedules and increase absenteeism. Departments will consider all viable options for telework and flexible work schedules. Employees shall be able to use leave credits of all types available, including sick leave, to care for children as a result of school closure that officials determine are necessary to protect public health.
- The Department of General Services (DGS) started a more frequent and rigorous disinfectant regime focused on high-touch surfaces, paying extra attention to surfaces in public areas such as doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, etc. In addition, DGS is ensuring public hand sanitizer dispensers are in all DGS-managed state offices. Within state-leased buildings, DGS contacted lessors to determine what actions they are taking to ensure that public areas are cleaned regularly, and that hand sanitizer dispensers are available in their buildings.
- An employee who has been subject to quarantine or self-monitoring as issued from a local public health department and tests positive for COVID-19 or otherwise becomes ill shall, no sooner than 14 days after the quarantine or self-monitoring began, be able to use leave credits of all types available. Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are caring for a family member who has tested positive for COVID-19 may be eligible for Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or California Family Rights Act (CFRA). Please contact the department human resources office regarding eligibility and available leave options.

This communication is intended to provide general guidance and information to employees during this time of emergency. Every effort has been made to provide current information. However, because of the evolving nature of the emergency, employees are encouraged to check the public health links provided in this communication for the most current information.

If you have questions not addressed in this communication, please contact your supervisor/manager, human resources office, and/or employee representative as appropriate.