

# Public Health Emergency Policy

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*Effective Date: Adopted 3/2020*

**§-I. PURPOSE** To provide procedures for use in COVID -19 pandemic event as determined by the World Health Organization.

**§-II. SCOPE** All Employees

## **§-III. POLICY**

Sick employees who report to work with contagious symptoms and/or a contagious condition, as those terms are defined in this policy, may significantly impact County operations due to the potential for spreading sickness, diminished productivity, and lack of quality or attention to safety.

Employees should consider options and practices that will reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 or passing the virus by observing healthy practices. Employees should also refrain from reporting to work with contagious symptoms and/or a contagious condition, so as not to spread COVID-19.

In the interest of maintaining a safe and healthy workplace, the County will require persons with contagious symptoms and/or a direct exposure not to report to work and/or may send employees with contagious symptoms and/or a direct exposure home.

### **A. Contagious Symptoms and/or Direct Exposure**

Contagious symptoms and/or condition exist when:

1. An employee exhibits COVID -19 related symptoms, e.g. fever, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches) or other symptoms, described by a public health organization as indicative of COVID-19.
2. An employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.
3. An employee and/or family member/household member has recently traveled to a geographic area actively identified by the World Health Organization to present a high degree of COVID-19 health risk or an area for which the CDC has issued a Level 2 or 3 travel advisory related to COVID-19.
4. Employee who is asymptomatic but has had direct exposure to a person with documented COVID-19, as such exposure is defined by the CDC to require quarantine or has been quarantined by a governmental agency.

## **B. Workplace Requirements**

The County and its employees bear responsibility for a safe and productive workplace environment. Accordingly, an employee with contagious symptoms and/or conditions:

1. Will not report to the workplace so as not to infect other employees or members of the public.
2. Will not report to the workplace until his/her symptoms have subsided and the employee is symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours or as directed by a medical practitioner.
3. Will not report to the workplace after returning from, or after a family/household member has returned from, a geographic area actively identified by the World Health Organization to present a high degree of COVID-19 health risk or an area for which the CDC has issued a Level 2 or 3 travel advisory related to COVID-19. In such case, the employee cannot return to the workplace until completion of the incubation period as identified by a public health organization and until the employee has been cleared with a health care provider's statement that the employee may return to work. (Such statement must be submitted to the department in advance of returning to the workplace.)
4. May be sent home, with or without the opportunity to work from home, based on observations of symptoms of COVID-19.

## **C. Absence Due to Contagious Symptoms and/or Direct Exposure**

An employee who has been sent home by the County and/or not reported to work due to contagious symptoms and/or condition, or who has been quarantined as defined in this policy will be compensated for hours they would normally have been scheduled to work during the absence; provided however, paid administrative leave will be authorized only when the employee submits medical documentation from a practitioner or the public health agency that the absence is related to COVID-19.

Employees will be compensated through paid administrative leave for the time the employee would have normally worked during a quarantine period not to exceed 14 calendar days (the quarantine period established by the CDC at the time of this policy adoption) or the time period established by CDC if revised. In the event that an employee's absence pursuant to an approved administrative leave extends beyond the CDC established timeframe, the Department Head/Elected Official will require that the employee provide additional medical certification as to the employee's current condition. Any extension of paid administrative leave beyond

this timeframe will require the approval of the County Manager with submission of additional medical certification similar to above requiring extended absence related to the public health emergency.

If paid administrative leave is expired, an employee requiring a prolonged absence may use any available accrued leave per the approved leave policies.

Ultimately, any prolonged absences will be addressed in compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations, including the ADA and the FMLA (where a serious health condition is involved).

The Department Head/Elected Official may require an employee to work from home or another private location while recuperating. This will be dependent upon consideration of factors, including the employee's position, the severity of the illness, and other safety and logistical considerations.

#### **D. Compliance**

Due to the seriousness of the ramifications of non-compliance, any violation of the policy as set forth will subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

This policy will be administered in accordance with all federal and state laws and regulations, including the ADA and the FMLA (where a serious health condition is involved).

**E. Conformance with Federal and/or State Law** In the event of passage of a federal and/or state law addressing this subject, the County Manager may amend this policy, after consultation with the County Attorney, to conform with such law(s). The Board of Commissioners shall ratify any amendments within thirty (30) days.