



From the Desk of Leslie Reed, Chief of Staff

Good afternoon,

We know that the impact of COVID-19 is a source of concerns and questions by our employees. As the department works to address the unprecedented and quickly evolving COVID-19 event, I want to assure you that we are continuing to work to identify ways to develop a safe and sustainable work environment for all of our employees, that will also ensure we are able to perform all of our core functions and meet our agency's mission.

We are looking to implement the Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidance and incorporate every measure possible to maximize social distancing in the workplace.

All employees continue to be reminded of the following:

- **Abide by DOH guidance, most importantly, if you are sick, please stay home. Avoid contact with others who are sick and utilize the recommended effective hygienic practices. Every preventative action helps impede the spread of respiratory diseases.**
- A state employees who personally travel [internationally](#), on a cruise or area of the United States experiencing community spread of COVID-19 as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will not be allowed to return to work for 14 days upon returning to the United States.
- If someone living in your household has travel [internationally](#), on a cruise or area of the United States experiencing community spread of COVID-19 as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will not be allowed to return to work for 14 days upon returning to the United States

- If anyone in your household is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 is self-isolating due to possible exposure or has tested positive for COVID-19, should stay home for 14 days.
- Employees with compromised immune systems should stay home, with an opportunity to use sick leave or to telework at the discretion of their supervisor.

You should all be already taking measures to:

- Rely on remote communication tools
- Cancel or postpone large events or meetings
- Minimize groups gathering and limiting essential meetings to groups of 10 or less
- Maintain 6 ft. of space

As a next step in our efforts, Deputy Secretaries and Directors have developed initial plans that would enable staff to begin teleworking. These plans are designed, and are expected to be, adaptive to meet any new guidance or circumstances that may arise, as well as ensure that unique staffing needs are appropriately addressed.

We are committed to being as aggressive as possible, but we want to ensure we are moving forward with teleworking in a sustainable and strategic way. I have sent a communication to your directors on how these plans will be executed. They should be sharing additional information with you in the very near future.

We will make every effort to be as flexible as possible as we work to implement a plan that is sustainable for both the agency and our staff. You are encouraged to reach out to your supervisor with any concerns or questions that don't fit into this guidance. You can also email questions to COVID-19@FloridaDEP.gov, and we will respond back to you as quickly as we can.

Thank you all for your professionalism and patience as we navigate through this novel event.

Thank you,

Leslie Reed

Chief of Staff