

# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

## **Purpose of Document:**

This document is intended to provide clarity about employee policies, practices and procedures that may be impacted in response to COVID-19 and its potential impact to operations. If you have questions that are not answered in this document, please direct them to the Department of Human Resources. The document will continue to evolve as we receive additional questions and as information progresses. Information is subject to change and the below guidelines are intended to be temporary as a safety precaution to COVID-19.

## **Commitment to Health and Safety:**

The safety of our community and our workforce is of utmost importance. For up-to-date information on COVID-19, and guidance from Public Health please go to the [Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 webpage](#).

## **EMPLOYEE FAQs**

### **Q1. How can I protect myself in the workplace to limit my risk of getting sick?**

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose coughing, or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using regular household cleaning spray or wipes.

### **Q2. Can I wear a mask to work?**

A. Currently, there is no recommendation to wear masks. However, if you choose to wear a face mask, it is important to understand that face masks are not a substitute for hand washing which is the priority. Good hand washing techniques are the most effective ways to prevent yourself from getting sick. This means washing your hands often with soap and water and rub for at least 20 seconds.

### **Q3. What should I do if I have an interaction with a coworker who appears to be sick with flu like symptoms?**

A. Confidentially elevate concerns to your supervisor/manager and/or DHRO. Also, follow the CDC prevention guidelines listed in Q1. As a supervisor/manager, please encourage staff to use personal sick leave if they are ill.

### **Q4. Is it OK to have a County doctor or nurse screen me for Coronavirus?**

A. Only your personal physician can examine you.

### **Q5. Can I stay home from work because I'm worried about getting sick?**

A. Employees are required to report to work. Employees can request vacation time or compensatory time and after determining operational needs, the Appointing Authority may approve.

### **Q6. My physician recommends that I be quarantined, how will I be paid during my absence from work?**

A. Contact your supervisor to let them know you will be absent from work and to determine if teleworking would be an option. If teleworking is not an option, you may use any available leave balances to be paid during this time and may be approved for Family Medical Leave (FML). If you run

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out of leave balances and still need to be off work, you will be advanced up to 80 hours of sick leave. Advancement of sick leave shall not be available to employees already on an approved leave of absence.

### **Q7. When will a doctor's note be required?**

A. At the guidance of public health authorities, we are temporarily relaxing requirements for doctor's notes to decrease the strain on healthcare systems. Human Resources will be responsible for determining on a case-by-case basis when a doctor's note may be needed.

### **Q8. I feel sick with flu like symptoms and I called my doctor who told me I should stay home. How will I be paid?**

A. You may use your available sick or other leave balances and may be approved for FML. If you feel well enough to work, ask your supervisor/department who will let you know if telework is an available option. If you are not able to telework, you may use your sick, vacation, or compensatory time.

### **Q9. A member of my family is sick so I can't come to work. Can I use sick leave?**

A. Yes, a family member is defined as husband, wife, domestic partner, child, stepchild, grandchild, brother, stepbrother, sister, stepsister, parent, guardian, stepparent, foster parent, grandparent, or any person serving as a parent, or who has served as a parent, or any other person living in the same household as the employee. Depending upon how long the illness lasts, you may be approved for FML. Your supervisor/department will let you know if teleworking is an option. If you are not able to telework, you may use your vacation, compensatory time or sick leave.

### **Q10. My child's school or daycare is closed due to health concerns and I need to stay home to care for my child. How will I be paid?**

A. Your supervisor/department will let you know if teleworking is an option. If you are not able to telework, you may use your vacation, compensatory time or sick leave. If you run out of leave balances and still need to be off work, you will be advanced up to 80 hours of sick leave.

### **Q11. I commute to work using mass transit such as the bus and/or Trolley, should I be concerned?**

A. All MTS vehicles are cleaned daily, with additional deep cleanings using bleach to disinfect, and other solutions recommended by CDC.

- Disinfectant is used to wipe down exposed surfaces nightly to help eliminate germs.
- Maintenance teams sweep, dust & spot mop nightly. Trolleys are often wiped down mid-day as well.
- Frequent deep cleanings are done on Trolley stations. This includes power washing floors, canopies, railing, benches, kiosk signs, disinfecting trash cans and more.

Please click [here](#) to refer to MTS webpage for up to date cleaning practices.

### **Q12. What should I do if I have plans to travel internationally or I am currently traveling internationally?**

A. In accordance with CDC guidance, we are requiring employees to notify their supervisors if they are planning travel or are currently traveling to countries with widespread, ongoing transmission of COVID-19. At this time, people who are planning travel, are traveling in, or have a layover in China,

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Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea, or Europe (as listed on the [CDC website](#)) will be asked to stay home for 14 days upon arrival back to San Diego. Your supervisor/department will let you know if teleworking is an option. If you are not able to telework, you may use your vacation, compensatory time or sick leave. If you do not have leave balances, you will be advanced up to 80 hours of sick leave.

Added  
3/13/2020

### **Q13. What extra steps is the County doing for cleaning public spaces in our buildings?**

- A. It is a priority that County facilities are maintained at the highest standard of cleanliness. The Department of General Services has directed the janitorial service providers to 1) conduct more frequent cleanings throughout the day in public spaces and common areas, as well as 2) use [EPA-approved germicide/disinfectant products](#) to ensure all surfaces and touchpoints in public areas and within the workplace are properly sanitized.

Added  
3/13/2020

### **Q14. What should staff do to keep their immediate spaces as clean as possible?**

- A. Staff are encouraged to continue their daily cleaning and disinfecting routine of personal desks. Janitorial staff are not cleaning the tops of personal desks to ensure documents, personal equipment and appliances are not disturbed. Disinfectant wipes are being provided to each department via the Department of Purchasing and Contracting. Employees should contact their department supply staff for product. Staff are discouraged from using other staff's phones, desks, offices, tools and equipment when possible.