

CITY OF CHICAGO EMPLOYEE ANNOUNCEMENT – MAY 15, 2020

Dear City of Chicago Employees,

As the weather turns warmer, many of you are undoubtedly looking forward to getting back to a more normal way of working and living. And while we continue our work to fight the spread of COVID-19, we are also actively working on plans to carefully and safely re-open City offices and functions in accordance with the Governor's guidance and the expert advice of the Chicago Department of Public Health.

Many essential infrastructure departments have kept working through this crisis. We continue to take steps to keep our essential workers safe at work, including providing cloth face coverings, instituting social distancing policies, and implementing enhanced cleaning practices for city vehicles and workspaces. In the coming weeks, these departments will continue to see new safety practices, including symptom screenings and temperature checks being rolled out at certain worksites beginning next week.

For those of you who have been at home, when it's time for you to return to work in City facilities, you will be returning to workspaces that may be quite different from those you left. Departments are putting their plans together now for resuming in-person work when it is safe to do so. Plans will differ from department to department and facility to facility, in order to be carefully tailored to best keep you safe in each environment. In addition to strict social distancing guidelines, plans may include occupancy limits on break rooms, conference rooms, and elevators, staggered work schedules, rotating telework schedules, new signage and guidance for members of the public who enter our workspaces, plexiglass screens and other dividers, different arrangements of furniture and our physical spaces, and a lot more. As we near re-opening, we will be sure to continue communicating with you and your bargaining representatives to make sure your concerns are heard and addressed. Please know that your safety – and the safety of the public who relies on the services we deliver – is top of mind in every decision we reach.

I want to take moment to recognize and thank the hundreds of city employees who have stepped up into new and unfamiliar roles during this crisis. Employees from all over the city have stepped forward to work in the Emergency Operations Center, run COVID-response programs, and do other work to strengthen the City's response. In the coming weeks, some of you may be called on to work as telephonic contact tracers or do other work to support the city's ongoing response. You should be proud of the work you're doing and the lives you're undoubtedly saving.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember for those of you who continue to come to work: **STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK**. You have an obligation to help make the workplace safe for all employees, as well as citizens who interact with City employees during work hours. Therefore, you must not come to work, and must notify your supervisor and/or HR liaison, if any of the following applies to you:

- You exhibit any symptoms that could indicate COVID-19 (fever or new/worse cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing);

- You've been tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting results;
- You tested positive for COVID-19; and/or
- You were told by a health care professional to quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19.

Employees also have an obligation to report a positive test to the department safety officer to help stop the spread of COVID-19. You will be paid COVID-19 leave if you miss work for any of the reason listed above, and this time off does not affect any of your accrued benefit time. For more information, see the City of Chicago's Sick Leave Policy Addendum or contact your HR Liaison. If you are absent from work for any of the reasons listed above, the department may require you to telework if you are able to do so. If you violate these policies and knowingly come to work while sick with COVID-19, you face potential discipline.

Again, **DO NOT** come to work if you have reason to believe you may have COVID-19 based on symptoms, tested positive for COVID-19, instructed to quarantine due to exposure to the virus, or tested for COVID-19 and awaiting results.

Thank you for your continued service to Chicago, and please stay tuned for further updates.