



2019 Novel Coronavirus Guidance
Frequently Asked Questions for State of Idaho Employees
Updated: May 28, 2020

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1. GENERAL COVID-19 QUESTIONS

What is novel coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some of which cause illness in people and some that are found in animals that can spread to humans. The novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 has not been seen in people before, so it is called new (novel). There are other known human coronaviruses that cause mild respiratory illnesses like the common cold, which more frequently occur in fall and winter.

Coronaviruses are thought to spread from person to person, like other respiratory viruses such as through coughing, sneezing or talking. They might also be spread by touching a contaminated surface then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates its website, [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus), daily with the latest information. The [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int) is also a trusted source of information about COVID-19. For information on COVID-19 in Idaho, see Idaho's novel coronavirus page, coronavirus.idaho.gov.

Where can I go for up-to-date information about coronavirus/COVID-19 in Idaho?

Visit coronavirus.idaho.gov and rebound.idaho.gov for updates, resources, and guidance for Idaho. For most current workforce guidance, visit <https://dhr.idaho.gov/covid-19-workforce-guidance/>

UPDATED What can I do to protect myself?

The [CDC recommends the following](https://www.cdc.gov) to protect yourself and others from COVID-19:

- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. (For information about handwashing, see [CDC's Handwashing website](#). For information specific to healthcare, see [CDC's Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings](#).)
 - » If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
 - » **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
- **Stay at home as much as possible.**
- **Put distance between yourself and other people.**
 - » Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
 - » This is especially important for **people who are at higher risk of getting very sick**. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>
- **You could spread COVID-19 to others** even if you do not feel sick.
- **Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public**, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities. (For information about cloth face covers, see [CDC's website](#).)
 - » Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- **The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people** in case you are infected.
- Do **NOT** use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker.
- Continue to **keep about 6 feet between yourself and others**. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
- **If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
 - » **Throw used tissues** in the trash.
 - » Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily**. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>
 - » **If surfaces are dirty, clean them**. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- If traveling, follow the [CDC's guidance for travelers](#).

UPDATED What can I do to protect my co-workers if I may have been exposed?

Refer to the question above regarding general precautions to take, when to stay home and [guidance provided by the CDC](#). If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, you should take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in

your home and community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.

Additionally, you should discuss your telecommuting options with your supervisor to determine options available to you. You also may be eligible for the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Please discuss eligibility with your supervisor and/or HR representative

UPDATED I am having flu-like symptoms. What should I do?

You should stay home when you are sick to help prevent the spread of illness to others. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.

If you need to seek medical care, call your healthcare provider and tell them your symptoms before you go. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

If an employee feels they do not need to be seen in-person by their doctor for an illness or concern, they can use **telehealth** as an option. Visit ogi.idaho.gov to learn more about telehealth benefits. Using telehealth, when appropriate for your concern, can reduce your exposure to others, decrease wait times, and provide access to an additional number of healthcare providers.

All state employees enrolled in the state's medical plan have access to telehealth through MD Live, as well as enrolled family members. Visit ogi.idaho.gov to learn more about your telehealth options.

You may also be eligible for paid leave under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA). Please reach out to your supervisor and/or HR representative to discuss your eligibility.

NEW Can an agency send an employee home if they display influenza-like symptoms?

Agencies should consult with DHR prior to sending any employees home.

NEW Can an agency require employees to have their temperatures taken while at work?

Agencies should consult with DHR prior to implementing policies/processes to take employee temperatures.

UPDATED Can I wear a facemask at work to help prevent infection from coronavirus?

Yes. The [CDC recommends covering your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others](#) to prevent the spread of COVID-19. DHR issued a memo providing further guidance regarding facemasks, which is available at [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#).

Per their website, cloth face coverings should be worn when going out in public. Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker. The use of facemasks is crucial for healthcare workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

Will my agency provide face masks, hand sanitizer, tissues, and cleaning supplies for the office?

Yes. Agencies may purchase face masks, hand sanitizer, tissues, and other cleaning supplies, such as disinfecting wipes, as needed.

UPDATED What kinds of environmental precautions should employees take for conference rooms and shared equipment?

The CDC states that it may be possible for a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, but it is still important to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces regularly as a precaution.

The CDC recommends following [everyday preventive actions](#) to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases which includes cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaner or disinfecting wipes. Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use disposable wipes to wipe down commonly used surfaces before each use (conference room tables, shared keyboards, remote controls, etc.).

It is also recommended that everyone [cover their mouth and nose with a cloth face cover](#) when around others. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities. *Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.* The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected. Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker. Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

Does DHR have any guidance on starting new hires during this health crisis? Should they be allowed to start? What will training look like? What if agencies are shut down?

Per the Governor's Budget Memo, dated March 27, 2020, agencies are required to submit a request to DHR and DFM prior to recruiting and/or hiring any position. Prior to requesting approval, agencies should evaluate this in accordance with their current staffing levels, workload demands, ability to onboard a new employee, Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), etc. If further assistance is needed, consult with DHR, DFM and/or the Governor's Office.

2. STATE OF IDAHO STAY HEALTHY ORDERS

NEW How do I remain up to date on information from the Governor's Office?

To stay up to date on recent Stay Healthy Orders visit coronavirus.idaho.gov , rebound.idaho.gov and DHR's COVID19 Workforce Guidance [webpage](#).

3. TELECOMMUTING

What are my telecommuting options if I would like to work from home?

You should discuss this with your supervisor. Examples of information your supervisor may take into consideration is outlined in the Statewide COVID-19 Policy under the [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#) on the DHR website.

Telecommuting should be utilized wherever possible in lieu of taking leave related to COVID-19 and coded on the employee time sheet as CVR (including FLSA exempt employees). However, all hours must be coded based on actual work performed. If there is not enough work that can be performed in a telecommuting capacity, you may not be able to telecommute for all your regularly scheduled hours.

Unfortunately, not all positions and/or individuals are candidates for telecommuting. If you or your position are not a candidate for telecommuting, you should review other options with your supervisor or HR representative, such as taking leave and/or implementing measures recommended by the CDC, such as wearing a facemask and social distancing. Employees with medical conditions may also qualify for time off under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or an accommodation under the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA).

All telecommuting arrangements are temporary and subject to change as the COVID-19 situation develops. Click [here](#) for *Temporary Telecommuting Agreement*.

Am I required to work from home?

Telecommuting may be a requirement for some employees based on their department/agency's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and/or in response to the COVID-19 situation. However, agencies should work with employees to allow them to work in a capacity that is most effective while also ensuring the health and safety of other employees.

Is an agency required to allow employees to telecommute?

Agencies are not required to allow employees to telecommute; however, agencies are encouraged to do so instances where the agency is able to maintain essential operations, manage the employee remotely, and ensure adherence to applicable laws.

UPDATED Can I work from home while caring for children or others?

General restrictions related to caring for young children or other persons while telecommuting during the COVID-19 situation have been waived. Under this exception, a telecommuting employee would be expected to account for work and non-work hours and take appropriate leave (paid or unpaid) to account for time spent away from normal work-related duties (e.g., to care for children or sick family members).

If an employee is required to provide care for their qualifying child(ren) and is unable to work, telecommute or be reassigned, they may be eligible for leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and should contact their supervisor or HR representative for more information.

What if I am eligible to telecommute but I do not have the tools needed to do so remotely?

Your department/agency is not responsible to provide personal equipment, such as internet, to allow you to telecommute. However, your agency may be able to provide you with state equipment (such as a laptop, cell phone/reimbursement, VPN access, etc.) needed to perform your essential duties at home, if what is needed is regarded as reasonable by your supervisor. If internet access is not possible based on where you live, and you must access the internet in order to perform your essential duties, you may not be authorized to telecommute.

Who is not eligible to telecommute?

This is identified on a case-by-case basis. Refer to the Statewide COVID-19 Policy under the [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#) page on the DHR website for information on what may be considered.

UPDATED What are my options if I am not eligible to telecommute?

Employees whose job duties prevent them from telecommuting, may use accrued leave if they are unable to report to their worksite due to prolonged school closures or other disruptions that may result from COVID-19. Please discuss with your supervisor and/or HR representative about eligibility to use EPSLA or FMLA under the FFCRA.

UPDATED What happens if my worksite closes and I am not eligible/authorized to telecommute?

DHR will work with the Governor's Office and DFM to evaluate options should this occur.

4. LEAVE

UPDATED What options are available for State employees who need to be absent from work as a result of COVID-19 due to illness, self-isolation, or care for a family member?

Effective April 1, 2020, employees may be eligible to receive paid leave in accordance with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). If eligible, employees can elect to use their accrued leave balances concurrently with EFMLA and EPSLA leave. Reference the FFCRA section of the Statewide COVID-19 Policy under the [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#) page on the DHR website for additional information.

In addition to FFCRA leave, employees may be eligible for: telecommuting, accrued leave, advanced sick leave, paid administrative leave for COVID-19, leave donations, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and unpaid leave.

For information to leave options reference the following:

- [Leave Donations Policy](#)

- [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#)
- [Vacation Leave Policy](#)
- [Statewide FMLA Policy](#)
- [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

UPDATED Can you provide an example of when an agency would provide paid administrative leave related to COVID-19 (CVT) for employees?

Refer to the “Use of Accrued Leaves” section of DHR’s Statewide COVID9 policy.

UPDATED Are there any instances when an employee would not be required to exhaust all their leave balances to use paid administrative leave related to COVID-19 (CVT)?

If the Governor or their designee declares a Department facility closed, DHR may elect to grant paid administrative leave to employees. Agencies will be notified should this occur.

NEW What documentation should agencies request to support employee requests to take leave related to COVID-19?

Agencies should not require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider’s note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work. Healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner.

Instead, employees should complete the FFCRA Leave Request Form on [DHR’s website](#) and include details as appropriate on the form. If an agency has a concern with information submitted by an employee, they may request additional documentation to support the request; however, they should consult with DHR prior to doing so.

UPDATED Will the leave accrual maximums be waived for employees in position with current high need?

Not at this time. Employees who are reaching maximum accruals are encouraged to take time off if possible and/or donate hours to employees who are requesting donated leave during this crisis.

UPDATED Am I entitled to use Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) for COVID-19?

Effective April 1, 2020, congress enacted the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The FFCRA provides expansions to the FMLA, which includes an additional qualifying event, and establishes a new law, the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) for qualifying employees. The expansions of the FMLA and the EPSLA expire on December 31, 2020.

Additionally, employees may be eligible for regular FMLA if they or a qualifying family member have a serious health condition requiring their absence from work.

Refer to the Statewide FMLA and COVID-19 Policy on the DHR website and/or contact your supervisor or HR representative.

Will I be covered under workers' compensation if I contract COVID-19 from a co-worker?

Anytime you believe you have acquired an illness at work, either you or your supervisor should complete and submit the [First Report of Injury](#). The State Insurance Fund will review your claim and determine whether workers' compensation applies.

Can an employee request donated leave?

Yes, an employee may request donated leave accordance to the Leave Donation Policy on DHR's website

UPDATED Many employees are working remotely. How do they sign the leave donation form?

During COVID-19, the Division of Statewide Payroll (DSP) is allowing employees to submit their leave donation form without a signature. In lieu of a sign form, employees must complete the leave donation form and submit it using their State of Idaho e-mail address in order to validate the request. This requirement is designed to ensure the integrity of the donation process. If DSP has any concerns regarding the submission, DSP may contact the donating appointing authority or donating employee in order to ensure authenticity. If you have any further questions, please contact the DSP Helpdesk for additional guidance.

NEW When should donated leave forms be submitted to the Division of Statewide Payroll (DSP)?

Donated leave forms should be submitted to DSP after they have entered that payroll for processing. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, DSP will temporarily be extending the deadline for donated leave form submissions. This new temporary deadline will be the Tuesday before DSP will run pre-processing which is typically ran on Wednesdays. For example, DSP will be processing donated leave forms for the 5/1/20 pay date starting Friday 4/10/20. DSP will accept these forms through the deadline of Tuesday 4/21/20.

UPDATED Are there any considerations being made to allow employees to donate sick leave rather than just vacation leave?

During COVID-19, employees may also donate sick leave in accordance with the rule waiver and updated policy published by DHR and the State Controller's Office. Please reference the [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#) for updated Leave Donations policy.

This new policy will allow state employees to donate their sick leave hours to another eligible state employee's sick leave balance, in addition to still being able to donate vacation hours through the same process. [Ref. DHR Rule Waiver 15.04.01.240.06 (effective until Dec 31, 2020 pending further guidance from DHR)].

A new form has been created in order to process the donation of sick leave hours. This document will be located in the "Forms" section under Payroll/Personnel forms on the SCO website:

<https://www.sco.idaho.gov/LivePages/payroll%20personnel%20forms.aspx>

Going forward, please use this form for all sick to sick leave donation requests. The Division of Statewide Payroll (DSP) will still utilize the original "EIS 180" form to process vacation to sick leave donation requests.

With appointing authority approval, an employee may donate accrued vacation or sick leave to an employee to be used as sick leave, in accordance with DHR's Donated Leave Policy. To receive donated leave, employees must first exhaust all their accrued leave balances.

UPDATED When will the new COVID-19 specific time codes be available?

All leave codes are available on page 16 of the Statewide COVID-19 Policy under the [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#) page on the DHR website.

HR and Payroll contacts have access within I-Time to the new Earning and Leave Codes. In order to enable these new codes, I-Time CPOs will need to make these codes available in Time Code Maintenance in I-Time. The agency can decide if they want all employees to have access to these codes or if they want to limit access to just the I-Time CPOs. For assistance in I-Time application, please contact the DSP Help Desk. For questions on applicability of each time code, contact DHR.

NEW Can employees use leave without pay (LWOP) instead of requesting advanced sick leave?

There are two scenarios in which the employee may qualify for leave without pay:

1. In accordance with DHR rule 15.04.01.250.01(s), the agency appointing authority may grant an employee leave without pay for a specified length of time when such leave would not have an adverse effect upon the agency.

The request for leave must be in writing and must establish reasonable justification for approval. Requests for leave without pay which exceed one workweek and are not covered by FMLA, require prior approval by the DHR administrator, and consultation with the Office of Group Insurance.

2. If the employee is on approved Emergency Paid Sick Leave, Emergency FMLA, regular FMLA or as a part of an approved accommodation under the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Agencies should consult with DHR for further guidance.

NEW Can we give employees paid administrative leave (CVT) before granting advanced sick leave?

For most situations, advanced sick leave is required to be used first. Administrative leave is only granted based on specific situations and with prior approval of DHR.

NEW After 80 hours of paid administrative leave related to COVID19 (CVT), can the agency give an employee ADT per the rule waiver 250.08?

No, the agency needs to consult with DHR/DFM for approval to provide administrative leave.

NEW If an employee is experiencing a limitation with their VPN access during telework, can they code paid administrative leave during that time?

Employees should code work time (REG) for IT issues outside of their control (i.e., not related to their own wifi) while they are working with IT to resolve those issues. If the issue lasts longer than 15 minutes, the employee should notify their supervisor to determine if there is any other work that can be completed while they await resolution. If the issue persists, paid administrative leave may be applicable; however, DHR/DFM approval is required prior to granting.

NEW Employee does not have enough work to telecommute for eight hours and has a child to care for at home. Would the employee be eligible for FFCRA leave or would they have to use their paid leave?

The employee should complete the FFCRA Leave Request Form on the DHR website so that a determination can be made regarding their eligibility.

NEW Employee usually has a family member care for the children, but the family member's doctor told them to limit time spent around children to limit their chance of exposure to COVID-19. Would the employee be eligible for FFCRA leave?

The employee should complete the FFCRA Leave Request Form on the DHR website so that a determination can be made regarding their eligibility.

NEW Employee tested negative for COVID-19 but due to symptoms, and the fact that the doctor said they were "presumed" positive, the employee still wishes to take time off. Can they use their own sick leave or are they required to use vacation since the test was negative?

The employee should complete the FFCRA Leave Request Form on the DHR website so that a determination can be made regarding their eligibility. Additionally, the employee may be eligible to use their own accrued leaves for the period their health care provider advises they self-isolate.

NEW Do employees still accrue leave while taking EPSLA or FMLA under the FFCRA?

Yes. Leave accrues paid on hours paid, not hours worked.

NEW Is an employee eligible for ALL FMLA after 30 days or just the FFCRA related FMLA?

Employees are only eligible for FFCRA-related FMLA, which is for childcare, after 30 days of employment.

NEW Employee was tested for COVID-19 and is awaiting results. What time code should they use?

The employee should complete the FFCRA Leave Request Form on the DHR website so that a determination can be made regarding their eligibility. If they are eligible, their HR representative will provide directions on the appropriate timesheet coding.

5. SOCIAL DISTANCING

Can I request to work in a position with less interpersonal contact until the concerns with COVID-19 are resolved?

If you have a qualifying health condition under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), consult with your agency's HR representative to review your options.

UPDATED What if I do not have any symptoms but I am required to self-isolate under the direction of my local public health authorities?

You should first request to telecommute or be reassigned. If you are unable to telecommute or be reassigned, you should complete the FFCRA Leave Request Form on the DHR website so that a determination can be made regarding your eligibility to take leave.

UPDATED What if I need to stay home to care for a family member who is required to self-isolate under the direction of local public health authorities?

You should first request to telecommute. If you are unable to telecommute, you should complete the FFCRA Leave Request Form on the DHR website so that a determination can be made regarding your eligibility to take leave

Am I required to help a customer or client who is showing signs of COVID-19 or another communicable disease?

You should discuss your concerns with your supervisor as they may be able to provide additional equipment and/or social distancing measures to ensure you are safely performing your job duties.

Additional information is available through the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration [website](#). Employees with a qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act may also have additional options available to them.

In some circumstances, employees have a right to refuse to perform their work if they believe it is not safe to do so. Employees should discuss their concerns with their supervisor and/or HR representative.

What if a co-worker is showing signs of illness and is still coming to work?

Employees should follow normal call-in procedures and stay home anytime they are sick to help prevent the spread of illness to others.

If you are concerned about a co-worker showing signs of illness and still coming to work, talk to your supervisor or HR representative. Nonetheless, employees need to be cautious to ensure that they are not violating their co-worker's rights, discriminating against them, and/or interfering with their privacy.

6. TRAVEL

UPDATED I went on a vacation and was isolated by public health officials for two weeks after my planned vacation. What should I do?

Per [CDC guidelines](#), if you have travelled internationally in the past 14 days, you should stay home and monitor your health. During this 14-day period, [follow the steps outlined by the CDC](#) to monitor

your health and practice social distancing. If you are approved to telecommute by your agency, then you should be allowed to do so during the self-monitoring period. Those employees for whom telecommuting is not approved by your agency should discuss your leave options with your HR representative.

UPDATED Can I impose a self-isolation on myself after traveling even if I am not directed to do so by a public health official or health care provider?

Reference to the [Statewide DHR COVID19](#) policy regarding your options.

UPDATED I am scheduled to travel for work. Can I choose not to go due to COVID-19?

Agency Directors, University Presidents and Agency Heads are responsible for determination Essential Travel in accordance with guidance issued by the Governor and the Department of Health and Welfare.

When determining what is essential travel, several factors should be considered, but not limited to:

- Guidance issued by the Governor and Department of Health and Welfare
- If the travel related to the Agency Continuity Of Operations Plan (COOP).
- If the destination one where community spread of COVID-19 is believed to be occurring.
- The mode of travel and if it involves movement through impacted areas [identified by the CDC Considerations for travel within the US as outlined by the CDC](#).
- The mission and if it takes the person into a higher exposure situation.
- If there are alternative methods that can still accomplish the mission (video conference, remote access, etc.).

Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html> for additional information on travel considerations.

The State Board of Examiners guidance is to use the most cost-effective and efficient mode but allows for additional travel costs if it is for a valid business reason such as airline travel insurance. The State Department of Insurance has a current list of authorized travel insurance providers.

If an employee expresses concern with required travel, the agency should discuss potential options with the employee such as FMLA and ADA.

7. OFFICE CLOSURES

UPDATED What if offices need to be closed due to a COVID-19 outbreak?

Agencies should keep in mind we work in public service and must remain available to serve Idahoans. If agencies do not have an updated Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP), agencies are expected to update or develop theirs immediately and submit them to DHR and DFM.

If an agency is concerned that they are unable to continue operations and need to consider closing a facility or portion of the facility, please consult with the Governor's Office, DHR, DFM, and legal in accordance with DHR Rule 15.04.01.250.08.

An example office closure template is available on DHR's [website](#).

UPDATED How should agencies communicate to their staff when an employee, who has worked in close proximity, is required to self-isolate and/or tests positive for COVID-19? Should all those employees be sent home to self-isolate?

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, employees deemed in close proximity will be separately contacted by the public health authority. For communication to other staff not notified by public health, agencies should reference the sample communication template on the DHR website under COVID19 Workforce Guidance> Communication Templates/Samples to draft a message to employees. Prior to sending the message, agencies must consult with DHR.

What if there is a wide-spread COVID-19 outbreak in a State-operated facility like a State hospital, clinic, or correctional facility?

If this occurs, then the appropriate public health officials and state authorities would determine the appropriate course of action and notify affected employees.

Agencies should proactively protect the workforce by requiring the use of protective personal equipment to reduce the spread of disease, [referring to the CDC's guidance](#). Additionally, employees, visitors, and/or patients enter the facility to prevent introduction of infected individuals. Continuously monitor your hygiene practices to ensure healthy employees keep from becoming infected. These are options that may require specific agency and possibly work-unit input to address, and each scenario will be unique in terms of need, regulation, and regulatory authority. Agencies should ensure continuous consultation with public health officials, regulatory entities (such as HHS and CMS), and their legal counsel to protect our workforce.

Does my agency have a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)?

All State of Idaho agencies must have a COOP. Consult with your supervisor to obtain further information on the plan.

How do I find out if the office I am assigned to work at is closed?

Because we provide critical services to all Idaho citizens, we avoid closing offices whenever possible. However, in the rare event that an office is closed, the first place to check is your agency's website and with your supervisor.

8. MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

Will DHR extend the due date for Cybersecurity Training?

The cybersecurity training deadline of March 31, 2020 was not extended. There has been an increase threat of legitimate phishing attacks connected to COVID-19 and many employees will begin working from home, so it is critical that cyber-safety maintain a priority for all.

KnowBe4 offers short video vignettes (two minutes) to help remind users how to work safely from home. If your agency is interested in assigning this optional training module, please submit a request to cybertraining@dhr.idaho.gov.

How Will Employees Complete Respectful Workplace?

A recording is available for use. Agency's may request a copy of the recording and use it as a "Live Stream" option for the months of March and April 2020. Requests can be sent to cybertraining@dhr.idaho.gov.

UPDATED Can the 1385-hour cap for temporary employees be waived or amended?

Effective Thursday, April 9, 2020, DHR waived statute 67-5302(35) lifting the limits on the number of hours or the number of months a temporary can work for an agency. Please review the Temporary Suspension of Specific Regulations Due to COVID-19 under Temporary Rules/Rule Waivers on the [COVID-19 Workforce Guidance](#) page.

NEW I understand that DHR issued a rule waiver to temporarily remove the 1,385 hour limit for temporary employees. What should I consider prior to allowing my temporary employee to work more hours?

Increasing temporary employee hours may impact an employee's eligibility for benefits and PERSI. Agencies need to discuss this with OGI and PERSI before implementing.

9. EMPLOYEE RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

Where can I go for support related to my stress, anxiety, and fears related to the coronavirus?

The current coronavirus outbreak and constant media coverage can be anxiety-producing. While it is important to stay informed, there are things we can do to manage our mental well-being:

- Avoid speculation and get your information from reputable sources such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the [World Health Organization](#), or the official [Idaho Coronavirus Website](#).
- Manage how you follow the outbreak in the media. If the news is causing you stress or anxiety, reduce your media intake and refer to the reputable information sources listed in the bullet point above.
- Talk about your fears, anxiety, and stress. The [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) provides confidential, short-term counseling services for benefit eligible employees and their dependents. Visit <https://ogi.idaho.gov/counseling/> or call 1-877-427-2327. (TDD: 1-800-697-0353).
- [GuidanceResources®](#) is Idaho's online EAP platform that provides access to timely, expert information on thousands of topics, including the coronavirus. Use ID: SOIEAP, and type "coronavirus" in the search bar.

Are there additional resources?

The [2-1-1 CareLine](#) is available to field coronavirus questions by dialing 2-1-1 or 1-800-926-2588 , or contact your [local public health district](#) with questions.

UPDATED What kind of resources are available for overall well-being during this stressful time?

Health Matters has added a new section on their website dedicated to maintaining overall well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. You'll find resources, tips, and strategies to help you maintain your well-being during this challenging time at <https://healthmatters.idaho.gov/well-being-resources/>

The Office of Group Insurance is working diligently to ensure that the state health plan is complying with all federal guidelines for COVID-19 and addressing barriers to care to support social distancing and guidance from the Governor and Department of Health and Welfare for enrolled members.

Compliance with Federal Coverage Requirements

- COVID -19 testing covered at 100% for all plans.
- COVID-19 office visit, telemedicine, ER, doctors visit and urgent care visits are covered at 100%.
- COVID-19-related tele-visits, office visits by phone or video call, will be covered at 100%.
- These mandates apply to coverage for testing and diagnosis of COVID-19, not treatment.

Telehealth with MDLive

Telehealth is an option to address non-emergent healthcare needs without physically visiting a doctor's office. Go to the OGI homepage for instructions on how to download the MDLive app on your mobile device or computer to get started.

- All MDLive copays and coinsurance will be waived for enrolled members for the remainder of the plan year for any health condition.

Tele-Visits

- COVID-19 related tele-visits, office visits by phone or video call, will be a covered service for all plan types for the remainder of the plan year. Non-COVID-related visits are subject to copay and coinsurance.

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

IDHR created a website with additional guidance and resources for behavioral health providers, patients, and families:

<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Medical/MentalHealth/COVID-19/tabid/4750/Default.aspx?QuestionID=731&AFMID=18795>

They also have a free hotline for anyone experiencing mental health distress: 1-888-330-3010.