


MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 12, 2021
TO: All Employees
CC: Recognized Employee Organizations
FROM:  Aaron Donato, Labor Relations Manager
SUBJECT: **Extension of Mandatory Remote Working – Through June 30, 2021 (COVID-19)**

As part of the City's sustained efforts to comply with workplace safety regulations, reduce opportunities for employee-to-employee transmission of COVID-19, and continue to provide the Sacramento community with essential services, the City is extending its previous direction regarding remote work.

Departments whose employees have the ability to work remotely are directed to continue the remote work arrangements. It is anticipated that this will last at least through June 30, 2021, however, the City reserves the right to recall employees back to physical worksites sooner, with fourteen (14) calendar days' notice.

This work from home mandate may be extended beyond June 30, 2021, at the discretion of the City.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. My staff cannot work from home and must come into the office.

A1. The purpose of this mandatory remote work directive is to mitigate employee-to-employee transmission risk. The City recognizes that some jobs cannot be completed remotely, however departments are required to reevaluate this assessment to ensure an employee's physical presence is operationally necessary and not simply a management or employee preference. Department directors and managers may be required to justify a requirement to have employees on site.

If staff is required to be physically present in the office, management must ensure that masks are being worn in common work areas, including cubicles and breakrooms, at all times and that employees are socially distancing.

To assist with contact tracing, management is required to log employees' time at the physical jobsite.

Q2. My staff can work remotely, but some work, such as delivery and distribution of physical mail or making deposits has to be completed in the office. What should we do?

- A2. It is understood that some work does not lend itself to be done remotely. These tasks should be limited in scope and employees should not be on the premises longer than is necessary.

To assist with contact tracing, management is required to log employees' time at the physical jobsite.

Q3. I'm afraid that productivity will suffer if more employees work remotely.

- A3. Numerous studies, including two reported this year by the [Harvard Business Journal](#) and [Forbes Magazine](#), indicate the opposite, at least in the short-term. Some of the reasons cited in these studies are that employees are no longer pulled into non-work-related conversations with co-workers that occur throughout the day. Additional citations included a significant reduction in impromptu work-related meetings, thus allowing employees to prioritize their own work schedule to get projects completed.

Even if employee productivity did suffer, this is significantly overshadowed by the benefits of protecting our workforce and mitigating the financially and operationally negative consequences of workplace transmission.

Q4. What other steps can be taken to mitigate employee-to-employee transmission risk?

- A4. Departments with field workers whose work does not allow for social distancing should defer routine or scheduled maintenance work when possible. Office workers should schedule their office time with their supervisor in advance, and management should limit the number of employees in the office at any one time. This can be accomplished by staggering days, changing employee work hours, or allowing employees to work alone in private conference or meeting rooms.

Employees with questions about this memo should submit them through their chain of command.