

COVID 19 Directive 03-18-2020-1



As you know, this week some of the County's most public, front-facing services such as the court systems, Clerk's Office, and Treasurer's Office modified work processes and/or suspended certain services with a goal to minimize face-to-face contact and increase social distancing.

County Administration is confirming similar measures are in place across the entire County and is implementing the following practices for all departments, effective immediately through April 5, 2020:

- Local travel should be minimized, and attendance at conferences, conventions and off-site training is suspended. Employees should cancel registrations and travel arrangements as soon as possible in order to maximize refund opportunities.
- Employees and their supervisor will reschedule face-to-face appointments with the public or implement alternative service processes that do not include face-to-face interaction whenever possible.
- County staff will provide extra cleaning supplies to each department for employee use to enhance sanitary conditions as they see need (wiping counters, knobs, phones, desks etc.).
- All employees who are potentially able to work from home should discuss this with their supervisor to determine the feasibility, and when possible, take steps to transition working from home. The Department Director shall have final decision regarding whether working from home is feasible.
- Any employee exhibiting severe cold or flu-like symptoms, or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 is required to be sent home. Supervisors may not send employees home solely if they are in a high-risk category. Any person with a specific situation should discuss it with their supervisor.

Use of Leave Time

Time off work related to COVID-19 will continue to be handled under the previously provided policy guidance listed below which was emailed to all employees on March 13.

In order to encourage employees to be safe and to keep others safe in light of the recent news of COVID-19, the County is temporarily offering additional flexibility with time off. This could be an absence that is needed due to any of the following reasons:

- *The employee's personal illness with symptoms consistent with COVID-19;*
- *Quarantine or observation, consistent with Health Authority guidelines, of someone in the employee's household potentially exposed to COVID-19; or*
- *To care for family members in response to a COVID-19 related school or daycare shut down in situations where the employee is unable to work from home.*

The following additional flexibility is being offered to cover the above-mentioned circumstances:

- *Employees may use up to 120 hours more PTO or Sick time than they have in their bank (negative accrual) or*
- *Employees may use their reserve sick leave bank.*

Employees **do not** have to exhaust any other banks before exercising the above-mentioned options. Depending on the situation, documentation authorizing the absence may be requested. Also, time off to care for family members as a result of a school or daycare shutdown is subject to supervisor approval. Employees with a negative bank balance will be required to sign an agreement to repay the value of the time owed from their last paychecks should they leave the organization before their balance is at or above 0 hours.

Note: Employees with both Sick and PTO banks will only be able to exercise this option with their Sick bank.

Additionally, the above policy applies for employees who meet a high-risk category¹ for COVID-19 and wish to be released from on-site work responsibilities.

Payment

- **Full-Time Employees** – Whether working from home or County facilities, all active full-time employees will be paid 40 hours per week or for their regularly scheduled hours. Overtime pay principles will apply.
- **Regular Part-Time Employees** – Whether working from home or County facilities, all active regular part-time employees will be paid for their regularly scheduled hours.
- **Hourly Employees** – Hourly employees must continue to submit a time slip in A360. To log in to A360 click [here](#).

Special Compensation

Effective, Monday March 23, employees that do not have the option to work from home and are required to work on site will receive 8 hours of banked vacation time for every 40 hours worked on-site. This includes, but is not limited, to:

- County Patrol Officers, Dispatchers, and Corrections Officers
- Emergency Management Personnel including Health Department staff responding to the pandemic
- Front-line Staff who have regular face-to-face contact with the public or institutionalized residents.

Other

- If the state or federal government implements legislation related to COVID-19 that impacts employment matters and employer obligations, the legislation will supersede this policy which will then be reevaluated.

¹ The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that those at greater risk should be temporarily released from work. This includes: a) Older adults (*age 60 and older*); b) People who have serious chronic medical conditions such as: heart disease, diabetes, and/or lung disease. Employees should alert their supervisor if they fall into a high-risk category and wish to be released from on-site work responsibilities. These employees will not be required to remain at work during this period. If an employee is in a high-risk category, is not ill, and can work from home, they may be asked to do so.

- The Severe Weather & Emergency Conditions Policy does not apply to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This policy does not apply to temporary or seasonal employees.
- For the period of March 17 through April 5, this policy replaces the Kent County Administrator’s e-mail dated March 13 titled “Time Off Flexibility in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic”.

County Administration in conjunction with our Health Department is constantly monitoring the CDC for ever-changing developments and working with state and federal government partners to respond appropriately to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to provide additional policy guidance as the situation evolves.