

GREEN LAKE COUNTY, WISCONSIN
COVID-19 PLAN

Directive #2 – March 24, 2020

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to Green Lake County Department Heads and employees on Green Lake County's plans for responding to the rapidly evolving coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency. This Plan will be reviewed by the Green Lake County Administrator and County Board Chair weekly or more often as needed.
2. **About COVID-19 and Its Spread¹**
 - 2.01 On February 11, 2020, the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan, China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV".
 - 2.02 There are many types of human coronaviruses, including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.
 - 2.03 COVID-19 is a new disease and the CDC is still learning how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States. Currently, the virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person as follows:
 - A. Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet);
 - B. Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes;
 - C. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs;
 - D. People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest);
 - E. Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads; and
 - F. It may be possible that 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, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
3. **COVID-19 Symptoms.** COVID-19 presents with flu-like symptoms (fever, cough or sore throat, headache or body aches, and in some cases diarrhea and vomiting) or acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath).

¹ Source: Wis. Dept. of Administration, FAQ for Wis. State Employees, March 11, 2020.

- 4. Limiting Risk/Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions.** The first line of defense to help slow the spread of COVID-19 before a vaccine is available and to ease the burden on healthcare providers include the following:
- 4.01 Staying home when sick;
 - 4.02 Covering coughs and sneezes using a tissue or sleeve, and disposing of the tissue properly immediately afterwards;
 - 4.03 Washing hands often using hot water and soap for 20 seconds or longer, and immediately washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after coughing or sneezing;
 - 4.04 Routinely cleaning frequently touched surfaces using a disinfectant bearing an EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims label;
 - 4.05 Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
 - 4.06 Not shaking hands with others;
 - 4.07 Avoiding close contact with people who are sick, and keeping a six foot distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in the community;
 - 4.08 Cleaning and disinfecting tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks and any other areas frequently touched by others;
 - 4.09 Prohibiting travel to areas with verified COVID-19 infections (see Travel Restrictions below);
 - 4.10 Avoiding non-essential large gatherings of 10 or more people; and
 - 4.11 Avoiding non-essential visits to long term care facilities.
 - 4.12 The County's Human Service Director shall serve as the liaison between department heads and the Public Health Officer.
 - 4.13 At the department level, department heads may continue to provide information to their employees concerning the manner in which services will be provided to the public in light of COVID-19.
 - 4.14 The Public Health Officer will periodically post information on the County Website and other social media sites concerning COVID-19. County departments that have social media sites are encouraged to post links to the Public Health Officer site.

5.0 Social Distancing

Social distancing includes any action to limit contact with others. There are three general options to take:

Limiting face-to-face meetings: To the greatest extent possible, you should be considering how to limit face-to-face meetings, including by using email, phone conferences, or videoconferencing. Consider whether any meetings, either within the department or within the community, can be cancelled/rescheduled or conducted remotely with the use of technology.

Modifying work schedules: Departments may be asked to consider whether modifying work schedules to reduce overlap of staff in our non-24/7 operations is feasible.

Working remotely: Departments may be asked to consider whether and how staff may be able to work remotely. It is acknowledged that not all departments and functions will be able to accommodate this, as many county services require direct client interaction. There are also some limitations on technology and equipment that may restrict the ability to implement this option. **Working remotely shall be subject to Department Head and County Administrator approval.** (See *Temporary Telecommuting Request Form*)

6. When to Stay Home from Work and Not Using Personal Accrued Leave

Anticipating the spread of COVID-19 to Green Lake County, we will have staff who will need to stay home, either because they are ill, have been exposed, are caring for an ill family member, or are watching children due to school or daycare closures.

The most important message we can send is to stay home if you have any symptoms or have any reason to believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19. As we plan for ways to continue to provide necessary, and in some cases, life-saving services for our clients at a time we anticipate potential staffing shortages, the last action we want you to take is to potentially spread COVID-19 to your co-workers and clients.

To help manage the distribution of staffing resources county-wide and plan for more significant interventions, we will be implementing a protocol so that we can centrally track which staff are out due to flu-like symptoms or potential COVID-19 exposure. Specifically, when you communicate to your normal department contact that you are sick or concerned about coming to work, you will be asked to report the following types of information:

- 1) Are you staying home because you are sick, or because you are caring for someone else?
- 2) Does the illness present flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, headache/body aches), or something else?
- 3) If it is flu-like symptoms, do you have any reason to believe you may have contracted COVID-19?
- 4) Have you or a member of a party you have been traveling with come into contact with someone contagious with COVID-19?
- 5) Have you traveled to a state or country with "community spread/transmission" in the past 15 days?

If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, please call and consult your medical provider. If you are exhibiting some symptoms but not sure whether you should stay home, please stay home and consult your physician via telephone for additional guidance.

Given the potential seriousness and magnitude of the situation, our goal is to remove as many barriers as possible for staff to be able to stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms or otherwise have reason to believe they may have been infected. In addition, a Department Head, in consultation with the County Administrator, may send an employee home who reports to work exhibiting signs of illness as described below.

To that end, the Green Lake County Board has given authority for the County Administrator, in consultation with the County Board Chair, to grant employees **a paid leave of absence** "when it is in the best interest of the County to do so."

Therefore, **employees will be granted a paid leave of absence that does not require them to use their accrued leave balances** generally in the following circumstances:

- The employee is exhibiting flu-like symptoms.
- Someone in the employee's family or household is exhibiting flu-like symptoms.
- The employee has been exposed to someone who is being quarantined due to suspicion of or potential exposure to COVID-19.
- A diagnosed case of COVID-19 by receiving a positive test result. An employee diagnosed with COVID-19 should contact the County Clerk to determine FMLA eligibility.

An employee shall return to work when fever-free for a sustained twenty-four (24) hour period. Employees on a qualifying FMLA leave may be required to provide a doctor's statement in order to return.

7. Travel Restrictions

- a. It is strongly recommended that employees postpone or cancel personal travel outside of Wisconsin, domestic and international.
- b. Domestic travel: The CDC determines which states are sustained community transmission states. These are considered high risk states. If an unforeseen, urgent circumstance requires travel to a designated community transmission state, notify the County Administrator and Department Head.
- c. Self-Quarantine under the following two circumstances:
 1. If you or a member of your traveling party have come in contact with someone contagious or if you otherwise have reason to believe someone in your party may have contracted COVID-19.
 2. If you have travelled internationally or on a cruise ship.
 3. If you have traveled domestically to a state currently designated by the Centers for Disease Control as having "community transmission". This means that transmission is occurring not only through individuals who have traveled, but is expected to be generally prevalent in the community. Please consult the following map to identify states with community transmission: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>. Scroll down to the map and hover your mouse over each state; those that indicate "Community Transmission: "Yes" are subject to this rule.

In this circumstance, self-quarantine means remaining away from work and other public areas, typically in one's home, for 14 calendar days.

- d. Employees who voluntarily choose travel destinations to states designated by the CDC as having sustained community transmissions will be subject to a 14-day self-quarantine prior to be allowed to return to work. Compensation during the 14-day self-quarantine period will be through the use of earned vacation, personal days or will be without pay.

As noted above the CDC provides a daily update of the list of states deemed sustained community transmission states.

- e. **This paragraph applies only to those employees who have departed for voluntary travel prior to the adoption of this policy.** If personal travel includes a destination that was designated by the CDC as a sustained community transmission state after your arrival or during your stay, you will be subject to a 14-day self-quarantine period prior to returning to work. Compensation would be paid as regular hours based on an employee's regular work schedule.
- f. County travel shall be limited to essential purposes to conduct County business or operations.
- g. County travel required for a court proceeding, a bona fide law enforcement purpose, or by the medical examiner for a death investigation, is exempt from the restriction in Section 7.

- 8. School or Daycare Closure:** Subject to Department Head and County Administrator approval, if an employee chooses to be home to take care of their children who are not in school and/or daycare, a temporary waiver to Green Lake County Personnel Policy - Sick Leave (Pg. 29-30), is implemented as of March 18, 2020. The temporary waiver will remain in effect until further action is taken by the County Administrator and County Board Chair or until the Green Lake County Emergency Declaration expires or is rescinded.

The restriction for new employees disallowing use of sick leave during their first six (6) months of employment is waived.

The employee will be required to use their accrued vacation time, other benefited time, sick time, in that order, prior to taking unpaid time.

Taking unpaid time under this section will not affect the accrual of benefits.

For tracking purposes, the Department Head shall provide a report to the County Administrator listing those employees who are on leave due to a school or daycare closure.

- 9. New Leave Entitlements Under Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA):** On March 18, 2020 the President signed into law the FFCRA relief package. The FFCRA includes two (2) distinct provisions that provide emergency leave to employees. (1) The Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA), and (2) the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA). The FFCRA effective date is April 2, 2020. Until such time as the FFCRA goes into effect, the County's plan and current FMLA law applies. Expecting further guidance from the Dept. of Labor, Green Lake County staff are working diligently to ensure full compliance with the terms of the FFCRA. Staff should contact the County Clerk's Office with any questions related to the

FFCRA.

10. Emergency Declaration: On March 17, 2020 the Green Lake County Board adopted Resolution 4-2020 declaring a state of emergency regarding COVID-19. As a result, all department heads shall begin tracking all expenses relating to COVID-19 planning and preparedness.

11. Building/Office Closures: Effective March 25, 2020 and through April 24, 2020 all County buildings shall be closed to the public, except as listed below. Constitutional offices may open briefly to provide emergency services. The Government Center will be open when required while court is in session.

- **CIRCUIT COURT:** The Government Center will be open when required while court is in session. The Court may issue orders on how cases will be handled and cases may be adjourned day to day. Please check regularly with the Green Lake County Clerk of Circuit Court's webpage.
- **CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT'S OFFICE:** Please place any documents for filing, including payments, in the drop box located in the lobby of the Government Center. For any questions, please contact 920-294-4142.
- **CONTACT THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY OFFICE AT 920-294-4046 FOR ITS AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.**
- **COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE WILL REMAIN AVAILABLE FOR MARRIAGE LICENSE APPLICATIONS:** Please call **920-294-4010** to notify staff that you are here for a marriage license and a staff person from the County Clerk's office will greet you at the entrance to the Government Center and escort you to that department.
- **REGISTER OF DEEDS OFFICE:** Please call **920-294-4024** to notify staff that you are here to attend to urgent business and a staff person from the County Clerk's office will greet you at the entrance to the Government Center and escort you to that department.
- **ALL GREEN LAKE COUNTY OFFICES ARE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC WITH CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS:**
 - **HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES:** Please schedule an appointment with the department for time-sensitive, critical or emergency services only.
 - Visitors with an appointment will be escorted by a county staff person to and from the appointment.
 - Appointments should be limited to only those individuals necessary to transact business.

12. County Meeting Rooms: County meeting rooms will not be available for the use of outside groups to conduct meetings. All public meetings of the County Board and Committees will remain open to the public and we ask that you practice social distancing if attending. Refer to meeting agendas for instructions on how to participate in public meetings that may be held virtually or by phone.

13. Exceptions to Green Lake County Policies and Procedures and this COVID-19 Plan may be considered and approved jointly by the County Administrator and County Board Chair on a case by case basis.

14. Given the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the fluidity of the situation, this plan may be revised and/or updated frequently. Please ensure you are referring to the most

recent version of this plan.