


County of Contra Costa
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 18, 2020

TO: Contra Costa County Employees

FROM: David Twa, County Administrator 

SUBJECT: Announcement Regarding the COVID 19 Pandemic

The COVID 19 Pandemic has changed life in the Bay Area and has resulted in Contra Costa County issuing an Emergency Declaration. While the Declaration is only through April 7, 2020, that actual event is likely to last several months. Schools and Day Care Facilities may be closed for an extended period of time. As a result of the Emergency Declaration, all County Employees, whether essential or not are now Disaster Services Workers.

This is uncharted territory for many of us and has every County resident and Employee concerned about the health and safety of themselves and their loved ones. To address some of these concerns we initially advised Departments and the Union Leadership that non-essential employees who were told that they should not report to work would continue to receive their regular pay (base pay) for the duration of the Order. Unfortunately, some of our employees interpreted this to mean that they could simply leave work regardless of their department's direction that they remain available to work at County Offices or, if appropriate, work from home.

Since we will be struggling with these issues for an extended period of time, I want to clarify the County's position:

First, in order to allow all employees to address their immediate needs to make arrangements to provide for family members, school children, or day care, until April 6, 2020 we will continue to provide that:

- Employees who are specifically directed by their supervisors that their jobs are non-essential may remain at home until called upon to provide disaster service work. Until called into work, these employees are on paid administrative leave and need not use accruals.
- Employees who have been directed to work from home by their supervisors may continue to do so until called upon to provide disaster service work. Supervisors are encouraged to direct employees to work from home where practical.
- Employees who need to take time off due to illness, caring for a family member, or childcare due to school closures may do so without using accruals up to and including April 6, 2020.

- Hourly, temporary, and per diem employees shall be paid for 3/16-3/31 (and 4/01/2020 – 4/06/2020 pay period based upon their pay for the prior pay period (2/1/29). Departments can contact the Auditor-Controller if individual adjustments are necessary.
- Essential employees eligible for overtime and temporary upgrades due to the nature of their work will be paid through the normal payroll process (time entered into Kronos)
- The use of accruals continues to be suspended for the time period up to and including April 6, 2020.
- Employees should endeavor to follow the social distancing guidelines and maintain a minimum 6-foot separation between essential employees whenever possible. Essential employee work locations will be adjusted accordingly.

Second, for High Risk employees, guidance from the State of California recommends that people who are age 65 and over or immunocompromised self-isolate in order to avoid exposure. For that reason:

- Employees 65 and over are encouraged to telecommute if operationally feasible. This may not apply to employees who are essential to public health and safety as determined by each department. Accommodations for this population may require review on a case by case basis to meet the needs of the employee and department. Should they request accommodation, aggressive steps should be taken by supervisors to allow these employees to work from home whenever possible.
- Employees who are immunocompromised, should notify their supervisors so that accommodations including working from home can be arranged.

Third, we are carefully reviewing all County services to determine which services can be reduced or suspended temporarily to avoid unnecessary personal contact. Some employees have been or will be asked to work from home during this period, and others have been or will be told that their services are not needed and they should stay home. You should expect to continue to report to work as usual unless you are directed not to do so. Please keep in mind that even if you are told you do not need to come in to work, you are still a disaster services worker for the duration of the emergency and you could be asked to come in to work at any time due to the needs of the County's critical services.

The County must continue to provide essential services to our community.