



Monroe County Personnel Department

124 North Court Street
Sparta, WI 54656
(608) 269-8719

Monroe County Personnel's COVID-19 Response Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to Monroe County Department Heads and employees on Monroe County's plan for responding to the rapidly evolving coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency. This plan will be reviewed by the Monroe County Administrator and Personnel Director weekly or more often as needed.

This plan is to provide clarity and guidance regarding taking time off during the COVID-19 public health emergency. With new laws enacted we are looking to give our staff a few options to help them navigate through this difficult time.

Due to Governor Evers Executive Orders throughout 2020 declaring a public health emergency for the state of Wisconsin we have adopted a policy to address changes to the workplace and other policies given the current COVID-19 pandemic. Previous executive orders were given and we had developed new policy in order to remain compliant while providing guidance for our employees. As a precautionary measure in response to the emergency orders and the COVID-19 pandemic the following updated rules will be in effect as of **Friday, January 1, 2021:**

What does this mean?

- Everyone must wear a mask or cloth face covering to cover the mouth and nose, when entering the building and moving about common areas (hallways, waiting rooms, conference rooms, public rest rooms, courts, common office areas, etc.) and while visiting offices, attending a meeting, gathering or court hearing (*exceptions will be made for members of the public who may have a health condition that may not allow for a mask*).
- Staff in an enclosed office will be able to remove their mask. If another staff member or a member of the public comes into the office the mask would need to be put back on.
- Staff in a cubicle setting will be required to wear a mask.
- Staff working outdoors with the ability to social distance from other individuals will not be required to wear a mask.
- Those who fail to comply with the masking policy will be subject to discipline per the Monroe County Personnel Policy.
- **Some departments may have additional requirements above and beyond the requirements of the Emergency Order #1, which stated face coverings are required (example: Rolling Hills).**

**If employees have a medical reason they cannot wear a face covering, they are to privately let the Personnel Department know. Employees may be required to provide information from their physician confirming their medical condition and why not wearing a mask is necessary to accommodate this condition. Employees are not

expected to disclose those reasons to others. All employees should be respectful of their co-workers' right to privacy. Because some employees are unable to wear a face covering, it is important that those who can, do.**

Staffing

- Department Heads that wish to continue with the alternate scheduling are authorized to do so. Due to these measures staff may still be working rotating schedules with a combination of telework and office time. It is recommended that you contact the Personnel Department regarding the need to take any of the leaves listed below so that we are able to help better communicate and answer any questions you may have.

Employee – defined as a Monroe County staff member that works full-time (40 hrs. /wk.) or at least part-time status (20 hrs. /wk. or more) that are currently benefit eligible per Monroe County's Personnel Policy Manual.

Leave Options

All leave options that were set to expire upon 12/31/2020 due to Federal Law, have been extended at the county level through 3/31/2021 per County Board action taken on 12/17/2020. These policies will be an extension to the previous laws as outlined below in Option 2 and Option 3. Please note, that if an employee has used any of the options below they are still limited to the original maximum amounts as previous policy that went into effect on 4/1/2020. Example: If John Smith used 80 of his EPSLA hours due to a COVID-19 positive test, he would NOT be able to get another 80 hrs. as of 1/1/2021. This policy has been extended, and has not authorized any additional time above the previously established policy.

For those who have to take time off due to COVID-19 related circumstances whether it be personal illness or child care will have the following options to consider.

Process

All requests for the following leave options must be completed on the attached COVID-19 Personnel Leave Request Form.

Option 2 - Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA) (Timeline for usage of leave below = 4/1/2020 – 3/31/2021)

Eligibility required for this option: Employee must be employed at Monroe County for at least 30 calendar days. Certain staff excluded from this provision include certain health care providers and emergency responders. **These departments include Rolling Hills, Health, Sheriff, Communications Center, and the Medical Examiner's Office.**

Option 2 Details – EFMLEA provides for time away from work for up to 12 weeks. The first ten (10) work days of EFMLEA leave is unpaid, unless the employee has available accrued vacation, sick leave, floating holiday, or comp time which can be substituted for the otherwise unpaid time. The employee will not be required to substitute pay for the first 10 days of unpaid leave. After the 10th unpaid work day, the employee will be eligible for pay from the County equal to two-thirds (2/3) of the employee's regular rate of pay for the remainder of the available EFMLEA leave associated with qualifying COVID-19 reason, not to exceed a daily cap of \$200 or aggregate cap of \$10,000, per person.

For full-time employees, the paid leave opportunity will be based on the regular rate of pay of the employee for the hours the employee would normally be scheduled to work. Part-time employee pay eligibility will be based on their regular hours worked per week – or if variable – the average hours worked in the preceding six months.

An employee may be eligible for regular FMLA leave if they have a COVID-19 diagnosis and they meet the normal requirements of FMLA. An employee is not ill but merely quarantined because of coming into contact with COVID-19 would not be eligible for EFMLEA or regular FMLA.

Employer paid FMLA leave through EFMLEA is allowed only for the closure of the employee's child's school or childcare and need to provide child care due to the public health emergency and not allowed for other FMLA reasons.

Please note that staff would NOT be eligible for this option if they have suitable care aside from themselves to provide suitable supervision of their children due to daycare or school closure. Staff would also NOT qualify for this option if they were given the option to have their children return to school or daycare and they refused to do so.

*****It is important to note that while an employee is entitled to 12 weeks of leave under EFMLEA, the length of the leave is reduced by an FMLA Leave previously taken by the employee, as this is not a separate 12 week entitlement. In other words, the Emergency Leave for childcare purposes is automatically reduced by the amount of leave an employee has already taken in the current FMLA year, without regard to the reason of the previous leave. Monroe County uses a rolling 12 month calendar for FMLA usage calculation. Public Health Emergency leave is another qualifying reason for which FMLA may be granted. It does not increase the total number of FMLA leave weeks that an employee may take in a year. *****

All benefits and accruals will remain intact for those who take leave per EFMLEA.

Procedure: All requests for this leave must be made on COVID-19 Personnel Leave Request Form. To receive contact the Personnel Department directly or visit our website at <http://www.co.monroe.wi.us/departments/personnel>. During this process the required certification from a health care facility will be waived unless there is cause to believe the employee falsified the request which will be evaluated on a case by case basis. The county will require a document from the child care provider that they are closed effective 6/25/2020 to be eligible for Option 2.

**Option 3 – The Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA)
(Timeline for usage of leave below = 4/1/2020 – 3/31/2021)**

EPSLA provides a limited term paid sick leave benefit for employees outside of FMLA or EFMLEA.

Eligibility for this option: All employees actively employed by Monroe County, with the exclusion of health care providers and emergency responders (exemption notice for these departments with specific guidelines is granted effective 4/1/2020, contact Personnel for further details). The maximum benefit through EPSLA is 80 hrs. for the combination of time used for the criteria listed below.

Qualifications: To qualify employees must be unable to work or telecommute because:

1. The employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order relative to COVID-19 virus;
2. The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19;
3. The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) and is seeking medical diagnosis from an appropriate health provider;

If absent due to reasons identified in 1, 2, or 3 under qualifications above (generally arising from the employee's quarantine because of COVID-19 illness), the employee will be entitled to:

- a. **100% of their regular hourly rate of pay (as long as in excess of minimum wage) for the hours of work missed and**
- b. **Subject to the cap of \$511 per day, to a maximum aggregate payment of \$5,110**

4. The employee is caring for a family member subject to a federal, state or local order related to COVID-19;
5. The employee is caring for a son or daughter whose school or place of care is closed or child care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19 precautions; or,
6. The employee is experiencing a substantially similar condition to COVID-19 and has been identified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

If absent due to reasons identified in 4, 5, or 6 under qualifications above the employee will be entitled to:

- a. **2/3 the employee's regular rate of pay or minimum wage, whichever is greater, and**
- b. **Subject to the cap of \$200 per day, \$2,000 in the aggregate.**

Pay during Leave: The amount of Emergency Paid Sick Leave available to employees is limited:

- Full-time employees will be eligible for 80 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave.
- Regular, Part-time employees will be pro-rate based upon their regular hours of work.
- Employees who work a variable work schedule, the average bi-weekly hours of work over the preceding six month period will be utilized.

If you have questions regarding which type of pay you qualify for please contact the Personnel Department.

Procedure: All requests for this leave must be made on COVID-19 Personnel Leave Request Form. To receive contact the Personnel Department directly or visit our website at <http://www.co.monroe.wi.us/departments/personnel>. During this process the required certification from a health care facility will be waived unless there is cause to believe the employee falsified the request which will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

When to Stay Home from Work

Anticipating the spread of COVID-19 to Monroe 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 to our clients at a time we anticipate potential staffing shortages, the last action we want you to take is to come to work ill and 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 staff that 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 who is sick?

- 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 or a member of your household 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 Monroe County Health Department may send an employee home who reports to work exhibiting signs of illness as described below.

- 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 Personnel Department to determine FMLA eligibility.

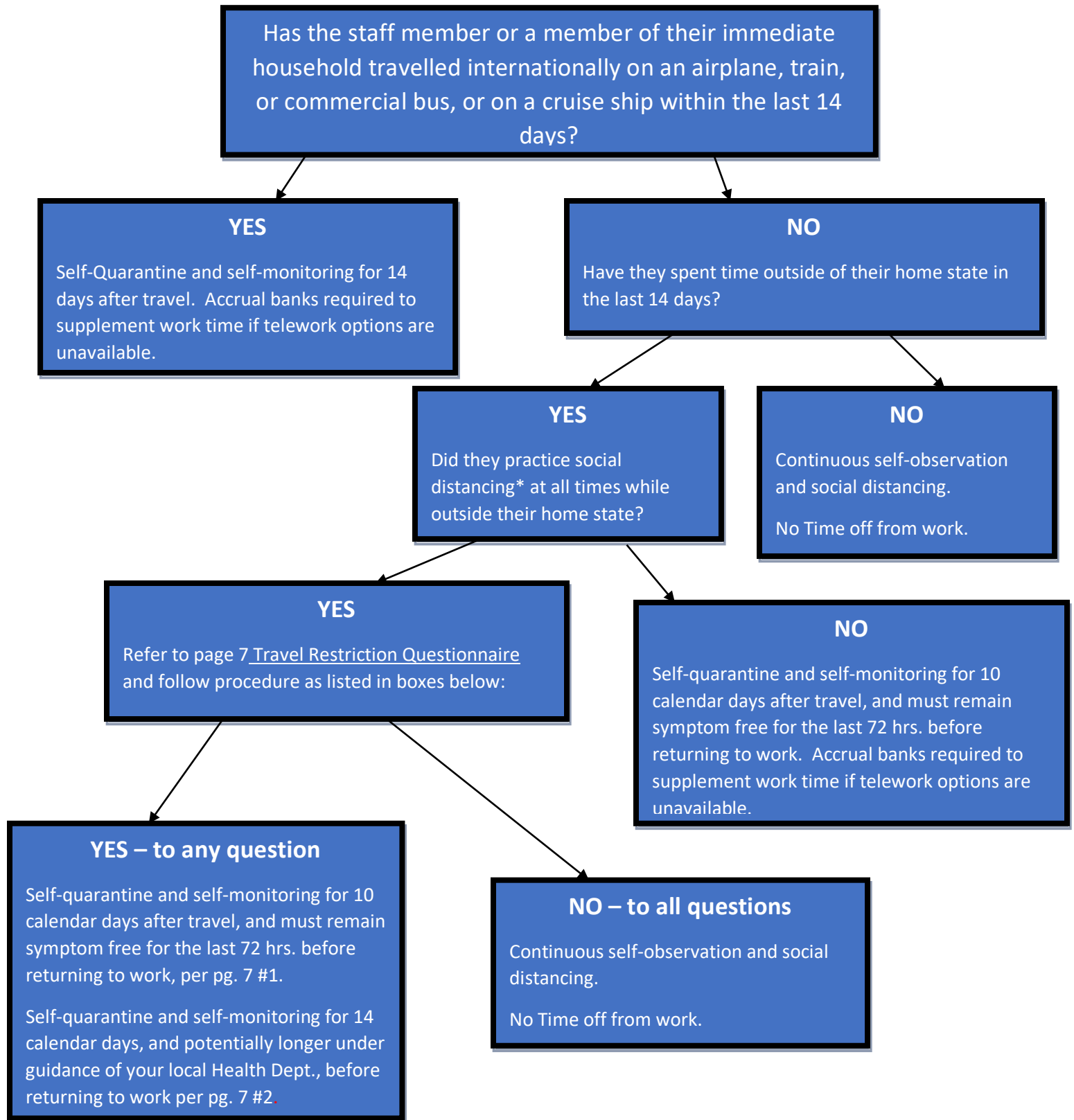
If staff are sent home by a supervisor they will have the option to use earned vacation, sick leave, floating holiday, comp time or leave without pay.

Travel Restrictions

- 1) It is strongly recommended that employees postpone or cancel personal travel outside of Wisconsin, domestic and international.
- 2) 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 your Department Head.
- 3) Staff will be required to self-quarantine should they meet the requirements listed on the next page with the chart titled **COVID-19 Travel Risk Assessment for Asymptomatic People: A Tool Guide to Monroe County Staff and Travel Restrictions Questionnaire**.
 - a. Based on the answers to the guide staff may be required to remain out of the office for up to 14 calendar days. Telework alternative options may be allowed with department head's approval if staff are required to self-quarantine.
 - b. Please review the chart and questionnaire below if you or anybody in your immediate household are traveling.

COVID-19 Travel Risk Assessment for Asymptomatic People:

A Tool to Guide Monroe County Staff



***Social Distancing – Minimizing contact with others, keeping at least 6 feet between you and other people at all times.**

Travel Restriction Questionnaire

<p>#1) In the past 24 hours have you experienced:</p> <p>If employee has experienced any of the symptoms listed, they should NOT go to work.</p> <p>Restrictions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-quarantine for 10 calendar days and must remain symptom free for the last 72 hrs. before returning to work. • Recommend employee to contact health care provider for further guidance. <p>Accrual banks required to supplement work time if telework options are unavailable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Cough • Feeling Feverish • Sore throat • Loss of sense of taste/smell • Chills • Muscle/body aches • Congestion/runny nose • Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing • Diarrhea/abdominal pain • Nausea/vomiting
<p>POTENTIAL CONTACT: If employee answers “yes” to #2 they will be sent home and required to self-quarantine for 14 calendar days and potentially longer under guidance of your local Health Department.**</p>	
<p>#2) Have you had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 patient while that person was ill?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

In these circumstances, self-quarantine means remaining away from work and other public areas, typically in one’s home, for a minimum of 10 calendar days. If employee remains symptom free for the last 72 hours they will be eligible to return to work. Compensation during the 10 day self-quarantine period will be through the use of earned vacation, **sick leave**, floating holiday, comp time or leave without pay. Employee’s will have the choice of the accrual bank or leave without pay during any of the circumstances listed on pgs. 5-7. During this process the required certification from a health care facility will be waived unless there is a cause to believe the employee falsified the request and this will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Determination if telework would be an alternative to accrual usage would be dictated by the Department Head. Certain departments may have more strict enforcement to adhere to state and other guidelines for a health care or other type of facility. ****Dates of quarantine time frames could be reduced under advisement of Monroe County Health Department.****

Employees shall notify their manager of any leave being taken. All employees taking leave as a result of travel outside of the country must contact their manager or the Personnel Department for accrual bank usage wishes. If staff do not specifically communicate accrual bank usage to their manager or the Personnel Department their time will be charged as such:

1. Vacation
 2. Floating Holiday
 3. Sick Leave
 4. Comp Time (if applicable)
 5. Leave without pay (LWOP)
- 4) County travel shall be limited to essential purposes to conduct County business or operations.
- 5) 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 under “Travel Restrictions”.

School or Daycare Closure –For time off options regarding this please review Options 2 – 3 listed above

Any employee that must miss work due to school or daycare closures will be required to use their accrued vacation, sick leave, floating holiday, comp time, or leave without pay within the guidelines associated with Options 2 and 3.

Taking leave without pay under this section will not affect accruals of benefits provided by the county.

For tracking purposes, the Department Head or Supervisor shall have the employee complete the proper form and report the time on the timesheet accordingly for approval.

We are asking departments to be flexible, if possible, with hours of work for staff members to continue to complete tasks. We ask all staff to be in communication and ensure approval through their manager before taking time off.

Vacation Balance Extension

Effective 3/22/2020 Monroe County will suspend the accrual “use it or lose it” policy per 4.31(2)(j) allowing essential staff, as defined by the Monroe County Administrator, to carry over their vacation balance to their anniversary date within 2021, where the policy restrictions would then apply. In short, any vacation for essential staff who are unable to take time off during this critical time will be suspended until March 31, 2021. Those who have anniversary dates that fall between 1/1/2021 – 3/31/2021 will have their anniversary date deadline established as 4/1/2021 for the year of 2021 only. On 4/1/2021 all staff will adhere to the guidelines established in the Personnel Policy Manual 4.31(2)(j). For dates beyond 4/1/2021 staff’s anniversary dates will operate as they always have per policy previously referenced for vacation maximum amounts.

Reporting to Work

- 1) Employees should continue to report to work unless directed otherwise as reflected in the Monroe County Personnel Policy Manual. A copy of the Personnel Policy Manual can be found on the Monroe county website at <http://www.co.monroe.wi.us/departments/personnel/>. As county employees, we have obligations to maintain services to the extent possible during an emergency. We will be making every effort to reduce exposure in our workplace.
- 2) If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, the Health Department will inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.
- 3) **Employees who fail to come to work without supervisor approval in a pandemic will be treated as if they failed to come to work at any other time and may be subject to disciplinary action.**
- 4) Employees may request leave time and it will be reviewed, and approved or denied, in accordance with the leave provisions in the Monroe County Personnel Manual and listed above in this document. In general, our objective is to ensure the health and safety of our county employees while continuing the County’s critical services. At this time, our goal is to encourage healthy employees that are able, to report to work.
- 5) Employees must work as assigned unless granted leave. Employees may be required to assist in performing work for absent or ill co-workers to ensure that the County is able to provide essential services. The County will make an effort to provide the appropriate protective measures to employees

assigned to work in a situation that would put them at greater risk of exposure than the typical interactions encountered in conducting usual life activities.

Social Distancing

Social distancing includes any action to limit contact with others. General actions we are directing departments to take:

- Limiting face-to-face meetings: To the greatest extent possible, you should be considering how to limit face-to-face meetings, including using email, phone conferences, or videoconferencing when possible. Consider whether any meetings, either within the department or within the community, can be cancelled/rescheduled or conducted remotely with the use of technology. Our default position should be that in-person meetings will be cancelled unless there is a compelling need. If additional technology conferencing tools are needed please reach out to the IT Director and County Administrator for approval of such need.

Emergency Declaration

As a result, all department heads shall begin tracking all expenses relating to COVID-19 planning and preparedness. This declaration has since expired at the county level, but all departments are still recommended to track expenses for potential reimbursement.

Office Closure

Complete county department/office closure will only be authorized by the County Administrator, with the guidance of Public Health Officials. Services may be limited in certain County and State offices, including the Monroe County Circuit Court. The public may be notified and directed to communicate with County departments via telephone or email. Departments may continue to schedule specific individual appointments with members of the public to provide services safely. When appointments are necessary they should be limited to a single individual and, if necessary, a partner or guardian. **Please limit any unnecessary visiting or unattended presence in the county building by members of the public.** This is in an effort to not only protect the health and well-being of the county staff, but the public as well.

Exceptions to Monroe County Policies and Procedures and this COVID-19 Plan may be considered and approved by the County Administrator on a case by case basis.

Response Coordination

The Public Health Director for Monroe County shall be responsible for coordinating Monroe County's response to COVID-19. The scope of that coordination shall include, but is not limited to:

- 1) Consulting with federal, state, and local emergency management and public health officials concerning the County's overall response to COVID-19;
- 2) Distributing official communications concerning the virus, its spread, and the County's response to it;
- 3) Providing recommendations on office closures, and travel limitations and restrictions; and

- 4) Consulting with, and providing recommendations to, department heads on service delivery as it relates to COVID-19.

Communication Protocol

- 6) External Communication: All e-mails, public health bulletins, and press releases concerning the County's overall response to the pandemic shall be issued by the Health Director.
- 7) Internal Communication: Communication to the County employees shall be through County Administration or Personnel in consultation with Health.
- 8) With the exception of the Health Director and Emergency Management Coordinator, all employees shall refrain from distributing group e-mails, notices, pamphlets, brochures or other forms of correspondence concerning the pandemic so as not to confuse, contradict or in any other way interfere with official communications issued by Health or County Administration. Employees concerned with receiving the most recent and credible information concerning the pandemic should go to the CDC website: <http://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-NCOV/cases-in-us.html>.
- 9) 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 the pandemic.
- 10) Communication to clients, vendors and other business partners regarding changes to business practices, due to the response to a pandemic, will be at the Department Head level.
- 11) Employees are urged to remain vigilant for e-mail scams related to pandemic.
 - a. Avoid clicking on links in unsolicited emails and be wary of email attachments;
 - b. Use trusted sources – such as legitimate, government websites – for up-to-date, fact-based information about the pandemic;
 - c. Do not reveal personal or financial information in emails, and do not respond to email solicitations for this information.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- 1) Monroe County Maintenance is primarily responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all county facilities utilizing standards proven effective against COVID-19, and for coordinating with custodians on the proper cleaning and disinfecting standards related to COVID-19.
- 2) To the extent that employees are capable of doing so safely, they shall assist maintenance and housekeeping staff with disinfecting porous and non-porous surfaces.
- 3) Maintenance and/or housekeeping personnel shall provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace, ensure that adequate supplies are maintained, and place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.

Future Communications

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.