



## City of Newport News HUMAN RESOURCES COVID-19 FAQs-#7

*Thank you for reviewing these Frequently Asked Questions. Please note the guidance provided in these or a previous edition of FAQs is subject to change based on the most up-to-date information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and/or Virginia Department of Health.*

### COVID-19 RETURN TO WORK QUESTIONS

**Q:** Do I HAVE to wear this mask every day? What if I don't see someone wearing one?

**A:** *Yes, in accordance with City policy, please wear your mask every day. If you see someone not wearing one, please remind them to wear their mask to protect you and them. The CDC administered guidance on the general public wearing face masks or coverings and the City is committed to flattening the curve. Currently, in accordance with [City Policy](#), wearing a face covering in public or common areas, while working with other employees and upon entry and exit from facilities is required. This will continue until further notice. Physical and social distancing will also continue until further notice. Thank you again.*

**Q:** I have concerns that a co-worker may be sick, and is continuing to come to work. What can I do?

**A:** *We want every employee to feel safe in their work environment. At any time you feel uncomfortable, please report your concerns to your immediate supervisor. Trust that the right decisions will be made. Should you feel your concerns remain unresolved, contact the Human Resources Department.*

**Q:** Why are some employees allowed to continue telecommuting-but I am required to report to the office?

**A:** *As the City has entered Phase I of re-opening, there are opportunities to begin bringing employees back to work slowly, in order to accomplish mission essential activities that otherwise cannot be completed via telework. If you have concerns about reporting to work, please make sure to communicate openly and honestly with your supervisor. Should you need further assistance, please contact the Human Resources department.*

**Q:** Can I be assigned to perform work that is not normally part of my position?

**A:** *As operations have been operating in a state of change, you may be asked to perform duties that are not normally assigned on a daily basis. We are all in this together and are likely all performing duties a little differently today than we were three months ago. The pandemic has changed the way we operate and do business and will likely affect how we do business for a long time. If you have concerns with any new or temporary job duties, please communicate openly and honestly with your supervisor.*

**Q:** I am having issues returning to work because I am unable to find childcare due to COVID-19. What options do I have?

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**A:** *First, we recommend you discuss this situation with your supervisor to determine what flexibility, if any, exists in your department and with your position. In addition, please refer to [COVID-19 Human Resources FAQ's #5](#), pages 2 and 3 for more information about the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. You will find information, links for paperwork and a Quick Reference Guide describing eligibility and procedures.*

### COVID-19 EMPLOYEE LEAVE and CARRYOVER

**Q:** If I am an emergency responder or essential personnel and unable to take the required 80 hours of paid personal leave, will I lose it if I can't take time off before June 30, 2020?

**A:** *We are continuing to investigate options to suspend, waive, or extend the June 30 deadline date for the use of PPL. Communication will be sent to impacted employees when this decision has been reached. We anticipate providing an answer to this in the next two weeks.*

### CITY RE-OPENING AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

**Q:** How long will the City operate in Phase I?

**A:** *The Governor has stated that Phase I could last anywhere from two to four weeks. As a city we are prepared to follow the guidance issued by the Governor's office and transition from Phase I to Phase II in accordance with those guidelines. The City Recovery Planning Committee has created some additional guidance and placed it on the Human Resources [COVID-19 site](#):*



**Q:** How long will we need to practice social distancing, face covering and sanitation protocol?

**A:** *As long as it takes and in accordance with CDC and Virginia guidelines, at least through Phase II. The only way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is to adhere to these guidelines. We can continue to telecommute, and phase back into work, staggering schedules, lunch or break times and avoid common gathering areas. We must also be diligent in self-monitoring, wearing our masks, washing our hands, and practicing social distancing. If we do this, we will flatten the curve and advance to Phase II sooner. We are all in this together and each of us must play our part.*

### CLEANING AND SANITIZING WORKSPACES

**Q:** What is being done on a daily basis to clean our offices, workspaces, vehicles, etc?

**A:** *Building Services and the custodial staff have specific protocol and expectations they adhere to on a daily/nightly basis. In addition, each department is encouraged to clean and sanitize their common areas, employee touchpoints and desks several times during the day. Should you need any cleaning supplies or PPE, a centralized, COVID-19 supply and distribution network had been established for requesting and distributing PPE for staff, cleaning supplies, and signage. Each department and agency has an individual who has been working as a logistics liaison to assist with this effort.*

**Q:** What should employees do on a daily basis to ensure we keep our workspace clean and sanitized?

**A:** *We are so glad you asked! The Recovery Planning Teams worked together to create a [Cleaning Checklist](#) for departments to use. This is intended to be supplementary to the custodial staff and it's an excellent daily and weekly reminder that it takes the entire team to maintain a healthy workspace. This checklist compliments washing your hands at every opportunity and wearing your face covering daily.*

**Q:** What is the difference between cleaning and disinfecting?

**A:** ***Cleaning** with soap and water removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It lowers the risk of spreading infection.*

***Disinfecting** kills germs on surfaces. By killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading germs, infection or viruses.*

**Q:** What is Routine Cleaning? How frequently should facilities be cleaned to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19?

- *Routine cleaning is the everyday cleaning practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.*
- *Surfaces frequently touched by multiple people, such as door handles, bathroom surfaces, and handrails, should be cleaned with soap and water or another detergent at least daily when facilities are in use.*
- *More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use. For example, certain surfaces and objects in public spaces, such as shopping carts and point of sale keypads, should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.*
- *Cleaning removes dirt and impurities, including germs, from surfaces. Cleaning alone does not kill germs, but it reduces the number of germs on a surface.*

*For further information, please refer to the recently updated: [Cleaning and disinfecting](#) guidance issued by the CDC.*