



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

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Voice/Relay

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TO: Howard County Employees

FROM: Lonnie R. Robbins
Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Update for Employees

DATE: March 13, 2020

This communication was sent via global email to all Howard County employees on Friday, March 13, 2020 at 12:08 p.m.

Dear Employees,

Yesterday afternoon Governor Hogan made important announcements regarding the State's response to Coronavirus- COVID-19. The Governor has moved the State to Level II of the Pandemic Flu and Other Infectious Diseases Attendance and Leave Policy. Level II means that, effective immediately, all State employees who are approved for telework are required to telework. In addition, the State is closing all public schools for two weeks starting on Monday, March 16 until Friday, March 27.

This is good public health and safety policy. While there are no confirmed cases in Howard County, at this time, we are going to do everything we can to slow the spread of this virus. Consistent with that priority, our County Executive announced today that effective on Monday, March 16, all non-essential County employees who have teleworking capability may be instructed to telework, until further notice.

This will reduce the number of people who need to be physically at work and will allow us to increase "social distancing" – or, in other words, to reduce the contact between people, in order to minimize exposure.

Employees who do not have teleworking capability are expected to report to work as scheduled or use leave. We will apply liberal approval of all leave requests to accommodate your needs to take care of yourself and your family. We will work individually with any employee who does not currently have teleworking capability or whose job cannot be done remotely and will grant telework requests as soon as technologically possible. While at the workplace, we ask that you follow the preventative steps that are posted on our website.

If you or a family member are ill, do not come to work. If you have insufficient leave, Human Resources will work with you to discuss accommodations that may be available. We will make every effort to ensure everyone has the flexibility needed during this difficult time.

Additional communications will follow with more details and we will provide the resources to support you as we transition to this new work environment.

I anticipate that things will continue to move rapidly on this issue. I fully appreciate that we are all trying to balance responsibility to our family with our work needs. I do not know what the future holds, but we do know that the first steps in battling the virus is to limit exposure, and I appreciate your cooperation as we take these necessary steps.

Thank you.