



## **REVISED COVID-19 EMPLOYEE FAQs** **AS OF JANUARY 6, 2021**

### **Background**

On March 16, 2020, Alameda County issued a Shelter-In-Place Order that has been extended and modified several times as California continues to battle COVID-19. Though the Order initially helped slow the virus trajectory, COVID positive cases have recently been on the rise in Alameda County and the risk of COVID-19 to the public and our employees remains significant. The City has kept its employees informed by distributing and posting online Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”). These updated FAQ’s supplement, and where indicated, replace previously issued FAQs.

Please be advised that these FAQs contain important information regarding safety and your right to additional time off, including Emergency Paid Sick Leave, under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). While the FFCRA expired at the end of 2020, the City is voluntarily extending some aspects of the FFCRA through the City’s Extended Program (see FAQ #13).

**Please review every FAQ (but particularly FAQs #29 - #33, because they contain important information on the City’s obligations regarding workplace exclusion if you are exposed to or test positive for COVID-19. If you have questions, please contact your supervisor or manager or Departmental HR Single Point of Contact (SPOC).**

### **ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER AND OAKLAND CITY EMPLOYEES**

#### **1. What Is The Shelter In Place Order?**

On March 16, 2020, the Health Officer of Alameda County ordered Alameda County residents to shelter in their place of residence except to provide or receive “essential services.” This Order has been extended and modified several times, most recently on December 7, 2020. Due to an increase in COVID-19 positive cases in Alameda County, the Order increases restrictions to help stop the spread of the disease.

<https://covid-19.acgov.org/sip.page>

## **2. Am I Required To Work During The Shelter In Place Order?**

The City of Oakland continues to serve the Oakland community with “Essential Government Functions.” If you are an essential government worker, you are expected to telecommute or report to work as directed by your Department. If you do not perform an essential government function, cannot report to work, and/or are not required to report to work, you will be required to use your accrued paid time off or Emergency Paid Sick Leave if eligible.

## **3. If I Am Over The Age Of 65, Am I Required To Work?**

The risk of *Severe Illness* with COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk. For example, people in their 50s are at a higher risk for severe illness than people in their 40s. Similarly, people in their 60s or 70s are at higher risk for severe illness than people in their 50s. However, the greatest risk for severe illness from COVID-19 is among those aged 85 or older.

Please note that the term “*Severe Illness*” may mean hospitalization, intensive care, a ventilator to help you breathe, or even death.

If you who fall in this category, you may request telecommute options. If you are unable to telecommute, employees who choose not to work because of their age and risk of COVID-19 must use their accrued paid time off or may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Extended Program (see FAQ #13).

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/older-adults.html>

## **4. If I Have A Medical Condition, Am I Required To Work?**

If you have a “underlying medical condition” that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines as (1) cancer; (2) chronic kidney disease; (3) COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease); (4) heart conditions such as heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies; (5) immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant; (6) obesity and severe obesity (BMI of 40 or higher); (7) pregnancy; (8) sickle cell disease; and (9) Type 2 diabetes Mellitus and do not want to report to work and cannot telecommute, you will be required to use accrued paid time off or may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave. According to the CDC, these underlying medical conditions increase a person’s risk of *Severe Illness* from COVID-19.

The CDC has identified additional underlying medical conditions that may put a person at a higher risk of *Severe Illness* from COVID-19. If you have one of these conditions and cannot telecommute, you may use your accrued leave or may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Extended Program set forth in FAQ #13. You may find these conditions using this link:

## **5. If I Am Able To Telecommute During The Order, Must I?**

Yes. If you can work, you must telecommute as directed by your Department. The City of Oakland issued a Temporary Telecommute Policy, Application, and Agreement that currently remains in effect until your Appointing Authority (City Administrator, City Attorney, Mayor or City Auditor) or their designee terminate the policy or unless otherwise notified in writing. Telecommute documents are available using the following:

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/city-of-oakland-covid-19-employee-resources>

To telecommute, the Application and Agreement must be completed and approved by your Department. You are then required to telecommute and follow the agreement unless your supervisor directs you otherwise. You must perform meaningful work and respond to your manager/supervisor while telecommuting. If you are not responsive during your telecommuting work schedule, your ability to telecommute may be rescinded and/or you may be required to use accrued leave to cover the time that you are not working.

If you cannot telecommute for any reason, including, without limitation to, becoming sick, needing to care for a sick family member, needing to quarantine, or needing to care for your children for any reason, you must advise your supervisor. You can use your accrued paid time off or you may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave and/or Extended Family and Medical Leave under the City's Extended Program (see FAQ #13). It is imperative that telecommuting employees work a full schedule as they would if reporting to the office.

## **6. How Do I Code My Time If I Am Approved To Telecommute And Performing Work?**

If you are performing telecommute work, you should code your timecard as "REG" (NONSWORN).

## **7. May I Work Overtime If I Am Approved To Telecommute?**

Yes, but only if you receive advanced authorization from your supervisor. Managers and supervisors of telecommuting employees are strongly urged to schedule any required overtime in advance.

## **8. What If I Get Sick While Telecommuting Or Need To Care For An Ill Family Member?**

You must immediately let your supervisor know if you are too sick to telecommute, need to care for an ill family member, or need to care for a child for any reason due to the Shelter-in-Place Order. You can use your accrued paid time off or may be eligible for

Emergency Paid Sick Leave and/or Extended Family and Medical Leave under the City's Extended Program (see FAQ #13).

**9. If I Cannot Telecommute, Am I Required To Come Into Work?**

Maybe. If the City determined that you provide an essential government function that requires onsite work or you perform disaster service work and you were instructed to report to work, the City expects you to come into work. If your Department orders you to report in to work, the Department will follow the [City's Safety Protocols](#). Those protocols are available on-line at:

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/city-of-oakland-covid-19-employee-resources>

**10. Will I Get Paid If I Am Required To Report To Work?**

Yes. You must code your timecard as "REG" (NONSWORN).

**11. What If I Do Not Have Any Accrued Unused Paid Leave?**

If you have no accrued leave, including without limitation sick, vacation, compensatory time, floating holidays, or management leave, you may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave and/or Extended Family and Medical Leave under the City's Extended Program (see FAQ #13). Additionally, certain employees may borrow up to two weeks (generally 75, 80 or 96 hours but dependent on your schedule) of paid sick leave. To be eligible, you must exhaust all your accrued paid time off and complete the City's request for and repayment agreement. Please see the [attached policy and application](#) for further guidance.

**FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT –  
EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE AND EXTENDED FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE**

**12. What Is The Families First Coronavirus Response Act?**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government enacted the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The FFCRA provides certain employees with additional paid sick leave (Emergency Paid Sick Leave) or extended family and medical leave (EFML) for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Please note that this leave expired on December 31, 2020 but the City extended some of the benefits through March 31, 2021. Please see FAQ #13

The Department of Labor has issued several FAQs that may assist you in understanding the FFCRA. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>

**13. Am I Eligible For Additional Paid Leave Or Extended Family And Medical Leave Under The FFCRA?**

The FFCRA provided eligible employees with Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Extended Family and Medical Leave (EFML) for certain reasons related to COVID-19. This leave was mandated by federal law and expired on December 31, 2020. **However, the City is voluntarily extending some of the FFCRA leave benefits which provides EPSL and EFML through March 31, 2021.** This will be referred to as the “Extended Program” in these FAQs.

As before, and with the Extended Program, if the City of Oakland has work for you to perform, but you are unable to perform it for a reason related to COVID-19, you may be eligible for two weeks of additional paid sick leave (“Emergency Paid Sick Leave”) for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Additionally, Oakland employees employed for at least 30 days are eligible for up to an additional 12 weeks of family leave to care for a child under certain circumstances related to COVID-19. Please note, like the FFCRA, the Extended Program caps the wage amount available to you under Emergency Paid Sick Leave and the additional time off under the EFML. Moreover, the Extended Program **does not provide an additional bank of EPSL or EFML** to those that have previously taken or exhausted their leave under the FFCRA. Rather, the Extended Program only extends the date that benefits are available through March 31, 2021. The Extended Program does not add additional benefits. The City continues to follow the requirements of the FFCRA, including but not limited to eligibility standards, payment caps, and reasons for taking such leave. However, the City will no longer provide paid leave for EFML when employees expend personal accruals, rather the City will extend protected unpaid leave akin to that leave provided for routine Family Medical Leave Act and California Family Rights Act leave.

#### **14. Who Determines My Eligibility Under the FFCRA Or The Extended Program For Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Extended Family Medical Leave?**

As with leave under the Family Medical Leave Act and California Family Rights Act, Risk Management, in coordination with your Department’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC), will determine your eligibility for leave and Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the Extended Program. You must complete an Employee Certification for Leave to start the process. The form is available online at:

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/city-of-oakland-covid-19-employee-resources>

#### **15. Do I Get Additional Emergency Paid Sick Leave In Addition To My Current Accrued Sick Leave?**

Yes. If qualified for the Extended Program, and you have not already expended FFCRA benefits, you will receive an additional two weeks of paid sick leave, up to 80 hours, that you may only use for certain COVID-19 reasons. **However,** the Emergency Paid Sick Leave is capped at certain dollar amounts, and those amounts vary depending on the reason you take the leave. Please see FAQ #18.

#### **16. Can I Cash Out Emergency Paid Sick Leave?**

No. Paid leave under the FFCRA, including Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Extended Family and Medical Leave was only available until December 31, 2020. The City *voluntarily extended the FFCRA leave benefits through March 31, 2021* under the Extended Program. The City will not cash out leave under the FFCRA or the Extended Program at any time, including upon separation of employment or upon expiration (i.e., March 31, 2021).

**17. Can I Supplement My Emergency Paid Sick Leave With My Accrued Paid Time Off So I Receive My Current Total Salary/Wage?**

No. Should you choose to use Emergency Paid Sick Leave, you may not supplement it with your accrued paid time off. You will receive either your regular rate of pay or the legally capped amount, whichever is less. Please see FAQ #18.

**18. What Am I Entitled To Under The FFCRA/Extended Program In Emergency Paid Sick Leave Or Extended Family and Medical Leave?**

In alignment with the FFCRA, the City will provide you with additional Emergency Paid Sick Leave or Extended Family and Medical Leave (EFML) under the Extended Program for the following reasons:

- If you are subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation Order related to COVID-19, the City will pay you for up to two workweeks at your regular rate, up to \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate. (Emergency Paid Sick Leave)
- If you have been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19, the City will pay you for up to two work-weeks at your regular rate, up to \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate. (Emergency Paid Sick Leave)
- If you experience one or more COVID-19 symptoms (i.e. fever of 100.4° F or greater, coughing, and/or shortness of breath) and are seeking a medical diagnosis, you will be paid while seeking the diagnosis for up to two workweeks at my regular rate, up to \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the aggregate. (Emergency Paid Sick Leave)
- If you need to care for an individual who is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order or who has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to reasons related to COVID-19, you will be paid for up to two workweeks at 2/3 your regular rate, up to \$200 per day and \$12,000 in the aggregate. (Emergency Paid Sick Leave)
- If you need to care for your child who is a minor or who is incapable of self-care due to a disability and whose school or care-provider is closed or unavailable due

to COVID-19 precautions. (Extended Family and Medical Leave-EFML) Please see FAQs #19-21.

**19. What Is The Extended Family Medical Leave Benefit (EFML) Under The FFCRA/Extended Program?**

If you need to care for your child who is a minor or who is incapable of self-care due to a disability and whose school or care-provider is closed or unavailable due to COVID-19, you may be eligible to take a maximum of 12 workweeks of protected leave (“EFML”).

**20. How Do I Know If I Am Eligible For EFML Under The FFCRA/Extended Program?**

Please see FAQs # 13 and #18 to determine whether you may be eligible for EFML. You must then complete and return to your SPOC or Risk Management a FFCRA Form and an Employee Certification for Extended Family and Medical Leave. [You may access the documents here](#). Risk Management will determine whether you are eligible for EFML.

**21. What Benefits (Leave or Pay) Do I Get Under EFML?**

If Risk Management approves your request for EFML, you are entitled to up to 12 weeks of leave. Additionally, you are entitled to certain pay as follows:

The first 2 workweeks of EFML are unpaid unless you decide to concurrently use available Emergency Paid Sick Leave or other accrued paid time off, including but not limited to vacation leave, compensatory time, or management leave. You may choose which accrued paid leave you want to use, if any. If you elect to use Emergency Paid Sick Leave (and you have a remaining balance), you will be paid at 2/3 your regular rate of pay, up to \$200 per day.

After the first two workweeks of EFML, you will be required to concurrently use any other accrued paid time off that you have that would normally be used to care for a child who is not ill, including without limitation vacation leave, compensatory time, or management leave. You may select which accrued paid time off you wish to use to be paid.

**Example:** After the first two workweeks of EFML, you use 5 more days of EFML. If you have 5 days of vacation, compensatory time, management leave and/or any other accrued paid time off, you are required to use that leave concurrently with the remaining EFML leave. Thus, you will be paid for 5 days using your accrued paid time off.

**22. What If I Do Not Have Any Accrued Paid Time Off But Still Need EFML?**

If you exhaust your accrued paid time off before you run out of EFML, you may continue to take EFML until it is exhausted, not to exceed a total of 12 weeks. The City will extend protected unpaid leave through the Extended Program until March 31, 2021.

**23. What If I Previously Took Or Exhausted All Of My Family Medical Leave (FMLA) But Still Need EFML?**

If you have already taken Family and Medical Leave this year for other reasons, the amount of EMFL available to you is reduced by an equivalent amount. Thus, if you took 2 weeks of FMLA leave, you have 10 weeks remaining of EFML.

**24. I Am A First Responder, Am I Entitled To Emergency Paid Sick Leave Or Extended Family And Medical Leave Under The FFCRA?**

Yes. Though the FFCRA allows the City to exempt first responders, the City chose to include first responders. Thus, if eligible, first responders may be entitled to Emergency Paid Sick Leave and EFML. The City will continue to offer this benefit through the Extended Program.

**25. How Do I Code My Timecard If I Take Emergency Paid Sick Leave Or Extended Family Leave?**

The City has issued instructions to all Departments on how to properly code your timecard if you take Emergency Paid Sick Leave or EFML. Please reach out to your Single Point of Contact (SPOC), Department Payroll representative, or the Payroll division in the Finance Department.

**26. Will My Retirement Pension Be Impacted If I Take FFCRA Emergency Paid Sick Leave Or Extended Family And Medical Leave?**

Please contact CalPERS at (888)CalPERS (or 888-225-7377) or use the following link:

<https://www.calpers.ca.gov/page/home>.

## CITY OF OAKLAND EMPLOYEES AND COVID-19

**27. How Do I Get Tested For COVID-19?**

You may contact your personal doctor or local clinic. Additionally, you are likely eligible for testing offered by the City at no cost to you. Please see [attached Guidelines](#) and call CarivaCare if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, had direct contact with someone who was confirmed to have COVID-19, or want to be tested for COVID-19 for another reason. The City strongly urges eligible employees to use the City's testing facility if they perform essential government functions, especially those in public safety and first responders.

**28. What If I Am A First Responder In The Oakland Police Department Or The Oakland Fire Department And Have Been Exposed To COVID-19 In The**

## **Workplace But Have No Symptoms?**

Police officers working in the Oakland Police Department who are exposed to COVID-19 through detentions and transports, **do not** need to quarantine if they were wearing mandated personal protective equipment (PPE). However, if an officer is exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace in any other manner, the City is required to exclude them from the workplace as set forth in FAQ #29.

Firefighters in the Oakland Fire Department who perform “paramedic and emergency medical services,” which includes responding to structure fires, **do not** need to quarantine if they were wearing mandated PPE. If a firefighter is exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace in any other manner, the City is required to exclude them from the workplace as set forth in FAQ #29.

### **29. What If I Have Been Exposed To COVID-19 In The Workplace?**

Under new regulations issued by Cal/OSHA, the City must exclude employees who have been exposed in the workplace to COVID-19 through Close Contact. The new regulations define a Close Contact COVID-19 exposure as being within six feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for a total of fifteen (15) minutes or greater in any 24-hour period. The City’s exposure investigation will investigate whether an employee was a Close Contact of a COVID-19 positive individual by looking back 1) 48 hours before the COVID-19 positive individual began experiencing COVID-19 symptoms; 2) 48 hours before the individual tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms; and/or 3) 10 days after the individual first experienced COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive without symptoms. It is essential that employees, including supervisors and managers, ensure they are (and those under their supervision are) properly distancing themselves at all times unless doing so is operationally impossible, and always wear a face covering or other appropriate PPE. If employees properly distance themselves from their colleagues, they should not be identified as a Close Contact of a COVID-19 person in an exposure investigation.

If you are exposed and identified as a Close Contact, Cal/OSHA requires exclusion for fourteen (14) days after the last known COVID-19 exposure. **HOWEVER**, Cal/OSHA’s 14-day exclusionary period has been reduced by the Governor’s Executive Order N-84-20 and Alameda County Public Health Quarantine Order No. 20-06f (as Amended December, 24 2020). This means that the exclusionary period for certain City of Oakland employees is shortened to ten (10) days. Accordingly, if you have been identified as a Close Contact exposed to COVID-19, then you will be excluded from the worksite as follows:

All asymptomatic Close Contacts (within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) shall discontinue quarantine after day 10 from the date of last exposure with or without testing.

Employees excluded from the worksite are required to complete the City's form C19-EE as soon as they are excluded. This form requires basic information about yourself, your exposure, and a signature from your supervisor/manager.

Employees excluded as required by the Cal/OSHA regulations due to a workplace exposure will be allowed to use their accrued leave during the period of exclusion if no telework options are available and the employee is otherwise able and willing to work. Employees who choose not to use their accrued leave will be required to use their accrued paid sick leave. Employees without accrued sick leave will be placed on paid administrative leave.

If you had exposure to a co-worker who is diagnosed with COVID-19 as determined by Risk Management and/or the DICO (Department Infection Control Officer), you should contact and follow the directions of your personal healthcare provider. Additionally, you are eligible for the City provided COVID-19 testing at no cost to you. Please see FAQ #27 and the City's Testing Guidelines. Remember that following the City COVID-19 testing, you should immediately contact your physician for instructions on whether you need to isolate or quarantine or have another COVID-19 PCR test. You must also update your supervisor as to whether you will report to work. Please see FAQs #35, 36.

### **30. What If I Have Been Exposed To COVID-19 Outside The Workplace?**

The new regulations issued by Cal/OSHA also apply to exposure outside of the workplace. The same Close Contact and exposure definitions explained in FAQ #29 apply to non-workplace exposures. Additionally, the City is required to exclude employees from the workplace in the same manner as explained in FAQ #29. While the exposure identification and exclusion processes are generally the same for workplace and non-workplace exposures, leave during the exclusion period is different.

If you had an exposure to someone outside the workplace who is diagnosed with COVID-19, you must contact and follow the directions of your personal healthcare provider. Please see FAQs #35, 36. Additionally, you are eligible for the City provided COVID-19 testing at no cost to you. Please see FAQ #27 and the City's Testing Guidelines. You must update your supervisor as to whether you will report to work. Please see FAQs #35, 36.

Employees excluded from the workplace due to an exposure that is not work related may use their accrued leave during the period of exclusion or utilize unpaid leave if no telework options are available and the employee is otherwise able and willing to work. Employees who choose not to use their accrued leave (or do not have any accrued paid leave) must be placed on an unpaid leave of absence.

### **31. If I Am Experiencing Flu-Like Symptoms, What Should I Do?**

The CDC, California Department of Public Health, and Alameda County Public Health Department recommend that if you suspect that you have been infected with COVID-19, you stay home to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19. The City expects and

mandates that you **do not** report to work sick, especially if you are experiencing flu-like or COVID-19 symptoms. It is imperative that we limit COVID-19 exposure to the public and those employees performing essential government functions.

If you are experiencing these symptoms, please contact your supervisor to inform them that you will not be reporting to work or are unable to telecommute. You can use your accrued paid time off or Emergency Paid Sick Leave if eligible.

Additionally, alert your doctor if you experience symptoms or have questions about your symptoms. Minimizing the spread of the virus is critical and you must follow the guidance of your physician. Please notify Risk Management if you receive a positive COVID-19 test result and your Single Point of Contact (SPOC) can guide you through City leave policies. You are also likely eligible for the City's COVID-19 testing and must consult the Guidelines for direction. The Guidelines are available online at:

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/city-of-oakland-covid-19-employee-resources>

### **32. If I Have Tested Positive For COVID-19, What Should I Do?**

- Follow the guidance of your doctor.
- Inform your supervisor or Risk Management. Understand that the City is required to exclude you from the workplace as set forth in these FAQs. Any questions on the timeline for your exclusion from the workplace should be directed to your DICO or Risk Management. The City will comply with California's confidentiality laws and will not disclose your identity unless required by a California County Health Department or compelled by law.
- Remain under home isolation and follow the recommendation of your physician until you are cleared to return to work. Please see FAQs #39, 40.
- Upon receiving notice of your COVID-19 positive test results, the City will conduct an internal exposure investigation and take additional actions as directed by the Alameda County Public Health Department.
- If you test positive through the City's COVID-19 testing, please contact your personal doctor immediately for further guidance.

### **33. What Will The City Do If A Co-Worker Tests Positive For COVID-19?**

If a City employee provides essential government functions, reports to a worksite, then later tests positive for COVID-19, the City and Risk Management or designated DICO will assess the exposure immediately upon notice. Risk Management and designated DICOs have implemented internal COVID-19 exposure investigation guidelines.

Upon learning of a COVID-19 positive employee, the City and Risk Management/DICO will investigate and trace the employee's steps at the workplace to identify other employees who may have had "Close Contact" with the COVID-19 positive employee. The City will assess across Departments in an effort to identify everyone who may have been exposed.

The City relies on the Cal/OSHA definition of “close contact”, i.e. being within six feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for a cumulative total of fifteen (15) minutes or greater in any 24-hour period.

Exposed employees who are identified through the exposure investigation will receive an individualized communication from Risk Management or the DICO with specific instructions. Typically, the exposure investigation is completed and notices sent out within the same workday but not more than 24 hours upon notice to the City. If an employee did not receive an exposure notice from Risk Management or a DICO, that means they were not identified as a Close Contact of the COVID-19 positive employee. Even so, employees who remain concerned about their COVID-19 status should contact their personal physician or take advantage of City funded COVID-19 testing. Please see FAQ #27. Please understand that an exposure investigation is not perfect, but the City is committed to using all efforts to identify any employee who had close contact with another COVID-19 positive employee. California Counties are officially tasked with COVID-19 contact tracing and the City must notify and cooperate in any contact tracing by a California County.

All notices of potential exposure must be sent to Risk Management or a DICO, if applicable. Risk Management (or DICO) will perform an exposure investigation and the associated workplace investigation. Following the investigation, Risk Management will individually notice possible Close Contacts and will generally notice the subject Department Head and all other Department Directors. This notice will contain all information required by and allowed under law while respecting employee privacy. Department Directors will, in turn, notice affected employees and subcontractors as required. Employees and subcontractors will be noticed by email. Employee Relations will notify employee representatives as required.

The City cannot and will not disclose the identity of the COVID-19 positive employees unless required by law.

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fif-you-are-sick%2Fquarantine-isolation.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fif-you-are-sick%2Fquarantine-isolation.html)

#### **34. What If I Need An Accommodation For Work Due To COVID-19?**

The City will ensure compliance with state and federal law on providing accommodations to employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you feel you need such an accommodation, please contact your Department Single Point of Contact and/or Risk Management as you would for a FEHA accommodation under Administrative Instruction 139.

## ISOLATING OR QUARANTINING FOR EXPOSURE OR TESTING POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

### **35. Based On The Alameda County Public Health Order On COVID-19, When Do I Need To Quarantine Or Isolate At Home?**

Alameda County Public Health issued a blanket Order on quarantine and isolation in response to COVID-19 (referred to as “County Order”) and has since updated the Order with instructions depending on whether you have COVID-19 or were in Close Contact with a COVID-19 person. The County Order states that individuals in Alameda County who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate at home. Please note that the instructions on quarantine and isolation vary by County and the City urges employees to understand their own County requirements and consult their personal physician. The City of Oakland does not require quarantine or isolation, that function rests with the Counties. Instead, the City is required to exclude COVID-19 positive employees and exposed COVID-19 Close Contacts for certain periods of time as set forth in FAQ #29.

Per Alameda County, identified Close Contacts of an individual who is COVID-19 positive regardless of whether it occurred in the workplace must quarantine at home. This includes but is not limited to someone who lives or stays with the individual; their intimate partners, and/or caregivers.

If you suspect that you have COVID-19 or are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider immediately and follow their instructions. Do not report to work. As an alternative option, you may be eligible for the City’s COVID-19 testing process. Following the City testing, you should immediately contact your physician for instructions and guidance and update your supervisor. Please consult the City Testing Guidelines for more information on this testing process.

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fif-you-are-sick%2Fquarantine-isolation.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fif-you-are-sick%2Fquarantine-isolation.html)

### **36. Is There A Difference Between Isolation And Quarantine?**

Yes. According to Alameda County, isolation separates sick, contagious people from those who are not sick. Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people exposed to an infectious disease to see if they become sick.

### **37. What Do I Do If I Suspect Someone Of Having COVID-19?**

All employees and members of the public shall be treated with courtesy and respect. A person’s risk for COVID-19 depends on a variety of factors that do not relate to the person’s race or ethnicity. You should not assume that someone has COVID-19 simply because they cough or sneeze. You should not ask about someone’s medical condition or inquire into whether they have COVID-19. If you suspect that a co-worker has COVID-19, please discuss your concerns without your supervisor or contact Risk Management.

### **38. Am I Required To Bring In A Doctor's Note If I Am Sick And Cannot Report To Work?**

During the Order, most employees will not need to bring in a doctor's note to use (code your timecard with) accrued paid time off for COVID-19 related reasons. However, you may be required to bring in a doctor's note, complete forms required by Risk Management, or obtain clearance in order to return to work, access Emergency Paid Sick Leave or seek an advance of paid sick leave.

## **RETURNING TO WORK AFTER TESTING POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 OR EXPERIENCING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS**

### **39. If I Tested Positive For COVID-19, When Can I Return To Work?**

First and foremost, you should follow the direction of your doctor and return to work once cleared from isolation. Risk Management and/or a DICO do not give medical advice to City employees.

Employees may return to work under any of the following circumstances:

1) An employee presents a note from a medical provider which indicates that they are not a risk for spreading COVID-19 may return to work.

2) An Employee who tested positive but never developed COVID-19 symptoms may return to work after 10 days have passed since the date of their COVID-19 test that resulted in a positive result. Please note that it is the date of the test, not the date the employee received the results. See California Code of Regulations, Title 8, section 3205(c)(11).

3) Symptomatic Employees who tested positive may return to work when:

1. At least 24 hours have passed since a fever of 100.4 or higher has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications;

2. COVID-19 symptoms have improved; and

3. At least 10 days have passed since COVID-19 symptoms first appeared.

A negative COVID-19 test shall **not** be required for any employee to return to work.

<https://covid-19.acgov.org/isolation-quarantine.page?#resources>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

#### **40. If I Was Required To Quarantine By The County, When Can I Return To Work?**

If you are quarantining because of exposure to COVID-19 but have not developed symptoms, you must follow the same exclusion timelines proscribed for workplace exposure in FAQs #29, or the same exclusion timelines proscribed for exposures unrelated to the workplace in FAQ #30, or present a note from a medical provider which indicates that you are not a risk for spreading COVID-19.

If the County orders you to quarantine or isolate, please contact your DICO and/or Risk Management for further guidance, including the determination of whether an exception may apply to the Order that reduces the quarantine period. See <https://covid-19.acgov.org/covid19-assets/docs/shelter-in-place/20-6f-hoo-blanket-quarantine-english-2020.12.23.pdf>

#### **41. What If My County Or Doctor Requires Me To Have A Negative COVID-19 Test Before Returning To Work?**

If you are required to receive a negative COVID-19 test prior to returning to work, please contact Risk Management as you are eligible for City testing. The City may not mandate a negative test before an employee returns to work.

### **OAKLAND EMPLOYEES AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

#### **42. Should I Wear A Cloth Face Covering?**

Yes. The Alameda County Public Health Department (“ACPHD”) issued an Order for all employees providing Essential Government Functions to wear a Face Covering in areas where the public is present or likely to be and at any time when others are nearby. The City also mandates the wearing of a face covering as set forth in its Face Covering Memorandum. Failure to wear a face covering when required to do so will result in discipline.

Wearing a face covering is one tool for reducing the spread of the virus but is not a substitute for physical distancing of at least 6 feet at all times in the workplace. Please review the City’s [Face Covering Memorandum](#).

<https://covid-19.acgov.org/covid19-assets/docs/face-covering/20-13-health-officer-order-eng.pdf>

A “Face Covering” means a covering made of cloth, fabric, or other soft or permeable material, without holes, that covers only the nose and mouth and surrounding areas of the lower face.

Employees should not use cloth face coverings when doing so would be dangerous, such as when vision might be obstructed or when using tools or equipment that could become entangled with the covering.

PLEASE NOTE, if your Department requires you to wear a face shield, N95 mask, gloves, or other required personal protective equipment (PPE), you shall wear full PPE while working.

#### **43. Will The City Provide Me With A Cloth Face Covering?**

No. Face coverings are required by ACPHD for everyday use by the general population. The required cloth face coverings are not tied to a specific occupation or job responsibility. Every employee should source their own cloth face covering for personal use should they so choose. Nevertheless, the City continues to make efforts to secure face coverings and will make them available to first responders and employees performing essential government functions.

#### **44. Are There Exceptions?**

Yes but they are limited. A face covering is not required when a person is in a personal office (a single room) if the public or co-workers do not visit the room. However, you must have a face covering available should someone enter the office or room. You must also wear a face covering if you work in a cubicle or enter a common space, including restrooms and reception areas. Please consult your supervisor should you have questions.

A face covering is also not required by the Order to be worn by an individual if that individual can show either: (1) a medical professional has advised that wearing a face covering may pose a risk to the person wearing the mask for health-related reasons; or (2) wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines. Should you need a medical exception, please contact Risk Management.

#### **45. Are There Consequences If I Do Not Comply With The Face Covering Order Or The City's Memorandum?**

Yes. According to the Order, failure to comply with any of the provisions constitutes an imminent threat and immediate menace to public health, constitutes a public nuisance, and is punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both. Additionally, you will be disciplined if you fail to wear a face covering. Please refer to the City's Face Covering Memorandum. [Face Covering Memorandum](#)

#### **46. How Do I Make A Cloth Face Covering?**

Instructions on how to make a cloth face covering are provided by the CDC. Please note that appropriate cloth coverings can include bandanas and neck gaiters.

If you wish to make your own mask, please use the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

**47. How Should A Face Covering Fit?**

The face covering should cover your mouth and nose and 1) fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face; 2) secure with ties or ear loops; 3) include multiple layers of fabric; 4) allow for breathing without restriction; and 5) able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

**48. Should Cloth Face Coverings Be Washed Or Otherwise Cleaned Regularly? How Regularly?**

Yes. They should be routinely washed.

**49. Can A Cloth Face Covering Be Reused?**

Yes. A cloth face covering can be reused, provided it is properly sterilized and cleaned after every use.

**50. How does One Safely Sterilize/Clean A Cloth Face Covering?**

A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a face covering.

**51. How Does One Safely Remove A Used Cloth Face Covering?**

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

**52. Does The Recommendation Surrounding A Cloth Face Covering Require Me To Wear An N95 Mask?**

No. The cloth face covering does not include N95 or surgical masks. These important supplies should be reserved for healthcare workers and first responders.

**53. Will The City Provide Me With An N95 Mask?**

Neither the CDC nor ACPHD recommends an N95 respirator mask or surgical mask for general use. Rather use a basic cloth face covering.

However, employees should use an N95 mask or other prescribed mask if such mask is part of your typical PPE. The City will provide you an N95 mask if it is a normal part of the required PPE for your classification/duties and you have been trained on the use of a N95, fitted, and received medical clearance. The City will not generally distribute N95 masks as a response to COVID-19.

#### **54. How Do I Properly Use An N95 Mask?**

If you are required to use a N95 mask, you should have already received training. Should you need a refresher course, Cal-OSHA provides a complete FAQ on N95 use that you can access here: [https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh\\_publications/N95-mask-questions.html](https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/N95-mask-questions.html)

#### **55. Are N95 Masks Reusable?**

According to the CDC, N95 masks may be reusable when there are anticipated shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative that N95 masks be reserved for first responders, healthcare workers, and employees performing essential government functions who have been trained, fitted, and cleared to wear a N95 mask.

Reuse is guided by a number of variables that impact respirator function, so there is no preset number of times that an N95 can be used before it must be disposed. Extending the life of an N95 can occur in two ways:

1. EXTENDED USE refers to the practice of wearing the same N95 respirator for a prolonged period of time without removing it, for example during an entire shift.
2. REUSE refers to the practice of using the same N95 respirator but removing it after a specific encounter or a shift and storing it for use by the same person. The CDC recommends that a respirator classified as disposable, such as an N95, can be reused by the same worker as long as it remains functional.

In light of this pandemic and concerning shortage of N95 masks, the City will allow the reuse or extended use of N95 masks as long as they are clean and functional. If you believe that your N95 must be replaced, please notify your supervisor immediately. If a Department is experiencing a shortage of N95 masks, please contact Risk Management.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

#### **56. I Am Working From Home, Is The City Required To Provide Me With Ergonomic Equipment Or An Ergonomic Assessment Of My Work Location At Home?**

No. The City is not required to provide you with ergonomic equipment or an ergonomic assessment for your telecommute location. However, the City wants to provide whatever ergonomic support it can give in the current situation. The City is currently evaluating its resources and personnel to see how it can best support City employees who are telecommuting.

**57. Can I Use Professional Development Funds To Buy Ergonomic Equipment For Use At Home?**

No. Professional development funds use is regulated by your Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and IRS regulations.

**58. Can I Come Into The Office And Take Ergonomic Equipment For Use At Home?**

Maybe. Employees who do not report to the workplace and provide essential government functions are prohibited by the County Health Order from leaving their home and returning to work to obtain equipment for at home use. Departments may allow employees performing essential government functions to return to the office for certain ergonomic equipment, but those wishing to do so must have supervisory approval prior to removing equipment. The City will not be able to meet every request and has full discretion to determine what ergonomic equipment may be taken home.

All equipment remains the property of the City of Oakland and supervisors and managers must log all ergonomic equipment loaned to you. It is expected that you will return or replace all ergonomic equipment to the City once the Order is lifted.

**59. Will The City Provide An Ergonomic Evaluation Of My At-Home Work Station?**

Currently the City has some capacity to support remote ergonomic evaluations of at-home workspaces. Those interested in obtaining an evaluation should make a request through Risk Management as they would for a normal evaluation.

## CITY OF OAKLAND EMPLOYEES ARE DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS

**60. Am I Required To Work As A Disaster Service Worker?**

California law designates all public employees as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) who perform disaster-related duties as required to promote and maintain public health and safety during a declared emergency. DSWs may be required to come to work at any time of day to perform disaster-related duties.

The City is currently assessing Disaster Service Work and anticipates calling employees back to work to provide these important services to City and County residents.

**61. If I Am Called Back To Work As A Disaster Service Worker, How Will I Know?**

Employees will be directed to report to work by their Department Head or City Administration.

**62. What Will I Have To Do As A Disaster Service Worker?**

Assignments will be based on the needs of the City's Emergency Operations Center, Department needs, employees' skills and qualifications, and employee availability. Employees may have to perform general duties that are not part of their normal duties, such as clerical support, food preparation, sorting, packing, loading or delivery. Employees will not be assigned work for which they are not qualified or trained.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ON COVID-19

**63. What Is COVID-19?**

Countries across the world are experiencing expanding outbreaks of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus. The virus is spreading from person-to-person.

**64. What Are The Symptoms Of COVID-19?**

According to the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea.

Call your personal doctor if you develop symptoms and have been in "Close Contact" with a person confirmed to have COVID-19 or have recently traveled from an area with widespread or ongoing community spread of COVID-19. Additionally, you may be eligible for the City-sponsored COVID-19 testing. Please see attached [Guidelines](#).

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

**65. Is COVID-19 Different Than The Flu?**

Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses.

There are differences between flu and COVID-19. It is believed that COVID-19 spreads more easily than flu and causes more serious illnesses in some people. It can also take longer before people show symptoms and people can be contagious for longer periods of time. Another important difference is there is a vaccine to protect against flu. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 though a COVID-19 vaccine is anticipated in

the next month or two. The best way to prevent a COVID-19 infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

Since some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone and testing may help confirm a diagnosis. For a more detailed explanation between the differences, please use the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

## **66. How Does COVID-19 Spread?**

- COVID-19 spreads very easily from person to person and is more easily spread than the flu virus but less than the measles;
- COVID-19 most commonly spreads during *Close Contact*;
- COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by airborne transmission which is exposure in small droplets and particles that can linger in the air for minutes to hours and may infect people who are further than 6 feet away from the person who is infected or after that person has left the space
- COVID-19 spreads less commonly through contact with contaminated surfaces; and
- COVID-19 rarely spreads between people and animals.

Please consult the following link for more information on how COVID-19 is spread:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

## **67. What Can I Do To Stay Healthy Or Slow The Spread Of COVID-19?**

Practice these illness-prevention measures:

- Wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth while at work and in public as required by ACPHD;
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others, whenever possible;
- Wash hands with soap and hot water and rub for at least 20 second or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; Avoid crowded indoor spaces and ensure indoor spaces are properly ventilated by bringing in outdoor air as much as possible. In general, being outdoors and in spaces with good ventilation reduces the risk of exposure;
- If you are sick or have any COVID-19 symptoms, stay home and consult

your doctor;

- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, including your workstation, door handles, phone, computer keyboard, remote controls, and other work equipment;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Get a flu shot to protect yourself and others from the flu, which has some similar symptoms to COVID-19;
- Limit your personal travel;
- If you are required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), please ensure that you are properly wearing it while working; and
- Follow the [City's Safety Protocols](#).