



OKLAHOMA

Office of Management & Enterprise Services

AAA MEMO: HCM 20-08

Date: April 30, 2020

Agency directors,

Thank you for your leadership in quickly moving your employees to telework status where it was possible, while maintaining core services to your constituents. As aspects of the state economy open up, it is time to think about how that impacts our state agencies.

Before I go into any details on this topic, there are a few high-level points I would like to make:

- Agency directors will continue to have a lot of discretion in how you manage your workforce; you know the services you need to provide and you know your constituents, so you should make key decisions about how to change the way you manage your workforce
- We have made great strides in the last six weeks to manage state services remotely. A key element of our efforts was to ensure even constituents without access to computers or smartphones could be served, e.g., by phone or by appointment. Because we took those steps, you can and should feel free to be moderate in your approach to returning your workforce to your physical workspace
- Employees whose critical functions require working from the office should be called back to work while you take appropriate measures to help them feel secure in their work environment. If you have employees who are or who care for someone in the vulnerable population for COVID-19 seek to make accommodations for them. If you have employees who are simply not comfortable returning to the physical workspace, and you are unable to move them to different duties, please work with your Human Resources personnel to develop a solution
- Nothing in the balance of this message should be assumed as superseding the following three critical documents you should look to for guidance - if you find irreconcilable conflicts, please let me know:
 1. [The governor's Open Up & Recover Safely plan](#)
 2. [The EPA's Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
 3. [CDC Guidelines on social distancing](#)

The above all said, we should begin to think about reintegrating our workforce into our physical offices, starting with roles that cannot be accomplished effectively remotely. If you wish to bring some of your workforce back into your building while following CDC and EPA guidelines and the OURS plan, please do so. At the same time, if you are delivering quality service to your constituents and managing your employees effectively, please continue to use teleworking as a management tool.

The following are additional considerations for managing your workforce in this environment:

Facility considerations

- Establish social distancing expectations, which may include acting as follows:
 - Maintain a distance of six feet from others at all times

- Limit break rooms to single occupancy
- Close common areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact, or enforce strict social distancing protocols
- Use meeting rooms as a last resort
 - Maintain six feet of distance between individuals in conference rooms
 - Use videoconferencing as an alternative
- Limit elevators to single occupancy when possible
 - Use stairs as the primary method of travel between floors. Where possible, designate one stairwell for traveling up and another for traveling down
- Limit or eliminating in-person meetings and group activities/lunches
- Increase space between desks and workstations or install barriers between desks
 - Consider assigning alternating schedules for staff to use large open cubicle areas to allow for additional space between workers
- Adjust points of entry to buildings
 - Control lanes can be created using barriers for office buildings with large single points of entry
- Increase frequency and thoroughness of building cleanings, such as:
 - Make disinfectant wipes available in common spaces such as break rooms, conference rooms, outside elevators, stairwells and lobbies
 - Thoroughly clean office spaces once per day including disinfecting surfaces, chairs, keyboards and light switches
 - Cleaning restrooms twice daily
 - Disinfect door handles, switches, buttons and other high-touch surfaces on a regular schedule throughout the day
 - Establish procedures for ensuring mail and packages are cleaned or quarantined prior to handling and distribution
- Establish guidelines for customers and visitors to the building, which may include:
 - Limit the number of customers or visitors allowed in the building at one time
 - Interface with customers using phone, web conference, or other contactless methods
- Install plexiglass barriers at customer interface portals to protect against airborne pathogens

General safety considerations

- Monitor and follow guidance from sources such as Centers for Disease Control Prevention, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Oklahoma State Department of Health and other federal, state and local entities
 - Consider the employer obligations under the Occupational Safety and Health Act
- Consider providing personal protective equipment, such as masks, gloves, face shields and hand sanitizer, especially for employees whose job duties put them in proximity to other individuals
 - Evaluate each employee's risk of exposure to COVID-19 as a result of job duties when determining precautions to implement and type of PPE to supply
- Encourage hand-washing and post signage at hand-washing stations
 - Set up hand sanitizer stations
- Implement employee health screening measures. Measures may include:
 - Employee temperature screenings prior to entering the building
 - Employee questionnaires prior to returning to work regarding potential exposure, symptoms and travel in preceding two weeks
- Set expectations for how positive COVID-19 tests will be handled if an employee who has returned to the building tests positive
 - Require employees to notify the agency immediately if exposed or sick
 - Ensure employees are aware the agency is required to notify close proximity co-workers or customers who may have been exposed so they can take precautions or get tested

Staffing considerations

- Implement a phased approach to return to work based on your agency needs, work functions performed, mission-critical status and other objective criteria
- In order to reduce the number of employees in office buildings, consider utilizing measures such as:
 - Telework
 - Reduced schedules
 - Staggered schedules or designated shifts
- Engage in individual discussions with employees at high risk for infection who may require accommodations. Potential accommodations include, but are not limited to:
 - Telework
 - Use of accrued leave or leave without pay
 - Adjusted work hours to avoid or reduce contact with others
 - Isolated workstations
 - Additional PPE
- Offer leave to eligible employees under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act in accordance with the law

Technology considerations

- Equipment:
 - Before staff bring equipment back into the office, agencies should review the asset inventory for each staff member to determine what equipment went home and what should be returned
 - Agencies should identify a location for physically cleaning equipment. Agency heads will identify the appropriate personnel to handle the cleaning stations
 - Agencies should establish a schedule for staff to bring equipment in for cleaning prior to returning the equipment to their workspace
 - Equipment should be cleaned in accordance with the [OMES COVID electronics cleaning guidance](#), as well as [CDC guidelines](#). Adherence to these policies will prevent unintended voidance of machine warranties. Cleaners should be purchased through your agency's normal procurement channels.
 - Once equipment has been physically cleaned, it can be safely returned to the employee's workspace
- Security:
 - Agencies should review the [Personal Device Standard](#) for guidance on employees who used their personal device(s) for state business. If there were deviations from this standard, please contact cybercommand@omes.ok.gov
 - Unified agencies can connect workstations to the network once physically cleaned. Any security issues will be identified through OMES security tools
 - Non-unified agencies should consult with their agency IT group to determine if additional actions are required prior to connecting workstations
 - For specific technology questions, please reach out to your OMES IT strategist
 - For cybersecurity concerns, please visit the [Oklahoma Cyber Command website](#) or email cybercommand@omes.ok.gov.

Communications considerations

- Establish a communications strategy for employees and customers regarding your agency plans to reopen office buildings
- Clearly communicate actions taken to ensure the health and safety of employees and customers
- Encourage employees to stay home if they are sick

- Communicate with vendors that supply contract workers to ensure they are requiring contractors to stay home if sick
- Notify employees of any new agency policies or modifications to existing policies

Policy considerations

- Implement new or revise existing agency telework or flexible schedule policies, if needed
- Clarify leave request procedures or policies such that employees are expected to notify the agency if they are sick. Ensure employees are made aware of this change
- Relax attendance policies as needed to encourage employees to stay home if they are sick or to care for a family member who is sick
 - Relax requirements regarding the need for medical documentation if an employee is sick
- Implement or update business continuity plans to include infection disease response
- Set expectations with employees that all return to work requirements and policies are to be followed and provide clear consequences for employees who fail to follow them
- Minimize all nonessential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel

Thank you for your work adjusting to an ever-changing landscape. Without your effort, our constituents would be without vital services at a critical time. Please note this guidance is by no means all-inclusive of considerations agencies will need to make - and remember you have discretion to make the right choices for your agency. These will vary based on the services you provide and the constituents you serve. Please feel free to reach out with questions as you begin to phase employees back into your agencies.