County eyes public access strategy. Positive worker cleared.

As we look ahead to the end of the current State of Emergency Order in Delaware (June 1), the Kent County leadership team continues to formulate a strategy to safely reopen facilities to the public and return all employees to their respective worksites. Good News - the asymptomatic non-essential employee who tested positive on April 30, has been cleared by the BayHealth Coronavirus Management Team to return to work. At this time, no other County employee has reported a positive COVID-19 test.

The custodial staff has continuously sanitized public areas and the maintenance crew has constructed plexi-glass shields for various public facing counters. In addition, the Administrative Complex lobby has been divided into separated entrance and exit pathways. Hand sanitizer dispensers are located at each entrance and floor decals will mark 6-foot distances at counters. Other measures for a PHASE ONE reopening are also under review such as:

1. Employees must continue to maintain social distancing (6-feet) at all times and/or wear a face covering if interacting with co-workers or the public within 6-feet.

2. Visitors must wear a face covering and wait in the lobby until escorted by a staff member to the appropriate office in the Administrative Complex.

3. Employees & Visitors must answer “NO” to the following questions each workday in order to enter a County facility:
   • Are you presently ill?
   • Have you had any illness in the past 14 days, to include Fever, Coughing, Shortness of Breath, or other Flu like Symptoms?
   • Have you been instructed by a healthcare professional to self-quarantine?
   • Have you travelled out of the country in the last 14 days?
   • Have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

4. Employees must report to their department head or designated co-worker to be checked for a fever (99.5 degrees F or higher) at the beginning of EACH WORK DAY using a handheld infrared thermometer. If no fever is indicated & questions answered with a negative response, the employee will receive a color coded wrist band that must be worn while on duty according to the day of the week (think rainbow color spectrum):
   • Monday = RED
- *Tuesday* = ORANGE
- *Wednesday* = YELLOW
- *Thursday* = GREEN
- *Friday* = BLUE

5. Employees with underlying health conditions who can successfully work from home will NOT be required to report to the worksite during PHASE ONE. If remote work is not possible, such employees should request use of accrued leave including but not limited to FMLA or federally mandated sick leave, if eligible.

6. Non-essential employees may be required to work alternating days or longer/shortened work schedules to limit unnecessary interaction during PHASE ONE.

   For purposes of the Governor John Carney’s State of Emergency Order, a “face covering” means a soft cloth or fabric covering that fully covers a person’s nose and mouth, not a medical-grade mask. The term “face covering” includes, without limitation, scarves and bandanas. The face covering should be comfortable, so that the wearer can breathe comfortably through the nose and does not have to adjust it frequently, so as to avoid touching the face. A “medical-grade mask” means an N95, KN95, surgical, or other mask that would be appropriate for a health care setting. For as long as medical grade masks such as N95 masks and surgical masks are in short supply, members of the public should not purchase those masks as face coverings under this Order. Wearing a medical-grade mask satisfies any requirement in this Order to wear a face covering, but all Delawareans are urged to reserve medical-grade masks for use by health care workers and first responders.

   A video showing how to make a face covering and additional information about how to wear and clean face coverings may be found at the website of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html).

   Kent County continues to require the following:

   1) All employees **must** immediately report to their Department Head and the Personnel Director if they:

      (a) have been diagnosed with COVID-19,

      (b) are reasonably suspected to have COVID-19,

      (c) have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or
(d) reside with or have been in close contact with persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are reasonably suspected to have COVID-19, or have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Symptomatic employees must stay home and cannot come to work until they are free of fever (DPS considers a fever to be 99.5 °F or greater), or signs of a fever, and any other symptoms of acute respiratory illness for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees who have been told they must be isolated or quarantined are prohibited from work on-premises until cleared by DPH or a medical professional, however remote work or telework may be authorized.

2) All employees must check themselves for a fever each day before reporting to the worksite using a reliable personal thermometer and again upon arrival at the workplace each day. If a fever is apparent, then the employee must notify their supervisor and stay/return home.

3) All employees must frequently hand wash with warm water and soap or use hand sanitizer including when entering and leaving the worksite.

4) All employees must follow cough and sneeze hygiene guidelines (cough/sneeze into bent elbow or tissue).

5) All employees must endeavor to maintain 6-feet of space between co-workers and other persons at all times per State and CDC guidelines and recommendations for social distancing (the exception being healthcare workers using appropriate PPE).

6) All employees must wear a face covering when working within 6-feet of co-workers or the public.

Employees must continue to take at least a 30-minute lunch break and two short 15-minute breaks when reporting to work in person or if working from home continuously, without interruption, via technology. Unless specifically authorized by the County Administrator, overtime is not permitted for “critical” or remote working staff (except when physically worked time/overtime has been authorized).

Employees must track all time physically worked during the pandemic response for possible reimbursement by the Federal government. In addition, all time spent physically teleworking must be recorded on a timesheet with project completion milestones documented and reported regularly to supervisors.

Please stay safe & healthy!

(posted 05/12/20)