Cautious reopening procedures continue for public & staff

Compliance with the new normal remains widespread after County offices reopened to the public on June 1. As Delaware enters phase 2 of the COVID-19 pandemic response, the public will continue to wear face coverings when visiting County facilities and County employees must remember to wear face coverings when in hallways, restrooms, elevators, break rooms, and within 6-feet of other people.

In recognition that the County’s business continuity plan made it difficult for some staff to take time off, the cap on vacation accrual for the months of March, April, and May has been temporarily lifted. County employees at the maximum accrual (240 hours for hourly employees) now have until the end of Calendar Year 2020 to use any normal vacation earned but not accrued due to the maximum limitation. If at the maximum vacation accrual, be sure to use your normal monthly accrual first (as usual) and then use extended “over the max” vacation hours, then any vacation under the max. Please note use of “over the max” vacation on your time sheet/vacation use request. Payroll will create a special payroll code for “over the max” vacation usage.

Also in recognition of the efforts of essential County employees, the three month use requirement for equal time off (up to 80-hours maximum per event) earned under Policy 4-2 has been extended until the end of Calendar Year 2020. Any unused equal time off will be paid out at the half time rate after the first of the year.

County building reopening procedures remain in effect until June 26 or longer:

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 or in public areas like hallways, restrooms, etc.

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

3. Employees & Visitors must continuously 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) upon arrival at the beginning of EACH WORK DAY using a handheld infrared thermometer. If no fever is indicated & questions answered with a negative response, Administrative Complex employees 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 may be required to work longer/shortened or flexible work schedules to limit unnecessary interaction. An alternative/flexible schedule may be directed by the department head with approval in advance by the County Administrator.

6. Employees must follow all COVID-19 safety requirements including social distancing & face coverings and should not be offended when expected/asked by a co-worker to do so. Employees failing to follow the safety requirements are subject to discipline up to and including termination.

7. Employees must enter the Administrative Complex via the employee entrance located at the rear of building or the west door by the Clerk of the Peace office. Employees should, if possible, avoid public entrances at all times. Those requiring access thru the front handicapped entrance should endeavor to avoid contact with visitors standing/waiting in the Complex lobby area.

   All full-time County employees are expected to continue to report to their worksite as scheduled, which could be an alternative/flexible schedule on a case-by-case basis as determined by the department head and approved in advance by the County Administrator. As a customer/public service organization, remote work will be limited only to those employees with a healthcare provider verified age or underlying health condition, or qualifying School Closing/Child Care Provider issue approved by the Personnel Director in connection with the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the expanded Emergency Paid Sick Leave and EFMLA provisions and/or
accrued leave. (The required request form is available on the Employee Portal & must be submitted along with healthcare certification, as necessary, upon qualification)

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

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, per FFCRA.

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 an employee has a fever, they must notify their supervisor and stay/return home and contact their healthcare provider for direction which could include self-quarantine/self-isolation.** The healthcare provider directive would trigger the 80-hours of paid sick leave required by the FFCRA. The employee must promptly complete and submit the Paid Sick Leave Request form to the Personnel Office with the medical documentation. Form is available on the employee portal.

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 (normally 60 minutes) and two short 15-minute breaks when reporting to work in person or if working from home continuously, without interruption, via technology – when approved. Unless specifically authorized by the County Administrator, overtime is not permitted for remote working staff (except when physically worked time/overtime has been authorized).

A short YouTube training video prepared by the Kent County Department of Public Safety is attached on the proper use and disposal of PPE:

https://youtu.be/gcutTW-64pE
https://youtu.be/Ma49M7FQdt8

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.

**Please stay safe & healthy!**

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