



## **COVID-19 Employee Q&A**

**March 18, 2020**

Keeping you and our residents safe is a top priority. As information is changing quickly, please look to your email, scheduled employee meetings and your department head for updated information regularly. Please send any other questions you may have to your department director. Please let Tammy Shelafo know if you have questions to add to the next Q and A.

### **Sick Leave**

All leave must be approved by your department head and is dependent on ensuring we are adequately staffed to provide city services.

#### **Q: What is the city doing to encourage sick people to stay home from work?**

**A:** The city is gifting a one-time allocation of 80 hours of sick leave to **ALL** full-time employees. Part-time, seasonal and temporary employees may request sick leave up to 20 hours at the regular hourly rate. Permanent part-time employees may request sick leave up to 40 hours at the regular hourly rate. Part-time employees should contact their supervisor for more details.

#### **Q: What do I do if an immediate family member becomes sick?**

**A:** Existing sick leave or the gifted sick leave (see above) may be used for at-home care of ill family members. Communicate with your supervisor when you must stay home sick.

#### **Q: When should I stay home from work?**

**A:** Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work if they have a fever (100.4° F [38.0° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), cough or shortness of breath. If you are symptomatic, but otherwise ok, please self-isolate for 10 days and self-report at [www.gunnisoncounty.org/covid19](http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/covid19). If you are symptomatic and worsening, please call the call center at 970-641-7660. If it is an emergency, please call 911. Communicate with your supervisor when you must stay home sick.

#### **Q: Can my department head or supervisor send me home from work?**

**A:** Your department head or supervisor may send you home if the above symptoms are observed.

#### **Q: When can I return to work after being self-isolated, quarantined or sent home due to suspected COVID-19?**

**A:** Employees may return to work after the following:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,
- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

- This guidance is subject to change and information is gathered. Please visit the CDC self-assessment for more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html>

**Q: What is the city doing to address childcare issues stemming from school and daycare closures?**

**A:** We understand that employees need to be at home to care for their smaller children. Please communicate with Tammy Shelafo and your supervisor about options which may include remote work, alternative work scheduling, or use of sick leave (either accrued or gifted), etc.

### Vacation Leave

**Q: What happens if I have vacation time off planned while the coronavirus is still a concern and my absence may affect my department's operations?**

**A:** Understanding that this is a fluid situation, urgent business needs in the future may result in leave approvals being rescinded for business purposes. We will notify employees as soon as possible should this occur. And, if you are planning to use your leave for travel, we recommend protecting your own health and rethinking those plans.

**Q: When and where can I schedule vacations?**

**A:** Vacation is only available with the approval of the employee's supervisor and/or department head. Such approval may be based on scheduling needs of the department and maintaining the essential functions of the department. Federal and state restrictions may be in place for employees traveling such as no air travel, cruises and going to high densely populated areas, and are subject to change.

**Q: What happens when I return from vacation?**

**A:** For travel other than regional travel to unpopulated areas, please be aware that upon your return you may be asked to stay home for a period of time and use accrued leave time, including the gifted sick leave. Your department head, supervisor, or Human Resources may inquire about the location of your personal travel to determine the need for self-isolation. The City may request that you contact the call center at 970-641-7660 for further advice on health screening.

**Q: What happens if I am maxed on my vacation time and I cannot take vacation leave due to the necessity of being at work?**

**A:** Vacation leave accruals will not be extended beyond the max accruals.

### Gatherings and Meetings

**Q: Will public meetings and events organized by the city be cancelled?**

**A:** This situation is rapidly evolving and regulations on such will continue to change. Please consider canceling such meetings or gatherings when appropriate. Meetings and gatherings can continue using a remote meeting tool, if appropriate. Departments are authorized to purchase their own accounts using Zoom or WebEx, etc.

**Q: How do we create social distancing in the workplace?**

**A:** Speak with your department head, supervisor or Human Resources about creation of a work environment free from gatherings greater than **10 people** and **distancing of greater than 10 feet at all times**. Please note

these parameters may be modified at any time. Possible solutions include remote working, staggering of shifts, workspace modification or relocation, job reassignment, etc.

### **Volunteering**

**Q: Can I volunteer for other duties to aid in response?**

**A:** The City encourages employees engaging in the support of our community in this time of need. Please note that time worked (including volunteer time) may not exceed 40 hours per week unless specifically approved by the City Manager or Finance Director. Please contact your supervisor or department head for prior approval if you are interested in performing a supporting volunteer role.

### **Potential Closure**

**Q: What will happen if the City Manager closes a facility to the public and non-essential employees are asked to stay home?**

**A:** All staff scheduled during the closure will be paid their regular rate of pay for their normally scheduled work hours.

- Employees who are able to work remote in their roles will be expected to continue to complete their work remotely.
- Essential employees will continue to work on site if they are healthy and the department director deems it necessary.
- Employees who are unable to work remotely will receive their regular rate of pay and are expected to be available to return to work in any capacity should city operations or needs dictate.
- Upon request, part time employees will have their time from February averaged to determine amount during the closure. The City retains the discretion to reassign your job duties.

This policy will be reevaluated on a weekly basis should this circumstance occur.

### **Essential Positions**

**Q: How do I know if my position is deemed an “essential” position?**

**A:** The department head will make the determination as to which employees are in essential positions or are not in essential positions. All employees need to be available to support city requirements if needed, or as approved by the Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Director. If you are unsure of your status, please contact your supervisor.

**Q: Can employees be assigned work duties to work a different job?**

**A:** Yes, department heads can direct employees to perform work outside of their normal job duties for which you are qualified for during this event. You will be expected to accept the assignment you are given to best support the needs of the city.

### **Work-Related Travel and Public Contact**

**Q: Can I travel for a meeting or training?**

**A:** Any non-essential (not required to maintain licensure, etc.) meetings or trainings, should be postponed until further notice, unless specifically approved by the department head.

**Q: What is the protocol for employees into homes to perform essential job duties?**

**A:** Please contact your department head or supervisor to ascertain the

### **Benefits**

**Q: What should I do if I am feeling anxious and overwhelmed?**

**A:** Please contact our Employee Assistant Provider, TRIAD over the phone at 877-679-1100. Online resources and webinars are available at [www.triadeap.com](http://www.triadeap.com)

Username: city

Password: gunnison

This is available 24/7/365 to all household members.

Another resource is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255 <https://gunnisonhelp.com/>

**Q: The medical providers are overwhelmed in town, is there somewhere else I can go for prescription refills or other medical issues?**

**A:** Employees covered by the City's medical benefit may access [Teledoc](#), which offers **FREE** 24/7/365 access to U.S. board-certified doctors through the convenience of phone or video consults.

**Q: What are the medical costs associated with COVID-19 testing?**

**A:** While the COVID-19 test is available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at no cost, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration has now officially approved commercial test kits making them ready for use. Effective immediately, CEPT medical plan members will have cost share (deductible, copays, coinsurance) waived for COVID-19 testing during this time of concern.