Dear Town of Durham Staff Members and Members of the Leadership Team,

Given the extraordinary scenario that is unfolding nationally with the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), we want to ensure that no employee will have to dip into their accrued leave time if they must stay home to care for school age children, ill family members, or to care for themselves either because they are ill from COVID-19 or just quarantined in place out of an abundance of caution given potential exposure. As a result, I am enacting a number of emergency administrative protocols for Town of Durham employees, effective immediately. These are covered in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) format outlined below.

Town of Durham – Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19

Q1. What do I do if I have no child care due to widespread school closures?
If you experience the need to stay home to care for children because of school/childcare closures due to COVID-19 please reach out to your supervisor to discuss the options of telecommuting or paid leave. The Town will provide special paid leave for this purpose if needed.

Q2. What do I do If I suspect I was exposed to COVID-19?
If you suspect exposure you are encouraged to reach out to your supervisor regarding risk assessment and options, which may include:

• telecommuting;
• paid leave for self-quarantined time off.

Q3. What do I do if I test positive or am told by health officials to quarantine?
If you are quarantined please adhere to the guidelines from the CDC that include home isolation for 14 days. If no symptoms appear in that time you will be cleared to return to work.

If you test positive for COVID-19 you should remain under home isolation until fever is gone and symptoms are better without medication and your health care provider clears you to return to work.

If you test positive for COVID-19 or are quarantined by healthcare officials the Town of Durham will grant paid special leave up to the start of Short-Term Disability.

Q4. What do I do if there is someone in my family, or who lives with me, with risk factors that make them in a high risk category for COVID-19 and I’m worried about coming to work?
This concern is understandable please reach out to your supervisor or directly to the Business Manager to inform them of your situation and desire to work remotely or take time off. The Town will provide special paid leave for this purpose if needed.
Q5. What if I feel ill due to common seasonal illness and have not been exposed and/or tested negative for COVID-19?
If you feel ill due to a common seasonal illness, do not have the symptoms of COVID-19, and have not been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and have not tested positive for COVID-19, you should utilize sick leave time and stay home away from others as you normally would under the Town’s sick leave policies until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms get better without medications.

Q6. If I am exposed to COVID-19 on the job can I file for Workers’ Compensation?
Notice to the Town from Primex confirms that an employee exposed to a known positive source of COVID-19 on the job will receive coverage for the cost of testing. If an employee contracts COVID-19 from such exposure their resulting medical expenses and lost wages for the quarantine and recovery period will be covered.

Q7. More FAQs will be added as they arise.

I do not have a comprehensive “All Town Staff” email list so please share this communication with all department personnel.

Todd

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Everyone can tackle climate change. How can you reduce your carbon footprint?
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