



CITY OF WATAUGA – PERSONNEL, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

POLICY TITLE	Declared Emergency Plan
INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE	March 23, 2020
LAST REVISION DATE	New
POLICY NUMBER	18.03

OBJECTIVE The City endeavors to provide a safe work environment for all employees and ensure the continuity of essential City operations during a declared emergency. The City will comply and act in accordance with regulations set by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or orders by the U.S. Government. This policy will remain in effect until the City determines that the emergency is no longer a threat to the organization or its employees.

SCOPE This policy applies to all employees.

POLICY

A. Precautionary Measures

1. Sick Employees
 - a. Stay home when you are sick and self-isolate from non-sick family members.
 - b. Do not go out in public when you are sick.
 - c. If you are ill in any way, call your doctor’s office first before going to a medical office for diagnosis or treatment.
 - d. Do not go to the emergency room unless you are experiencing a medical emergency. Emergency rooms need to be able to serve those with the most critical needs.
 - e. If you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems, stay home and self-isolate until you have contacted a healthcare professional.
 - f. Supervisors have been directed to send employees home if they are exhibiting symptoms that are recognizable as a contagious medical condition. An employee may be required to have their temperature taken.

2. Work Attendance
 - a. Employees who are sick need to stay at home until they are fever and symptom free for 48-hours. (This does not apply to non-contagious illnesses such as an injury, migraine headache, diabetic episode, etc.)
 - b. Employees with members of their household who are sick are encouraged to stay home as well.
 - c. Employees who have confirmed cases of the Coronavirus virus cannot return to work until after 14 days diagnosed in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. A release from a doctor is required.

3. Work Activity Variations

- a. Encourage increased hygiene using provided supplies, such as:
 - Sanitize personal work stations daily.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Signs have been posted in City restrooms as a reminder)
 - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- b. Use work level social isolation when possible
 - Avoid group meetings in small spaces like offices when possible.
 - Avoid meeting with groups of more than 10.
 - Try and maintain six (6) foot separation distance.
 - Use digital means for communication to reduce hand-to-hand and face-to-face transmission.
 - Replace face to face visits with phone calls and emails.
 - Scan and email documents including receipts, purchase orders, and other city related documents

B. Expectation to Report to Work

1. Employees are expected to report to work per the normal schedule, unless otherwise instructed.
2. While some programs and facilities are closed to the public, employees are expected to report to work and perform duties as assigned.

C. Volunteers

1. Volunteers will not be used during this period.

D. Business Travel

1. Business travel is discouraged.
2. Employees will not be allowed to travel to areas identified as Level 3 high risk areas by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or U.S. Government. These areas are also known as “hot spots.”
3. If an employee has a conference/training scheduled and the employee expresses concerns about attending, the employee will not be required to attend.
4. Employees are discouraged from using mass transportation.

E. Personal Travel

1. Vacation requests are subject to Department Head approval.
2. Employees are discouraged from using mass transportation.

F. Essential Personnel

1. All employees are expected to return to work unless otherwise instructed.
2. Essential Personnel including Police Officers, Firefighters and certain Public Works employees are required to work regardless of City closure.
3. These employees will earn compensatory pay at straight time should City facilities be closed by the City Manager and non-essential personnel be instructed to not report to work. These employees will have 12 months from the date of earning the compensatory pay to utilize the accrual.

G. Leave Accruals during a Declared Emergency

1. If absent from work, employees will use available leave accruals including sick leave, vacation leave, holidays, personal days and compensatory time.
2. Should the employee require additional time away from the office, the employee will be allowed to “go negative” into sick time up to an additional two (2) weeks. This additional sick leave will be considered a salary advance and will be repaid in subsequent pay periods at the standard accrual rates.
3. Should the employee leave the City prior to repaying the advance any negative amounts will be collected upon termination.
4. The City will remain consistent with all efforts of pending federal or state legislation passed in response to any national, state, or local emergency.

H. Employee Absence Due to Exposure

1. If an employee is diagnosed with the virus as a result of exposure, and it is assumed that the expose occurred while working, a workers’ compensation claim will be filed. An investigation will be conducted by the City’s carrier to determine if it was a work-related exposure. Policy 7.02 Workers’ Compensation may apply. The Family Medical Leave Act as required by law and Policy 8.04 Family Medical Leave Act may also apply.
2. The Families First Coronavirus Act, a temporary extension of the Family and Medical Leave Act, effective April 2, 2020 and ending December 31, 2020, provides that an eligible employee is entitled to up to 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave for the following reasons, if related to COVID-19:
 - a. The employee is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order;
 - b. The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine;
 - c. The employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
 - d. The employee is caring for an individual who is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order or has been advised to self-quarantine;
 - e. The employee is caring for a child of the employee if the child’s school or child care provider has been closed or the child care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19; or
 - f. The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Secretary of Labor.

3. If an eligible employee intends to receive paid sick time under the Families First Coronavirus Act, notice must be provided to the City by the first workday after taking the sick time and the City may require additional notice in order to continue receiving such paid sick time.
4. An employee eligible for paid sick leave for the reasons stated in Section H.2. may also elect to use existing accruals in lieu of emergency paid leave under the Families First Coronavirus Act. Employees that exhaust emergency paid leave pursuant to the Families First Coronavirus Act and need additional leave will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Department Head.

I. Absence Due to Underlying Medical Condition

1. If an employee with an underlying medical condition expresses concern about reporting to work, the Department Head will evaluate the matter and make a recommendation to the City Manager. These will be handled on a case by case basis.
2. Employees over the age of 60 may fall under this category.
3. Disclosure of the underlying medication condition is a condition that would immediately reflect a protected status from non-discrimination or differential treatment.
4. The employee will be required to use leave accruals.
5. Employee will be required to provide a medical release from a physician stating ability to return to work.

J. Absence Due to Concern over the Spread of the Virus

1. If an employee expresses concern about reporting to work, the Department Head will evaluate the matter and make a recommendation to the City Manager.
2. The employee will be required to use leave accruals.
3. Employee will be required to provide a medical release from a physician stating ability to return to work

K. Absence due to lack of child care

1. Due to closures of schools and daycares, an employee may request to use leave accruals to care for their children. Department Heads will grant leave on a case by case basis evaluating operation needs and with fairness amongst all employees.
2. An employee is eligible for paid leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, effective April 2, 2020, if the employee is unable to work to telework due to a need for leave to care for the employee's child if the child's school or child care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19.
 - a. Under this Act, eligible full-time and part-time employees are entitled to 12 weeks of job-protected leave. The first 10 days of the protected leave shall be unpaid, but an employee may elect to substitute any accrued paid time off for the unpaid leave.
 - b. When the need for leave is foreseeable, an eligible employee shall provide the employer notice of leave as practicable.

- c. Employees that exhaust emergency paid leave pursuant to the Families First Coronavirus Act and need additional leave will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Department Head.

L. Return to Work

1. Employees who are absent for three (3) or more days due to any sickness are required to present a release to return to work from their doctor. The City may suspend this requirement at any time during an emergency, and in the absence of a doctor's note may require an employee to consult with Human Resources regarding their readiness to return to work.

M. City Events

1. The City Manager and/or Emergency Management Coordinator participate in regular briefings held by the State Department of Emergency Management and Tarrant County Health Department to determine the need to cancel events.
2. Cancellation of these events will be determined by the City Manager.

N. City Operations Exposed to the Public

1. Operations exposed to the public such as Utility Billing, Animal Shelter, Permits, Library, Senior Center and Community Center will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Closure of these operations will be determined by the City Manager.
2. Citizens will be encouraged to utilize online or telephone payment options for utility and citation payments.
3. Notices prepared by the Emergency Management Center will be placed at all City Facilities and Events accepting the general public.
4. The Emergency Management Center has prepared precautionary measures for the public. There are three (3) phases (Preparedness, Minimal to Moderate and Substantial) for the COVID-19.

O. Public Information

1. City will communicate with citizens about the status of city operations via social media, the city's website and/or by phone.

P. Expenditures

1. All expenditures generated as a result of the declared emergency will be tracked using a specified account number provided by Finance. As an example, these types of expenditures include the ordering of larger quantities of sanitation supplies.
2. Employees should be diligent in their expenditures and refrain from unnecessary spending at this time so as not to exceed the approved budget.

Q. Failure to Follow Policy Requirements

1. Any employee who fails to follow the requirements of this policy and/or falsifies any information or documentation related to their own or another's potentially life-threatening, contagious illness will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with City policy up to and including termination.