Please note: Information and policy around COVID-19 is continuously changing and evolving so guidance may change rapidly. Human Resources will work diligently to provide updated information as concisely and quickly as possible. HR representatives are also available daily to answer questions and respond to specific scenarios. Also, questions regarding HR related policies and procedures on COVID-19 can be sent to COVID.HR.Questions@SFMTA.com

NEWLY ADDED QUESTIONS OR REVISED INFORMATION

1. If an employee is considered a part of the vulnerable population for COVID-19, are they required to use sick leave if they decide not to come into work?

   Individuals who are part of the vulnerable population should consult with a health care provider regarding their concerns. If the health care provider advises the employee to stay away from work, the employee and the supervisor can discuss a few different options:
   a. Allow the employee to telecommute if possible. (Consider: Does their job permit it? Do they already have the technology to commute? Will any critical functions be incomplete or need to be shifted to other staff if the employee works from home?)
   b. If the employee cannot telecommute, for whatever reason: Allow the employee to use paid leave (sick, vacation, floating holidays, accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position). If the employee does not have any paid leave available, they may want to take advantage of the Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement.

   Please note that employees are not required to disclose the medical condition the manager. The employee should initiate this conversation. Managers should not require essential employees to stay home due to being a part of the vulnerable population.

   The reason for employees to use paid leave and not paid furlough is because paid furlough is a pay code that is used only when the City does not have work (partial or full) for an employee, due to the public health emergency.

2. Would an employee who attended a meeting with someone who was likely to be spreading COVID-19 at the time of the meeting be notified about possible exposure?

   Any employee that has been potentially exposed to an employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by a Human Resources team member, following the guidance of DPH. Also, please review the definition of “close contact” below.
Sick employees are expected to stay home and not come into the workplace. While at work, employees are required to maintain social distancing (six feet apart) from coworkers. All employees are expected to adhere to the preventive measures set in place to reduce the transmission of COVID-19:

1. Notify your supervisor and stay home if you are sick.
2. Take preventive measures such as frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
3. Cover your coughs and sneezes, avoid touching your face.
4. Get your flu shot to protect against flu or symptoms similar to COVID-19.
5. If you feel sick, please call your primary care physician or the nurse advice line.

Employees have sick leave available should they need to stay home due to illness.
   a. Kaiser members: Contact the nurse advice line listed on your insurance card
   b. Blue Shield members: Contact your primary care physician listed on your insurance card
   c. United Healthcare members: Contact your physician.

3. *If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, will employees who work with and near the employee be notified they might have been exposed?*
SFMTA’s protocol is to reach out to the Department of Public Health (DPH) regarding each specific situation. The DPH will provide direct guidance for each incident.

Employees who are potentially exposed to an employee who has tested positive for COVID-19, based on guidance from DPH, will be notified by a Human Resources team member regarding the potential exposure.

4. *If an employee is tested for COVID-19 and the test results are positive, does the employee need to inform the agency of the test results?*
We are asking any employee who tests positive for COVID-19 to contact Return to Work Staff (RTWTeam@SFMTA.com) immediately to inform them of their status so that we can consult with DPH regarding a plan to mitigate and prevent exposure to others in the workplace and preserve wellness.

The Return to Work Staff will contact any employee who is sent home and monitor their progress.

If you are instructed to stay home due to illness, these are the options for your leave:
   a. You will be placed on paid sick leave.
   b. If you have exhausted all your paid sick leave balances, you may use other accrued paid leave or take unpaid sick leave.
   c. If you are eligible to accrue sick leave, you may request up to 80 hours of advance sick leave for COVID-19 related illness.
5. **How long will paid furloughs be offered?**
   Currently the Mayor has approved paid furlough if needed up to April 17, 2020. Paid furlough is a pay code that is used only when the City does not have work (partial or full) for an employee, due to the public health emergency. If the duration or application of this policy is updated, HR will inform all staff.

6. **Where should the completed Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement forms be sent?**
   All completed Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement forms should be sent to COVID.HR.Questions@SFMTA.com after they are reviewed, approved and signed by the manager. Once processed, the applicable leave will be available in the leave accrual bank.

7. **How long does it take for the Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement to be processed so I can use the time accordingly?**
   Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement processing can take up to five business days to process.

8. **Will new employees be able to sign-up for Health Services/Benefits and Retirement during this public emergency?**
   a. While the San Francisco Health Service System (SFHSS) office is currently closed to in-person meetings, SFHSS will continue to do business and asks members to contact them by phone during normal business hours (check SFHSS website for most current hours https://sfhss.org/).
   b. New employees will be able to fax their application and documentation to 415.554.1721.

9. **If an employee is diagnosed with the COVID-19, what is the HR process?**
   See Other COVID-19 Specific Scenarios Section

10. **If work is available, can managers require non-essential employees to telecommute or take accrued paid time off if they don't want to telecommute?**
    If work is available, then the employee should be considered essential and afforded the option to work remotely. If this employee declines to telecommute, they may use paid leave (sick, vacation, floating holidays, accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position). If the employee does not have any paid leave available, they may want to take advantage of the Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement.

    Any full-time employee who does not have 40 hours of work will be paid for the difference between the work they have been assigned and 40 hours, using paid furlough pay code.
11. If an employee is non-essential, can they work remotely?
The term non-essential employee implies that we do not have work for that employee. If you have work (full or partial) for an employee, they are considered essential. If the employee and manager both agree to establishing a Telecommuting Agreement and there is work to be completed that can be done remotely, this agreement can take place.

For any employee who is assigned work that amounts to less than full-time, and for whom there is no other work to be assigned, all non-working hours should be categorized as paid furlough hours.

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use normal time reporting codes (i.e. WKP) with Incident Code (201920000B), Incident Activity Code (0000), Project (10033788), and Project Activity (0001)

12. Can the designation of essential and non-essential change over time?
A designation of essential and non-essential does not change over time. The need for the functions performed could change. Due to the emergency, a function may be designated as non-essential and the employee performing that function may be reassigned (either immediately or at some other time) to an essential function. Additionally, it is possible that there is less than full time equivalent amount of work for a full-time employee at certain times, in that case, the employee would receive furlough pay to make up the difference between work assigned and full time.

13. Can staff voluntarily come onsite if they are non-essential?
In order to comply with the shelter in place order and ensure social distancing, non-essential employees may not come to the office. Additionally, to the extent possible, essential staff who are eligible to telecommute should.

14. Can employees work remotely if schools are closed and they have to be home?
Yes, if the employee has the ability to work remotely and their childcare situation does not interfere with their ability to work, subject to eligibility and manager approval.

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use normal time reporting codes (i.e. WKP) both onsite and telecommuting hours.

15. What is a paid furlough?
A paid furlough is a term used to define a set period of time to ensure that an employee retains their pay while there is a temporary (partial or full) reduction of their current work assignment due to the COVID-19 public emergency.
16. If an employee cannot come to work due to school closures because of COVID-19:
   a. Allow the employee to telecommute if possible. (Consider: Does their job permit it? Do they already have the technology to commute? Will any critical functions be incomplete or need to be shifted to other staff if the employee works from home?)
   b. If there is work for the employee to perform but, the employee cannot telecommute, for whatever reason: Allow the employee to use paid leave (sick, vacation, floating holidays, accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position). If the employee does not have any paid leave available, they may want to take advantage of the Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement.

Payroll timekeeping note (refers to above scenario):
   a. Use normal time reporting codes for telecommuting hours (i.e. WKP)
   b. Use paid sick leave (SLP) or other paid leave (VAP, FHP, CTP)

ESSENTIAL AND NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

Essential employees are individuals that perform functions that the agency is prioritizing for core operations during the current public health emergency. Essential employees may be required to work onsite but may work remotely if they are eligible and their manager approves a telecommuting agreement.

Non-essential employees will not be asked to perform their regular function while the shelter in place order is in effect and will be put on paid furlough.

Please keep in mind that non-essential employees and essential employees who have less than full time assignments may be called upon to perform Disaster Service Worker (DSW) functions. Department Directors and/or their designee will determine which positions are essential and those that are non-essential.

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use time reporting code AIP for non-working hours (Non-Essential)
   Post to Project Code 10033788, Project 0001; Incident Code 201920000B and Incident Activity Code 0000

17. If an employee’s position is determined to be essential, can the employee work remotely?
   The Department Director and/or manager will need to review and approve the employee to work remotely, as an essential employee. If you are permitted to work remotely, you will need to read the FAQs below, complete the Telecommute Agreement form and discuss with agreement with the manager.
Payroll timekeeping note:
Use normal time reporting codes (i.e. WKP)

18. Can a non-essential employee be called to come to work as a DSW employee?
Yes, you may receive a call asking you to report as a DSW worker and conduct other duties. Your supervisor may ask you to perform extra cleaning duties, put together hygiene kits for public-facing employees, putting up signs to alert citizens, etc.

All City and County employees are designated by State law as Disaster Service Workers. This means that when the Mayor declares a local emergency, employees may be deployed to different work sites than usual, or be asked to perform work duties or tasks that are different from their regular work responsibilities. No one will be assigned duties they are not qualified or trained to perform.

The DOC may ask employees to work at different locations than normal or assign work duties or tasks that are different from regular duties. If so, managers / supervisors will need to ensure the following:

- NO ONE will be assigned duties they are NOT qualified or trained to perform
- If task or duties require qualifications such as but not limited to, licenses, permits, specialized training and certifications, you should NOT assign those duties to those who do not already have those qualifications.
- For tasks that do NOT require qualifications:
  - Appropriate trainings should be given and documented as to who have taken and completed the training prior to the performance of the task.
  - Hours will need to be tracked separately. Payroll personnel have been given special codes to track hours/time associated to the response.

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use normal time reporting codes (i.e. WKP) with Incident Code (201920000B), Incident Activity Code (0000), Project (10033788), and Project Activity (0001)

19. Can an employee decline a DSW assignment?
All City and County employees are designated by State law as Disaster Service Workers. DSWs perform disaster-related duties as required to promote and maintain public health and safety during a declared emergency.

If an employee declines a required DSW assignment, they will be required to use their accrued leave.
TELECOMMUTING DURING THE COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY

In accordance with the Mayor’s Press Release on Friday, March 6, 2020, and the Department Public Health’s recommendation to minimize exposure in workplaces and businesses, managers and employees may consider the use of telecommuting. We know it’s a challenging time and as a part of our effort to reduce the risk of transmission, we want to make sure that people who need to and want to can telecommute (based on their job and employee eligibility).

All telecommuting must be approved by the Department’s designated manager. This telecommuting option will follow the Mayor’s designated State of Emergency period and will be updated accordingly.

All essential employees who are eligible for telecommuting, must follow the expectations of the policy and managerial performance expectations while telecommuting.

20. Who is eligible for telecommuting during this time?

Telecommuting is available for essential employees who have jobs that are conducive to working remotely. For example, managers who have staff that report to them or front-line supervisors are positions that may not be viable for working remotely.

21. What does the employee have to do to initiate the Temporary Telecommuting process?

✓ Employees must reach out to their supervisor for approval of telecommuting PRIOR to beginning to telecommute.
✓ The employee and supervisor must agree on the parameters.
✓ Telecommuting may be approved on a temporary basis, as defined by the Mayor’s state of emergency, ONLY. The temporary approval to work remotely ceases once the Mayor lifts the emergency.
✓ An employee must have the necessary work equipment to complete their functions off-site. This includes but are not limited to: a computer or laptop (SFMTA or personal), internet access, a phone, access to work materials and necessary software.
✓ Employees must complete the HR telecommuting agreement form (located on the HR intranet/COVID-19.)
✓ All signed agreements must be submitted to the direct manager or designated department representative.
✓ A manager can suspend the telecommuting agreement at any time if the work arrangement is not meeting the division’s business needs.

22. Are departments required to allow telecommuting?

During this emergency, the City is encouraging all departments to allow telecommuting when operational needs and technology make it possible for essential personnel. Each department Director or designee retains the right to determine whether an individual employee’s job is compatible with remote work. There are some jobs that cannot be
performed remotely and there are critical public services that must be provided in person, including responding as a DSW.

Managers should keep the following in mind when approving telecommuting requests:

a. All telecommuting requires a completed telecommuting agreement, even for short durations.
b. Give priority for telecommuting to employees who self-identify as being part of the COVID-19 vulnerable population.
c. If more employees desire to telecommute than can be accommodated, alternate telecommute days among employees so that more of them can do it.
d. If a telecommute request cannot be granted, document the business reasons for doing so and share them with the requesting employee.

23. Can managers do a rotational telecommute arrangement with employees, which could include each direct report reporting to the office one or more days a week and then alternate remote working with each other in order to ensure coverage the remaining days of the week?
In order to keep the SFMTA operational, Managers need flexibility in staffing resources for continuity of operations and therefore may request employees to work various alternate arrangements, such as above.

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use normal time reporting codes (i.e. WKP) for both onsite and telecommuting hours.

24. While employees are working remotely can managers set-up daily check-ins with employees and communicate daily work plans?
Yes, managers can communicate with employees, set-up skype meetings and provide daily work assignments, just like when the employee is working in the office. Employees who are working remotely should always be available for those communication touch points and able to meet daily productivity goals, as indicated below.

a. Managers may require employee to make contact with their supervisor daily.
b. Managers may work with the employee to develop a workplan identifying deliverables and required meetings to attend.
c. Employees are expected to be available via phone and email during core work hours, unless communicated with their supervisor.
d. Employees are expected to keep their calendars up to date.
e. Employees must provide a phone number that they can be reached at throughout the workday.
25. Can an employee take time off if they are not at-risk but have an at-risk parent in the hospital for reasons not related to COVID-19?
   This situation does not relate to COVID-19 and should be handled in accordance with sick leave policy. Therefore, the employee can take sick leave to care for a parent.

26. Will the SFMTA provide technological equipment to employees in order to work remotely?
   Currently, the SFMTA does not have sufficient technological equipment to provide to all employees who do not already have such equipment. Therefore, in order to work remotely, employees will need to use their current laptops (if they have them) and if it if not, they may need to use their personal equipment. The SFMTA does have a suite of programs that enable remote work (VPN, Microsoft Teams, etc.).

27. What’s considered “Work Tools”?
   Access to work files and network are critical and must be established before approval.

EMPLOYEE LEAVE AND COMPENSATION

28. Does SFMTA require a doctor’s note for absences in excess of five (5) days during the COVID-19 emergency?
   Our implementation will be consistent with the City’s. We will not require a doctor’s note to verify sickness or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath), acute respiratory illness or flu-like symptoms. This applies to both sick leave restriction and return-to-work.

   For absences due to other types of illness or injury, a doctor’s note is still required, including cases of sick leave restriction or return to work after absences in excess of five days.

   Payroll timekeeping note:
   Use paid sick leave (SLP) or other paid leave (VAP, FHP, CTP)

29. Can a department manager/supervisor send an employee home if the department believes the employee is too sick to work?
   If an employee comes to work and appears to be sick, the employee’s manager or supervisor should direct the employee to go home.

   Payroll timekeeping note:
   Use paid sick leave (SLP) or other paid leave (VAP, FHP, CTP)
OTHER COVID-19 SPECIFIC SCENARIOS

30. If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath), or has been placed in quarantine, the employee shall not come to work, and should call their medical provider. Such an employee must stay home until cleared by their healthcare provider to return to work.

   a. During this public health emergency, employees are allowed to use all paid leave (sick, vacation, floating holidays, accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position). If the employee must stay out and does not have any paid leave available, they can apply for the Sick Leave & Vacation Leave advancement or placed on unpaid leave.

   b. Paid leave can be used for COVID-19-related conditions related to the employee or the employee’s family member.

   c. Employees who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or placed in quarantine, must contact the Return to Work Staff (RTWTeam@SFMTA.com) before returning to work.

Employees may be eligible for State Disability Insurance for COVID-19 related claims. For questions, contact www.EDD.ca.gov

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use paid sick leave (SLP) or other paid leave (VAP, FHP, CTP)

31. If an employee has been advised to self-isolate by a medical provider and does not have symptoms consistent with COVID-19:

   a. Allow the employee to telecommute if possible. (Consider: Does their job permit it? Do they already have the technology to commute? Will any critical functions be incomplete or need to be shifted to other staff if the employee works from home?)

   b. See Telecommuting section

   c. If the employee cannot telecommute, allow the employee to use paid leave (sick, vacation, floating holidays, accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position) or consider taking Sick Leave and Vacation Advancement. If the employee does not have any paid leave available and does not want advancement time, place them on unpaid leave status.

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use normal time reporting codes for telecommuting hours (i.e. WKP) and for paid leave use (SLP, VAP, FHP, CTP)
32. If an employee cannot come to work due to school closures because of COVID-19:
   a. Allow the employee to telecommute if possible. (Consider: Does their job permit it? Do they already have the technology to commute? Will any critical functions be incomplete or need to be shifted to other staff if the employee works from home?)
   b. If there is work for the employee to perform but, the employee cannot telecommute, for whatever reason: Allow the employee to use paid leave (sick, vacation, floating holidays, accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position). If the employee does not have any paid leave available, they may want to take advantage of the Sick Leave and Vacation Leave Advancement.

Payroll timekeeping note (refers to above scenario):
   a. Use normal time reporting codes for telecommuting hours (i.e. WKP)
   b. Use paid sick leave (SLP) or other paid leave (VAP, FHP, CTP)
   c. Use normal time reporting codes (i.e. WKP) with Incident Code (201920000B), Incident Activity Code (0000), Project (10033788), and Project Activity (0001)

33. If the schools are closed, can employees bring child(ren) to work?
   a. Bringing children to the workplace is not in alignment with the city’s “social distancing” policy, so in the current climate of our public health emergency and the shelter in place proclamation, this cannot be supported.

34. If an employee cannot come to work due to transportation disruptions because of COVID-19:
   a. Allow the employee to telecommute if possible.
   b. If it is not possible for the employee to telecommute, consider allowing temporary shifts in the schedule so the employee can commute outside of rush hour.
   c. Encourage the employee to consider alternative methods of commuting.
   d. Allow the employee to use paid leave (only vacation, floating holidays, accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position—sick leave may not be used for this purpose)**. If the employee does not have any eligible paid leave available, they can apply for the Sick Leave & Vacation Leave Advance. The form is located HR intranet page.

**3.15.20 UPDATE: Employees cannot use sick leave for transportation disruptions.**

Payroll timekeeping note:
Use normal time reporting codes for telecommuting hours (i.e. WKP) other paid leave (VAP, FHP, CTP)

35. What if an employee has symptoms of COVID-19?
   Employees should stay home, or go home if at work, and contact their health care provider with health concerns.
Payroll timekeeping note:
Use paid sick leave (SLP) or other paid leave (VAP, FHP, CTP)

36. An employee called to inform us that they came “in contact” with someone suspected of COVID-19. The contact was a parent of a child who is friends with his child. The person has not tested positive.
This scenario would not meet the criteria of “close contact” as identified below AND the person has not tested positive. This person can come to work. If they choose to stay out of work until the persons test results are received, they can use vacation, sick, floating holidays, or accrued compensatory time off, applicable to their position. They could also telecommute with approval by their manager.
See Telecommute section

EXPOSURE (Close Contact) to coronavirus is defined as:

a. Household Close Contact: Living in the same house (household contacts) with a person with confirmed, probable, or suspected coronavirus.

b. Other Close Contact (within 6 feet, 2 meters; touching distance) with a person with confirmed, probable, or suspected coronavirus. Examples of such close contact include kissing or hugging, sharing eating or drinking utensils, carpooling, close conversation, and any other direct contact with respiratory secretions of a person with coronavirus.

The following are not considered close contact exposures:

a. Living in a city or town where there are one or more confirmed cases of coronavirus.

b. Being in the same school, church, workplace or building as a person with influenza.

c. Walking by a person who has coronavirus.

37. Can employees perform additional duties as a Disaster Service Worker (DSW) to “pitch in” during this COVID-19 health emergency?
All City and County employees are designated by State law as Disaster Service Workers. This means that when the Mayor declares a local emergency, employees may be deployed to different work sites than usual or be asked to perform work duties or tasks that are different from their regular work responsibilities. No one will be assigned duties they are not qualified or trained to perform.

If you have any questions and/or concerns regarding DSW, please contact Derek Kim, HR Chief of Staff at Derek.Kim@SFMTA.com
38. What additional duties as a Disaster Service Worker (DSW) could be assigned to assist?
For example, an Operator may be shifted to a different route if we are experiencing high volumes of sick calls or a Mechanic may be assigned to another location if a facility is closed. Additionally, staff may be called on to support cleaning efforts, communications, etc.

If this occurs, managers / supervisors will need to ensure the following:

**NO ONE** will be assigned duties they are **NOT** qualified or trained to perform.

a. If task or duties require qualifications such as, but not limited to, licenses, permits, specialized training and certifications, you should **NOT** assign those duties to those who do not already have those qualifications.

b. For tasks that do NOT require qualifications:
   i. Appropriate trainings should be given and documented as to who have taken and completed the training prior to the performance of the task.
   ii. Hours will need to be tracked separately. Payroll personnel have been given special codes to track hours/time associated to the response.

39. The Governor has requested that individuals, 65 and older, self – isolate. Should managers ask employees to self-isolate?
No, the request to self-isolate must come from the employee not the manager.

**WORKERS’ COMPENSATION**
40. Will my time off for COVID-19 isolation or testing be covered by Workers’ Compensation?
No, an exposure is not an illness.

41. Who can answer questions about workplace exposure from coworkers or the public, and about how to keep employees safe?
Employees, supervisors and Designated Personnel Officers (DPO’s) can call the Nurse Triage/Injury Hotline at 855-850-2249 to get their questions answered on the likelihood of exposure and how to stay safe at work. Departments without Industrial Hygienists or safety officers may also request guidance from the Emergency Operations Center.

If you feel sick, please call your primary care physician or the nurse advice line.

- Kaiser members: Contact the nurse advice line listed on your insurance card.
- Blue Shield members: Contact your primary care physician listed on your insurance card.
- United Healthcare members: Contact your physician.

**EMPLOYEES RETURNING TO WORK FROM TRAVELING**
If employees have any questions regarding travel and returning to work, please contact RTWTeam@SFMTA.com or Bonnie.Chung@SFMTA.com
MAINTAINING A RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE
It is everyone’s responsibility to maintain a respectful workplace every day. A person’s risk for COVID-19 is not based on race, ethnicity or culture. As a reminder, City employees must abide by the Respect in the Workplace policy and treat colleagues and members of the public with courtesy and respect. Discrimination of any kind is a violation of the City's Equal Employment Opportunity policies and will not be tolerated.

General Questions regarding HR related policies and procedures on COVID-19 can be sent to COVID.HR.Questions@SFMTA.com