



Office of the City Manager  
**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** March 16, 2020  
**To:** All staff  
**From:** City Manager Lorie Tinfow  
**Re:** Decision to Close City Buildings and Facilities

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Over the weekend, you received a memo from HR Manager Kim Imboden with information about steps the City had taken in response to the COVID-19 emergency and guidance for you under certain conditions. In the memo, we promised to follow up with more information on Monday—today.

As public employees, our objective is service to the residents and community. We are trying to balance that objective with the health and safety of our employees, which is extremely important to us.

Conditions related to COVID-19 are changing very rapidly. We will continue to keep you updated as much as, and as soon as, possible.

Earlier today, I made the decision to close the remaining City facilities and buildings to the public effective tomorrow, March 17, through at least March 31, 2020. A press release will go out today. These closures will affect all staff and we have tried to anticipate your questions and provide useful information in this memo.

Meanwhile, the City's COVID-19 Team will continue to meet daily (by phone) to monitor changing conditions and coordinate our response. We will send you updated information as appropriate. In addition, any memos sent to employees will also be posted on the HR page of the City website, which can be accessed at:

<https://www.ci.benicia.ca.us/index.asp?SEC=7E608ACC-CDC9-477A-BF9F-9677ADBAB4F9&DE=845861C3-20F7-4DCA-82E1-71F7E6E0C52C> or by going to [www.ci.benicia.ca.us](http://www.ci.benicia.ca.us), under departments select “administrative services”, then Human Resources, then COVID19.

**Please read the following information carefully and if you have any questions, please contact your supervisor, department director or Kim in HR.** If you have a question for me, please let me know.

## HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

### Department Closures:

Effective Tuesday, March 17, City Hall and most satellite work locations will be closed to the public through March 31, 2020. The only City building that will remain open to the public is the Police Department lobby. However, some staff will continue to perform their duties during the closure, either by coming in to their work place/office or by working at home. The determination will be made by your supervisor. Please discuss your status with them.

In a response to the COVID19 pandemic Finance has created two additional pay codes to track hours for COVID 19. Code 901 is to be used for all regular hours worked, whether working at your normal work location or remotely. Code 902 is to track the hours on your normal work schedule that you did not work due to COVID 19, as a result of any directive from the City.

Example: Employee A normal work schedule of 9 hour days, on a 9/80 schedule.

- On 3/16/20 Employee A works 9 hours from their office.
- On 3/17/20 Employee A works 7 hours in the office and 2 hours from home.
- On 3/18/20 Employee A works 7 hours from home, 2 hours not worked.
- On 3/19/20 Employee A doesn't work any hours.

Code	Description	3/16/20 Hours	3/17/20 Hours	3/18/20 Hours	3/19/20 Hours
901	COVID 19 Worked	9	9	7	
902	COVID 19 Not Worked			2	9

### Employees not working due to closure:

Employees who are not scheduled to work due to the closure will be paid during this period, using a special administrative leave. **Before you leave work today, please complete your timesheet and submit to your supervisor.** For hours this week that you are not working due to the closure, on a blank line on your timesheet please write in "COVID19 code 902" and indicate the hours you would have normally worked each day this week. When we return from the closure you will complete your April timesheet (covering the timecard period of March 21 to April 20). Employees who work during the next two weeks will indicate hours worked under a special category as well (described below), and information will be disseminated by your department.

During this time that employees are sent home, it is the City's expectation that you will adhere to a self-quarantine at home during the hours *you would normally be at work*. Because this is paid administrative leave, employees will be expected to be on-call to answer a phone call or email, or may be required to report to work, based on operational needs. Outside of your normal work schedule we can't require you to self-quarantine at home, but we recommend it

to keep you and your family members safe, and to achieve the goal of decreasing the spread of this virus.

**Employees required to work during the closure – normal work schedule:**

Departments that are a 24 hour and/or 7 day per week operation will still have employees working. Additionally, some departments that are not a 24/7 department will also need certain employees to work. The exact staffing model for each department and division will be communicated by your supervisor. Employees required to work will receive some sort of compensatory administrative leave to be implemented after the closure. Please track these hours as “COVID19 code 901”. The exact details of this will be worked out through the appropriate stakeholders and communicated to employees.

Important things to keep in mind for ***employees scheduled to work during the closure follow:***

- If you feel sick, please stay home:
  - Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home. CDC guidelines recommend employees not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- Sick Leave Usage:
  - During this time, employees will not be required to provide a healthcare provider’s note if you are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate your illness.
  - Employees should code their time as Sick Leave first.
  - If you do not have any Sick Leave available, you may use any other available paid time off (PTO) category such as vacation, holiday, comp time, management leave or family sick leave.
  - If all PTO is exhausted, employees may take unpaid leave. If taking unpaid leave will create a financial hardship, please contact the Human Resources Department to discuss alternatives.
  - For the time being we will also allow voluntary leave donation whereby an employee can donate leave to another employee.
- What if an employee just wants to stay home to avoid getting sick?
  - Employees may request vacation or other paid time off. Department managers will review requests and coordinate approval of requests.
- If you believe you have been exposed to the virus at work.
  - If you believe you were possibly exposed to the virus at work, inform your supervisor and seek appropriate medical attention immediately.

- If a family member is sick or my child's school closes:
  - You will be allowed to utilize your appropriate paid or unpaid leave to address your family's needs.
  
- Working from home.
  - If the situation warrants and it is operationally effective, as determined by the appropriate Department Director, the City will consider, on a case by case basis, requests from employees to work from home. While not all positions are conducive to telework, those positions with primary job duties that can be effectively performed remotely will be given consideration.

#### **YOU ARE A DISASTER SERVICE WORKER:**

As a City of Benicia employee, before you entered upon the duties of your employment, you took and subscribed to the oath or affirmation; as such, all City of Benicia employees are disaster service workers. You may be called upon as a disaster service worker in the event of an emergency. Employees who are sent home during the closure, or permitted to work from home, are also required to remain available to report to the City within a certain time frame to meet staffing and operational needs.

#### **MARCH 31 PAYCHECKS:**

Paychecks will be issued on Tuesday, March 31. For employees who have direct deposit, pay stubs will be mailed to you. For employees who have 'live checks' (i.e. not direct deposit), paychecks will be available for pick up in the **Police Department lobby** on Tuesday, March 31, between the hours of 8:30 am 2:00pm. You will need to bring a valid picture I.D. (e.g. Driver's License or School ID) when picking up your check. Any paychecks not picked up will be placed in the mail by Tuesday, April 1.

#### **QUESTIONS:**

As mentioned in the memo issued Saturday, this remains a constantly changing situation and new information is coming out daily. As such, this memo may not cover every employee situation. Therefore, **if you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact your supervisor, department director, or Kim Imboden.**

#### **THANK YOU:**

Thank you for everything you do everyday to contribute to the City of Benicia's quality of life and well-being. YOU make Benicia great!