



Office of the City Manager
MEMORANDUM

Date: March 30, 2020
To: All staff
From: City Manager Lorie Tinfow
Re: UPDATE: City Facilities & Programs Closure Extended through May 1, 2020

Over the past three weeks, it feels like our world has shifted on its axis. COVID-19 has affected every aspect of our lives and I want to provide more information about the status of our work lives here.

As you know, City facilities and programs have been fully closed since March 17, 2020. Initially the closure was through the end of March, then that was extended to April 12 and now we have extended it further, until May 1, 2020.

As public employees, our objective continues to be service to the residents and community. We are trying to balance that objective with everyone's health and safety including yours, which is extremely important to us.

Meanwhile, the City's COVID-19 Team is continuing 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 (including this one) 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, 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.

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

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Department Closures:

As you know, City Hall and most satellite work locations have been closed to the public since March 17, 2020. **With this memo, I am extending the closure date through May 1, 2020.** The only City building that remains 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. I know that in some cases there has been a delay in shifting to telecommuting as we have waited for the laptops/equipment to arrive. As I write this, we are very close to receiving all needed equipment.

As a reminder, in response to the COVID19 pandemic Finance staff have 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 |

We have become aware that an additional time code may be needed and more information will be provided soon.

Employees not working due to closure:

Employees who are not scheduled to work due to the closure will continue to be paid during this period, using a special administrative leave. 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. You will be completing your next timecard while we are closed and more information about that process will be available soon. Employees who work during the closure 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 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 expect that you will comply with the shelter-at-home order issued by Governor Newsom 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. We are still working on the specifics and will share more information soon. 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:***

- 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.

DISASTER SERVICE WORKER STATUS

As City of Benicia employees, we are all Disaster Service Workers. Before you entered upon the duties of your employment, you took and subscribed to the oath or affirmation to serve the community in this way. 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. Thank you for fulfilling this important role when the community needs you most.

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.

FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT (FFCRA)

The **Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)**, which became law on March 18, 2020, and provides for Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Expanded FMLA Leave to help lessen the severity of the COVID-19 outbreak in certain critical areas relating to employment and health coverage. The FFCRA goes into effect on April 1, 2020. Information will be disseminated this week with more information on the FFCRA.

QUESTIONS

As mentioned in prior memos, 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 head, 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. These are unprecedented times but I know that together we will get through them.