Coronavirus (COVID-19) Supervisor Toolkit

In a Nutshell

- Direct employees to resources at [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus). This is a fluid situation, and we recommend frequent references to this site for updated information.
- Communicate regularly with your employees. Be flexible, but consistent. Remain calm and measured.
- Discuss individual issues with your department leadership, Human Resources or the County Attorney’s Office, as appropriate.

FAQs

**What resources are available to employees?**
Encourage employees to view [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus) for the most updated information including best prevention practices, tips for working remotely, ways to manage stress and government updates. The web page is updated daily. Share relevant resources with employees who do not have computer access.

**What can I do as a supervisor for my employees during this time?**
You are integral to enforcing proper preventative measures (see CDC recommendations for handwashing and [employer guidance](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus)). Also please allow time for employees to get together briefly (10 or 15 minutes, virtually or with social distancing) to relax, connect, not talk about work, etc. This can help reduce stress and stay connected. It’s vital that you provide necessary information, resources, and support to employees who are at work, at home working or sick, or away on leave.

**What does the “COVID-19 Safer at Home” order mean to me as an employee?**
The “COVID-19 Safer at Home” order was put in place to limit non-essential travel and encourage citizens to stay at home as much as possible (see the [COVID19 Safer at Home Order FAQs](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus)). Our employees are able to travel to and from the worksite in order to work, if arrangements haven’t been made to telework. Check with your Appointing Authority, particularly if curfews broaden or restrictions tighten on orders to stay at home.

**How should supervisors respond to an employee’s request for time off due to COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms or illness?**
Employee requests for time off due to COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms or illness should be granted and tracked along with other requests and absences. Any employee displaying flu and flu-like symptoms should not come to work. Per our [current policy](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus), this is considered scheduled leave since flu-related absences are currently treated as scheduled leave.

**Should supervisors require doctor’s notes for absences related to COVID-19?**
No. In accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), doctor’s notes will not be required from employees for flu and flu-like illnesses (including COVID-19). The same applies if an employee stays at home to take care of a household family member who is experiencing COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms or illness.

**What are the options regarding paid leave?**
Beginning April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, for eligible employees:
- **Emergency Paid Sick Leave (NEW)** – This is a new type of leave provided in accordance with a recent federal law. Review the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act FAQs](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus) for specific info, but basically this
provides full-time employees up to 2 weeks of Emergency Paid Sick Leave if unable to work due to COVID-19 illness or childcare issues due to school closures.

- **Emergency Family & Medical Leave Expansion (NEW)** – This is another new type of leave provided in accordance with a recent federal law. Review the Families First Coronavirus Response Act FAQs for specific information.

- **A Friend in Need (AFIN)** – See Policy #12. This is a voluntary program through which an eligible employee may choose to assist eligible fellow employees in times of need by permitting person-to-person leave donation as defined within the policy. NOTE: A Friend in Need Program is available for an employee who is sick or needs to care for a sick family member but NOT to an employee who needs to take care of well children due to school being closed.

- **Administrative leave with pay** – See Personnel Rule 4 which provides Appointing Authorities the ability to grant administrative leave with pay if such leave is in the best interests of the organization.

- **Leave without pay** – See Personnel Rule 4 which provides the option of leave without pay after all forms of accumulated or gained leave have been exhausted (with noted exceptions).

**What happens if an employee is sick at work?**
Send them home. Employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. fever, cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or who become sick during the day should avoid unnecessary contact with other employees and customers, be sent home immediately and consult with their health care provider as appropriate.

**What happens if an employee makes contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID019?**
Please refer to the COVID-19 Exposure section of our Employee FAQs for the best ways to handle various scenarios following the Florida Department of Health’s recommendations.

**Is telecommuting an option?**
Telecommuting, video chat meetings, conference calling and the use of technological tools that enable remote work can be great ways to maintain operations while limiting exposure between employees. Such options may not be feasible for many positions within the County due to the nature of the job or type of work performed. Whether to allow telecommuting is the decision of each Appointing Authority. As such, Appointing Authorities that want to allow, or require, telecommuting should be clear about expectations for those arrangements and consistently apply appropriate policies in effect. View the BTS Remote Work Guidance (login to SharePoint required).

**What if my employee travels?**
Follow the CDC travel recommendations and directions from the Florida Department of Health on what to do if an employee has recently traveled and wants to return to work. Please check this information before making a decision as recommendations may change quickly. Consult with Employee Relations at employee.relations@pinellascounty.org or (727) 464-3506 with any questions or concerns.

**What about temporary employees from Personnel Solutions Plus (PSP)?**
Temporary contract workers were notified via PSP about our practices of staying home if sick, using good hygiene and that they will be sent home if sick. You, as a supervisor, should also emphasize these practices to all employees including temporary contract workers. Some PSP employees continue to work – either remotely or in the office. Please contact jobs@pinellascounty.org if you have questions.

**What protective strategies can my employees use now?**
Preventative measures, such as staying home when sick, practicing good personal hygiene, staying updated on the latest accurate information and recommendations including social distancing, and remaining calm while diligent offer some of the best ways to protect yourself and others. Ensure cleaning of commonly touched surfaces is performed regularly. See the CDC Disinfection Recommendations.

**What if I have additional questions?**
Contact Human Resources Employee Relations at employee.relations@pinellascounty.org or (727) 464-3506. All phone lines and emails are continually monitored and responded to as quickly as possible.