

Published by Pinellas County Human Resources. Issues for previous months are found at www.pinellascounty.org/hr/leadership. Any employee may request a new issue be emailed each month by [subscribing to Leadership Notes newsletter](#).

MAY 2020

COVID-19 Communication Tips

As a manager, your priority is the safety and well-being of your employees. Communication with your employees is key. But how do you decide what to communicate? It's simple: Put yourself in their shoes. Here is what employees want to hear, and how you can help:

1. What the pandemic means for employees now and later.

"What is expected of me now and what will the 'new normal' look like?"

Employees need details on what the crisis means for them specifically. To get answers to employees, managers must communicate details to their teams. Even if you don't have all the answers, share what you have available now. If an employee is struggling, encourage them to contact the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) at (866) 248-4096 to get 24/7 emotional support for themselves and their family members. If your team is having difficulty functioning, contact Human Resources to request [Critical Incident Services](#) (NEW).

2. Leave time information.

"What is Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency FMLA time? Am I eligible?"

Employees are concerned about having enough leave time if they get sick with COVID-19, a family member gets sick, or they need time to care for children because of school/daycare closings. To help answer questions about leave time provisions, refer to the [Families First FAQs](#) and [Families First Examples](#). Also see the [Supervisor Resource Guide and Scenarios](#).

3. Facts about the crisis.

"There's too much information out there, I need one place to understand what's happening."

Employees want to know what's going on with this pandemic, and they are overwhelmed by trying to find information on their own. Don't try to be an expert. Human Resources has provided important information for employees on the [employee COVID-19 web page](#). We've summarized key information and provided links to credible resources. We update the page frequently

to keep up with the changing situation. We are also addressing this need with blast emails, so please ask your employees to read them and provide a print version for employees who don't use email frequently.

4. What's going on with colleagues.

"I miss my colleagues. What is everyone up to? Is everyone okay?"

While isolated at home, employees crave connection with their colleagues. Human Resources created an [Employee Blog](#) to help connect with each other and share resources, stories, tips and support. Another way to connect is with Microsoft Teams. This is a good option particularly if employees have cameras on their laptops so they can see each other.

5. Fun stuff.

"It's a scary time, I could really use a smile right now."

Having fun does not mean your team is not taking this situation seriously. Employees need some light-hearted stuff too. Host a virtual coffee break on Teams, encourage employees to post photos of themselves working on the [Employee Blog](#), or try anything else work-appropriate that might make employees laugh for a minute.

Content excerpted with permission from Davis & Company
www.davisandco.com/blog/5-things-employees-want-hear-their-employers-right-now

Crisis Leadership Resources

The Pinellas County online learning portal **ULearnIT** provides valuable resources relevant to COVID-19. Choose from over 40,000 videos, courses, books and book summaries. Select *Leading in a Crisis* from the Quick Links or type *Crisis* in the search box to find valuable resources. Also view featured [ULearnIT COVID-19 resources](#) including short courses on managing in a crisis, time management, virtual team challenges, stress reduction, collaboration, and more.

Our Organizational and Talent Development team is here to assist with your learning needs. See the [Quick Reference Guide](#) on the resources available via SharePoint.