



Administrative Services

Gilberto Elizondo, Jr., Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: ELECTED AND APPOINTED DEPARTMENT HEADS

FROM: GILBERTO ELIZONDO, JR., DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

DATE: JUNE 17, 2020

SUBJECT: COVID-19 POLICY GUIDELINES

AFFIRMATIVE DUTY TO REPORT

All employees shall report any close contact with known COVID-19 positive individuals or suspected positives, as well as any personal symptoms to Department Management. Complete honesty and candor is required to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

FACIAL COVERINGS ARE MANDATORY

It is mandatory for all County employees and members of the public to utilize face coverings while on County premises. Face coverings are considered personal protection equipment (PPE) and play a significant role in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Elected and appointed department heads are authorized by current County policies to discipline employees for failure to comply.

Furthermore Cameron County is incorporating The Governor's Guidance, last revised on June 3, 2020, and hereby mandates the following:

Departments shall:

ORGANIZATION

- Have an individual wholly or partially dedicated to ensuring the health protocols required of the department are being successfully implemented and followed.
- The appointed department designee shall train all employees and contractors on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette. HR and Health will make themselves available to answer any questions to the designee.

OPERATION

- Continue to encourage individuals to work remotely if possible.
- As appropriate, stagger schedules, break times, and start and end times for employees and/or contractors to minimize close contact.
- If a department provides a meal for employees and/or contractors, departments shall have the meal individually packed for each individual. If unable to do so, a single individual with food handling gloves and face cover will apportion and serve the food.
- Understand that young children and persons who are unable to adjust or remove face coverings should not be regarded as suitable candidates for wearing face coverings. In this case, the decision is up to the individual or their parent, guardian or attendant.
- Contactless payment is encouraged. Where not available, contact should be minimized.

SCREENING

ALL MEDICAL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL

- Screen employees and contractors before coming into County buildings by taking each individual's temperature and inquire as to the existence of any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19. Employees who have a temperature greater than or equal to 100 degrees Fahrenheit should be reevaluated within 15 minutes and should be separated from other employees.
- Upon returning from lunch break, all employees will have a second temperature check.
- Send home any employee or contractor who has any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100 degrees Fahrenheit (after a second evaluation within 15 minutes) or known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Not allow employees or contractors with new or worsening signs or symptoms listed above to return to work until:
 - In the case of an employee or contractor who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may not return to work until all four of the following criteria are met:

- at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath);
 - at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; and
 - is cleared by the Cameron County Health Department.
 - In the case of an employee or contractor who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19:
 - the individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and
 - the individual may not return to work until the individual has completed the same four-step criteria listed above;
 - In the case of an employee or contractor who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period:
 - The individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis.
- Not allow an employee or contractor with known close contact to a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19 to return to work until the end of the 14 day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure (with an exception granted for healthcare workers and critical infrastructure workers).
- Place all medical information in a different file than an employee's personnel file. This file is absolutely confidential. Any unauthorized disclosure of such information is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

COUNTY BUILDINGS

- Regularly and frequently clean and disinfect any regularly touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, tables, chairs, and restrooms. Prior to the end of the work day, the department must do a final thorough cleaning and disinfection of all regularly touched surfaces. Disinfect any items that come into contact with customers. Cleaning/Maintenance staff are a supplement to, not a substitute for, sanitizing and disinfecting by the department.
- Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available to employees, contractors, and customers.
- Have employees and contractors wash or sanitize their hands upon entering County buildings.
- Have employees and contractors maintain at least 6 feet separation from other individuals. If such distancing is not feasible, other measures such as hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced. Also consider the use of engineering controls, such as dividers between individuals, to minimize transmission of COVID-19.

- Cameron County break rooms are not to be utilized for congregating or eating. Employees are encouraged to eat their meals in their offices. Any break room and microwave must be disinfected after each use. Employees are not to congregate or gather in crowded places during work hours.
- Consider having an employee or contractor manage and control access to the facility, including opening doors to prevent patrons from touching door handles.
- To the best of the department's ability, limit the use of standard-size elevators to four individuals at a time, each located at a different corner of the elevator to avoid close contact. Utilize touchpoint cleaning and nanoseptic button covers if appropriate. For individuals not wishing to ride an elevator, ensure stairways are available for use. As appropriate, individuals subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act may ride the elevator alone or accompanied by the individual's caregiver.

All Elected Official and Department Heads should refer to Attachment A to this Memorandum which is the Human Resources Guide for COVID-19 Leave and Frequently Asked Questions. All departments are required to contact the Department of Human Resources each time an employee is unable to work due to COVID-19 related reasons. The Department of Human Resources will provide assistance to each department by identifying what leave the employee may be entitled to, how employees should request leave, what documentation is needed, how departments should track leave, provide advice for the employee's return to work, proper sanitization requests and how to report time to Payroll. All elected official and department heads should utilize Attachment B Log to document screening.

This memorandum will be in effect until written notice by this office states otherwise.

cc:

Eddie Treviño, Jr., County Judge
Pete Sepulveda, Jr., County Administrator
Juan A. Gonzalez, Chief Legal Counsel