

STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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April 14, 2020

TO: All DOC Staff

FROM: Melia Olsen, HR Director

SUBJECT: Employees at Higher Risk for Severe Illness (Proclamation)

As Secretary Sinclair shared with you in a memorandum on Friday, April 10, 2020 (attached), we are committed to supporting our employees at highest risk of serious complications from COVID-19.

This right is further extended to all Washington state employees who fall in one of the high-risk categories in Washington per <u>Proclamation 20-46</u> issued yesterday by Governor Jay Inslee. This amends <u>Proclamation 20-05</u>, and prevents all employers, public or private, from failing to provide accommodation to high risk employees, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), that protects them from risk of exposure to the COVID-19 disease on the job.

Specifically:

- 1. The employer must offer high-risk employees alternative work assignments, including telework, alternative, or remote work locations, if feasible, and social distancing measures:
- 2. If an alternative work assignment is not feasible, or the employee declines, the employer must allow the employee to use any accrued leave or seek unemployment benefits;
- 3. The employer must maintain the employee's health insurance benefits;
- 4. The employer is prohibited from permanently replacing high-risk employees.

This proclamation is effective *today* and expires on June 12, 2020, unless extended by the Governor.

If you are at high-risk, as defined by the CDC, (see https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html) and would like to request an accommodation under the Proclamation, please complete the High-Risk Employee Alternate Work Assignment, Telework or Leave Request form (03-112) and submit it to local human resources.

If you have questions, please also reach out to your designated human resource office.

Attachments

MO:yh



April 10, 2020

TO: All DOC Staff

FROM: Stephen Sinclair, Secretary

SUBJECT: Employees at Higher Risk for Severe Illness

As I review the progress we've made to expand telework options, I am proud of our supervisors and appointing authorities for thinking outside of the box and providing opportunities to telework for employees in positions previously considered ineligible. We expanded the use of telework on March 16, and I am happy to report we now have over 700 employees working from their homes. This is a great accomplishment, however we must continue to explore all possible opportunities to support our workforce.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that **older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions** may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

Based on what is known at this time, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 include:

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:
 - o People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - o People who have serious heart conditions
 - o People who are immunocompromised
 - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications

- o People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- o People with diabetes
- o People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- o People with liver disease
- Pregnant people
- Those experiencing homelessness

Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications. More information on higher risk groups can be found on the CDC's website.

We must do our very best to find ways for our higher risk employees to be provided with opportunities to telework, or the ability to explore alternate work assignments and/or locations. If you are someone who is not currently teleworking and considered high-risk based upon the guidelines above, you can work with your supervisor to discuss if revised work duties may be assigned or explore other ways to provide opportunities to work from home.

If telework is not possible, we encourage employees at high-risk to reach out to their local human resources office if not comfortable remaining at work. Decisions to allow high-risk employees to be released from work will be made on a case-by-case basis, based on the employee's specific situation and within already established leave guidelines.

We understand this is a stressful time and your health is a priority. The <u>Washington State</u> <u>Employee Assistance Program (EAP)</u> has developed resources specifically to address COVID-19 impacts on employee wellbeing. I encourage everyone to take a moment to consider your own personal health and review the resources available through EAP.

We are prepared and committed to support you. Please continue to stay positive, support your co-workers, practice social distancing, and remember to wash your hands.

SS:bf



HIGH-RISK EMPLOYEE ALTERNATE WORK ASSIGNMENT, TELEWORK, OR LEAVE REQUEST

Emp	oloyee name	F	Personnel ID number	Facility/Office		
	reby verify I fall into one of the high-risk Disease Control (CDC):	cate	gories as defined by the	United States Centers		
	Age 65+Underlying health condition					
The	name of my treating health care provide	er is:	(if applicable)			
You	will not be asked to provide medical do	сите	entation from your health	n care provider.		
I am	requesting to:					
	Work at an alternate location. Identify	if you	ı have a suggested loca	tion:		
	Human Resources will contact you do	discu	iss options.			
	Telework. Human Resources will contact you do discuss options.					
	Leave for: <u>Date</u> Work with your local Human Resource State or Federal law.					
	Receive documentation to provide to the of work in order to apply for benefits.	ne En	nployment Security Dep	artment regarding lack		
	irm that the foregoing is true and correct is for potential disciplinary action.	t and	understand that any mis	srepresentation will be		
Date	ed this day of	, 20	at	, Washington.		
Sign	nature		_			

HUMAN RESOURCES USE ONLY						
Employee name	Personnel ID number	Facility/Office				
Telework or alternate work location approved.						
Leave approved - Employee requested, or after telework/alternate location offered, employee prefers to take own leave.						
Essential employee and agency lacks full-time telework or alternate work arrangements. Employee may seek unemployment benefits if they do not want to take leave.						
Comments:						
Human Resources Manager/designee	Signature	Date				
☐ Approved (through June 12, 2020, unless extended by the Governor)☐ Denied						
Comments:						
Appointing Authority	Signature	Date				

The contents of this document may be eligible for public disclosure. Social Security Numbers are considered confidential information and will be redacted in the event of such a request. This form is governed by Executive Order 16-01, RCW 42.56, and RCW 40.14.

Distribution: **ORIGINAL** - Employee Occupational Health Record **COPY** - Employee, Supervisor, Appointing Authority