

Good afternoon all,

Thank you all for the adjustments you have made and are making to continue to provide services across the state to the people of Maine. Thanks too for the support you are offering to each other as employees. We hope this email finds you healthy and settling into new routines. We are doing a different style update this time...bullet points and links.

Statewide COVID-19 information may be found on the Governor's website: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/>

As always, please go to our website for state employee specific links and updates: <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/covid-19>

### Did You Know?

- The **Real ID** deadline has been moved to October 2021: <https://www.maine.gov/sos/bmv/licenses/realid.html>
- Don't forget to complete your **Census!** It's Important, It's Safe, and It's Easy: <https://my2020census.gov/>
- The **United Way** reminds us they continue to be here for all Mainers in times of need. Their offices continue to work full time to ensure people have access to services like food, shelter, personal protective equipment, and child care: [COVID-19 Response effort](#)
- On the **Office of Employee Health and Benefits website**, there is a dedicated [Covid-19 section](#) where you can find updated information related to your health plan, retirement, and wellness resources.
- **Maine people are helpers**, and they are everywhere. This new resource helps Maine people to target their skills, resources, and time in the most effective and safe ways to do the most good for our state: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/maine-helps>
- Today would normally be **Tax Day**, but both the Federal Government and the State of Maine have extended the filing and payment date of certain taxes from today to July 15. <https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/news/governor-mills-extends-state-income-tax-payment-deadline-july-15-2020-2020-03-26>
- You can review all of the Governor's Executive Orders here: [https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/official\\_documents](https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/official_documents)
- We hope to have **cloth face coverings** for distribution to state employees within the next week or so.

### The **Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)**

Passed by Congress and effective 4/1/2020, includes the **Expanded Family and Medical Leave Act (EFMLA)** and the **Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA)**. Below is a link to a Question/Answer document as well as a link to the leave request forms.

FFCRA Q&A: <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/sites/maine.gov.dafs/files/inline-files/FFCRA%20Q%26A%20for%20Employees.pdf>

FFCRA Leave Request Form:

<https://www.maine.gov/dafs/sites/maine.gov.dafs/files/inline-files/FFCRA%20Leave%20Request%20Form-1.pdf>

EPSLA Leave Request Form:

<https://www.maine.gov/dafs/sites/maine.gov.dafs/files/inline-files/EPSLA%20Leave%20Request%20Form-2.pdf>

### Teleworking:

As of April 1, approximately 85% of state employees are teleworking. Approximately 7,700 of the nearly 9,100 designated as non 24/7, public safety.

Remember – your work space at home isn't designed for use like your work space at work. We can forget and keep sitting in one place for too long as we Zoom and Teams from meeting to meeting, but it's important to move often.

Some pointers for setting up a workspace in your home can be found on this video, recently created by the State's ergonomic advisor, Jason Wade:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axSgFvUSpGA&t=22s>

Here's the link to the Telework Best Practices document:

<https://www.maine.gov/dafs/sites/maine.gov.dafs/files/inline-files/Telework%20Best%20Practices%20-%20Employees.pdf>

Stay active while teleworking. See below two exercise videos for employees.

**Back Strengthening:** [https://youtu.be/x9R7eX\\_pjiQm](https://youtu.be/x9R7eX_pjiQm)

**Desk Stretching:** <https://youtu.be/JXRwcybd7I0>

As a reminder, if you have questions about your telework setup, reach out to your [Human Resources professionals](#).

### Temporary increase to vacation accrual maximums

We have reached an agreement with MSEA to temporarily increase vacation accrual maximums for those employees in MSEA bargaining unit positions.

New MSEA temp maximums are effective March 26 through December 31, 2020:

Bargaining Unit(s)	Less than 15 Years of Continuous Service	15 or More Years of Continuous Service
Admin, OMS, P&T	New temp max <b>300</b>	New temp max <b>400</b>
Supervisory	New temp max <b>325</b>	New temp max <b>425</b>

The Controller's Office is working on a report of employees who lost vacation time beginning Thursday, March 26, and until the new temporary maximums are adjusted in TAMS. This lost time will need to be restored through a manual process at the agencies. Once the new maximums are updated in TAMS, time will automatically accrue up to the new maximums.

NOTE:

- The new temporary accrual maximums **do not** change the contractual maximum amount of vacation that can be paid out to an employee upon termination – those remain unchanged.
- The temporary maximums are only through December 31, 2020. Effective January 1, 2021, we revert back to the maximums in the contracts.

We are working on similar agreements with other unions.

### **Gym Reimbursement**

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the requirement for non-essential businesses to be closed, the gym reimbursement program is suspended until further notice. The gym reimbursement forms for first quarter (months: January, February and March) will be processed in April.

### **Health Premium Credit Program**

The deadline for this year's Program is extended to September 30, 2020. <https://www.maine.gov/bhr/oeh/benefits/health-premium-credit>.

### **As a reminder**

- If you are sick, stay home. Do not come to work. Do not run errands. Do not go into the office to pick up work items; coordinate with your supervisor for delivery.
- Call your health provider – do not visit them in person.
- Please continue to exercise care with personal hygiene, as these measures continue to be our best protection:
  - Wash your hands frequently with hot, soapy water for at least 20 seconds
  - Keep your hands below your shoulders (away from your face); and
  - Greet others from a distance, instead of shaking hands

Be mindful of the needs of others. Stay calm. Facts not Fear. Assume best intentions. Be kind. Maintain distance, but stay in touch.

Thanks to all of you and for all you do.

*Kirsten LC Figueroa*

Commissioner  
Department of Administrative and Financial Services