

Dear State of Maine employee,

While guidance continues to evolve in response to COVID-19 in Maine, I want to thank you for everything you are doing to support the people of Maine as we navigate through this time when they most need the services we provide. Leadership continues to monitor COVID-19 activities centrally with the support of the Maine CDC, and efforts continue to be made to ensure we strike an appropriate balance between meeting our business obligations to the citizens of Maine and ensuring the health of our employees and clients. We also understand that many essential services, like our 24/7 facilities and public safety programs, must continue to be well-staffed and operational at all times.

Communications continue to be reviewed centrally to ensure consistency with CDC and leadership guidance. With this guidance in mind, your commissioners and agency heads are working to:

- Limit potential exposure of our employees most vulnerable to the virus by considering alternate work locations and/or schedules, telework, and leave time options where appropriate (management approval required; 24/7 facilities and public safety programs may not have any or only limited options)
- Support social distancing by reducing the number of employees within crowded work spaces through alternate work locations and/or schedules, telework, and leave time use options as appropriate (management approval required; 24/7 facilities and public safety programs may not have any or only limited options)
- Provide more flexibility in the use of leave options over the next two weeks as appropriate for those who may need to be away from work for reasons related to the coronavirus, including the expansion of the use of sick leave (work with management and Human Resources; 24/7 facilities and public safety programs may not have any or only limited options)
 - For example, an office employee who is unable to work from home but approved by management to be away from work to care for child(ren) due to school or daycare closure, may now be allowed to use sick leave to cover this coronavirus related absence

Additionally, actions are being taken to keep employees and the public informed and reminded of safe practices as we continue business operations:

- Notices are being posted at doors of state offices reminding employees and the public not to enter if they are sick with symptoms of the flu and virus
- Reminders of electronic methods for conducting State business are being posted
- Bureau of General Services is installing 2 hand sanitizer dispensers in each of the 44 occupied Augusta area state owned facilities (including MCJA)

The coronavirus has created an unusual situation, and all employees will respond differently. The State has resources available to you – please reach out to your supervisor, Human Resources, or Living Resources (EAP) if you need support. Please keep in mind that your Living Resources program is available to you and your family members 24 hours a day, seven days a week to assist with virtually any issue, including guidance on how to remain healthy and deal with the emotional impacts of the coronavirus.

- Remember, there is a fine line between **social distancing** and **social isolation**
- Living Resources (EAP) is also offering the following session to help support many who are impacted and concerned about the coronavirus. The registration link is below. All employees and family members are invited to attend.

Coping With Uncertainty About The Coronavirus

| Date/ Time | Registration Link |
|--|---|
| March 17 th 11am – 12pm EST | https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/733907924160508939 |

If you are sick, stay home and 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.

Please route questions to your supervisors and our [Human Resources professionals](#).

Be mindful of the needs of others. Stay calm. Stockpiling supplies may mean vulnerable neighbors are not able to get what they need. Please check on others, share, and be kind.

Thank you again for your thoughtful adherence to the measures in place.

Sincerely, Kirsten

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