

Dear Maine State Employee,

As the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services (DAFS) with purview over the State's workforce, it is important to me to be in regular contact with you about updates regarding COVID-19.

As you may know, this morning DHHS closed their Lewiston office due to a confirmed case of COVID-19. Employees who report to the Lewiston office have been instructed to go home. Per Maine CDC protocols, the office will be appropriately cleaned and in the coming days parts of the office may be reopened.

While I know this news is concerning, I wanted to take a moment to discuss the steps that have been taken to protect your health and safety. As you know, immediately following the emergence of COVID-19, State government took steps to protect State employees by limiting potential exposure to the virus.

We have substantially limited our public-facing interactions, and we have encouraged the people of Maine, whenever and wherever possible, to avail themselves of our online and over-the-phone services. In many instances, we have closed to the public our forward-facing office spaces.

We have encouraged those employees who can telework to do so, particularly if those employees are vulnerable to the virus. As such, after speaking personally with each Commissioner, DAFS estimates that approximately 70 percent of State employees – excluding emergency and public safety personnel – are currently working remotely. With the support of Governor Mills, we have also moved to provide more flexibility in the use of leave options, including expanding the use of sick leave with approval.

Furthermore, for those agencies with employees who are still in the office, State government is implementing strict physical distancing measures to reduce the number of people in otherwise crowded work areas and offices. If you are one of the few employees working in your office, I encourage you to be mindful of your interactions with your coworkers, to conduct business via email or phone whenever possible rather than in-person, and to maintain a distance of six feet from people at all times. No more walking into each other's cubicles.

DAFS has also increased its janitorial services, cleaning more frequently and sanitizing commonly-used areas of offices. We continue to urge you to wash your hands thoroughly and often and to practice physical distancing at all times. Most importantly, if you are sick, stay home – do not come to work.

Let me also personally thank you for adapting to work in this new and unprecedented environment to ensure that State government can protect your health and safety and provide critical services to the people of Maine. You embody the extraordinary dedication Mainers are known for, even under extraordinary circumstances.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to your manager or HR lead, and, for more information related to COVID-19, I encourage you to visit our resource page [HERE](#).

With gratitude,

Kirsten LC Figueroa  
DAFS Commissioner