



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

May 26, 2020

TO: Assistant Superintendents
Complex Area Superintendents
Principals

FROM: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto
Superintendent

A blue ink signature of Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto.

SUBJECT: **Return of Employees to the Workplace Starting June 1, 2020**

On May 18, 2020 Governor David Y. Ige issued the "Eighth Supplementary Proclamation Related to the COVID-19 Emergency" which invoked the "Act with Care Order." This order permits work in business or operations for:

"Educational institutions – including public and private pre-K-12 schools, colleges, and universities – for purposes of implementing appropriate learning measures, performing critical research, or performing essential functions, provided that the social distancing requirements identified herein are maintained to the greatest extent possible."

Based on this proclamation, the Hawaii Department of Education (Department) will require employees to return to the workplace starting June 1, 2020 unless prior agreements are made after the issuance of this memo.

To assist in this transition, the following suggestions are being provided that align with current guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Hawaii Department of Health. Supervisors should be prepared to implement the return of employees to the worksite in a way that is best tailored to their respective operational conditions and using independent discretion and judgment as needs arise.

The CDC has provided a "Workplace Decision Tool" to assist employers in making (re)opening decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision tool can be found at the following website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/workplace-decision-tree.pdf>

This guidance may be revised as deemed appropriate.

1. Continuation of Telework

Where an employee can be as functional and productive as when in the workplace with sufficient access to all necessary information, materials, and equipment, telework should continue to be the first consideration for that employee. For example, an employee could return to the workplace during regularly scheduled hours (e.g., for a set number of hours per day or per week) or on an ad hoc basis to drop-off completed work, pick-up work to perform while teleworking, or to use Department property (e.g., scanner, internal access to a database) to assist the employee to complete their duties and tasks in an efficient and functional manner. A rotation of staff in the office at one time (such as separate teams that do not mix and thereby reduce challenges in the event there is an exposure) or combination of telework and in-office work for key staff may also be considered as operations permit. A fully executed telework agreement shall be completed by the employee and supervisor to continue telework for a duration not to exceed July 28, 2020.

Follow the [link](#) to access a copy of the Department's Telework Guidelines and Agreement.

2. Entering Department Facilities

All employees and visitors are urged to wear a mask or other cloth face covering when they are within six feet of others. (Note: some individuals may be unable to wear face masks due to a health reason. In these instances, the implementation of additional safety considerations may need to be considered.

Employees shall contact their supervisor prior to entering a Department facility if they meet any of the following conditions:

- They are symptomatic – cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or exhibit at least two of the following symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell.
- They have traveled within the past 14 days.
- They have been potentially exposed through close prolonged contact with a person who has or is suspected to have COVID-19.
- They are not wearing a mask or other cloth face covering (unless they have a health reason for not doing so).

Employees who have the symptoms as set forth above should notify their supervisor and stay home. Sick employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with their healthcare providers and criteria set forth by the Hawaii Department of Health.

3. Maximization of Social Distancing

Supervisors may consider the following when employees enter the workplace:

- Employees should maintain a six feet or greater distance from each other at all times, including:
 - Workspaces and hallways to the fullest extent possible; and
 - Common areas not absolutely critical to essential work, such as kitchens, copy rooms, file rooms, etc.
- In-person meetings or conferences should be minimized even when social distancing can be maintained. Where possible, these should be converted to video or telephone conferences.
- Shaking hands and other forms of human contact should be prohibited.
- Minimize the number of employees in the workplace at any given time to the fullest extent possible to continue operations while enabling the proper maintenance of social distancing.
- Stagger employee start/end times within existing flexible work hour parameters to avoid entry/exit to/from Department facilities en masse.
- Consider one way circulation routes through the workplace and at points of entry/exit if feasible to minimize face to face employee contact.
- Communal snacks should be discarded in an abundance of caution.
- Entry of a coworker's workspace should be avoided unless appropriate social distancing can be maintained.
- Post signage at multiple, relevant locations to remind employees of social distancing requirements.

4. Encourage the Practice of Good Hygiene

All employees should continue to practice good hygiene, including the following:

- Wash hands with soap and water or the use of hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Post signage at multiple, relevant locations to remind employees of good hygiene practices.

5. Sanitation

Common touch points (door knobs, file cabinets, supply cabinets and drawers, etc.) and frequently used furniture and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as much as possible on a regular basis.

Hand sanitizer should be provided if available, otherwise employees should be encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water on a frequent and regular basis.

Custodial staff will continue with their cleaning duties, however employees may wish to consider cleaning and disinfecting their personal workspaces and items on a more frequent basis.

The use of other employee's phones, keyboards, or other work tools and equipment should be avoided when possible or cleaned and disinfected before and after use.

6. Other Considerations to Maximize Social Distancing

Utilize paperless options for the transmission of documents and other correspondence to the fullest extent possible. Approvals via eSign or by email should be utilized as much as possible rather than requiring original signatures.

Interoffice hard copy mail should be minimized to the fullest extent possible.

The Department appreciates the commitment and dedication of all of our employees, especially during this uncertain time. Thank you for your cooperation as we carefully transition back to the workplace in a safe manner. Principals are encouraged to contact their Complex Area Superintendent regarding any questions or concerns.

For more information about cleaning best practices, please contact Facilities and Maintenance Branch at (808) 784-5000.

Please contact the Office of Talent Management at (808) 441-8300 or email otmhelp@k12.hi.us for employee relations support.

CMK:sb

c: Deputy Superintendent
Communications Branch
Office of Facilities and Operations
Office of Talent Management