



Hello Everyone,

In recognition of the extraordinary measures necessary to help slow the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), effective Monday, March 16, 2020, the City of Fremont will be closing City Hall to the general public, closing all other non-essential City offices to the public and notifying all non-essential staff members that they should remain at home. We expect these conditions to remain in effect for the remainder of the month of March 2020 at which time we will reassess the situation. We are taking this unprecedented action in order to protect the safety and wellbeing of our staff and the public by reducing the opportunities for person-to-person transmission of the virus.

During this period, City of Fremont staff will effectively fall into one the following categories:

1. **Essential personnel that must report to work as usual:** These staff members will report to work as usual. Good examples of these staff members would be Police Officers, Firefighters, and the essential infrastructure personnel that keep the basic services of the City of Fremont operational. Your Department Management teams will be working with you to clarify, if necessary, who falls in to this category and to develop new service delivery strategies to mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 when you are at work and in the field.
2. **Personnel that can perform work remotely:** These staff members are directed to work from home to continue performing the services that keep Fremont operational. Examples of effective telework employees could include IT Infrastructure Managers, Payroll Technicians, Business Managers and any employee at any level of the organization for which a productive effective project can be identified. The City has suspended its conventional telework rules and will be assigning telework whenever possible.
3. **All other personnel that cannot perform telework:** Regular employees that cannot perform telework, and for whom no other work has yet been identified, will be placed on *paid administrative leave* at this time. The leave will likely continue until the end of March or until telework is identified. Paid leave comes with certain expectations as in the Questions and Answers listed below.

We acknowledge that this new action is aggressive and it may cause confusion and service disruption. While we do not have answers to all questions that may arise during this time of uncertainty, below is a preliminary list of questions and answers that we hope will help to address **what we anticipate to be your most immediate questions:**

1. **How do I know what my work status is right now?** Many staff members should already know what work category they fall in, either because they are essential safety personnel or because they have already had discussions about telework with their managers. If you don't know your status, talk to your manager as soon as possible to determine your status.

2. **Can I come to work to get my computer or important belongings?** Yes, you may come to work to get your belongings. Many staff members will need to transition or make arrangements to work from home. Some management teams may need to have a final face-to-face meetings on Monday before virtual work begins, which is appropriate. However, please engage in social-distancing while in the workplace and try to keep yourself and your coworkers healthy.
3. **What does it mean if I am placed on paid administrative leave?** If you are placed on paid administrative leave, this means you have not been designated to provide essential in-person services and no appropriate telework has yet been identified for you. You will be paid your regular wage and will not be required to draw from your own leave banks during this initial two-week period. Staff members on paid administrative leave are required to remain local, accessible by phone and ready to perform telework or report to work if notified that appropriate or essential work has been identified. You should also remain at home and self-quarantine as best you can to slow the spread of the virus. Please remember, **all City of Fremont personnel are Disaster Service Workers and may be required to report to work if conditions change.**
4. **What else can I do to help?** This action is an extreme organizational challenge for our City and everyone can help each other get through these first few days.
 - a. **Don't come to work sick!** If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Follow your doctor's advice.
 - b. **Help distribute this email:** We know that many employees do not have access to their work email or do not check it on the weekend. The City will distribute this message broadly to employees using all known contacts, but please call, text or email this message to staff members you suspect will not receive it otherwise. We will place signage at City Hall and other workplaces on Monday, March 16 during the morning and we will be developing a more comprehensive list of employee personal email addresses in the days to come.
 - c. **Limit contact with others:** The purpose of taking this extreme action is to reduce exposures as much as possible and to keep people healthy. If you can stay home, please stay home!
 - d. **Be patient:** It will take the City a few days to establish support and services for this new business model. IT will be strained by telework demand and many normal avenues of business will be interrupted. Work creatively with your team. We are finding our way, but we will get there.

You will have more questions and we will continue to keep employees informed of any updates. If you have HR questions, the best way to contact us during this period will likely be email at humanresources@fremont.gov, but you can also call 510-494-4660 and we will respond. We are in this together and we will get through it together.

Thank you,

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