

To: All EOE Staff

From: Rachel Goldstein, Chief Financial Officer
T'shana Thomas, Talent and Workforce Development Manager

Date: March 18, 2020

RE: EOE Telework Guidance

Governor Baker announced that non-emergency staff should remain home and not report to work on Monday March 16th and Tuesday March 17th. **All EOE staff, other than those directed otherwise by their managers, will be required to work remotely effective Wednesday March 18, 2020.** These protocols shall remain in effect until April 3, 2020, at which time this will be revisited.

This document speaks to the most critical next steps for our agency, but I know employees will have additional questions and concerns. We will be having a **virtual all staff meeting on Thursday March 19th (time to be announced)**, during which we will review this information and address any additional questions employees may have. Rachel Goldstein will send out a meeting invitation with instructions to access the meeting.

We have and will continue to do our best to be transparent and provide information as promptly as we can. This is new territory for everyone, but we'll tackle this new experience together as an agency team.

This document explains the most important next steps related to:

- [Timesheets](#)
- [Information Technology Resources](#)
- [Remote Work Management Practices](#)
- [Returning to Work to Obtain Personal Items](#)
- [Agency Continuity of Operations Plan \(COOP\)](#)
- [Social Distancing and Other Preventative Measures](#)
- [COVID-19 Communications](#)
- [Approved Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) Accommodations](#)
- [Information Technology Requirements and Resources](#)

If anyone has any questions or need any additional information, please don't hesitate to contact either Rachel Goldstein or T'shana Thomas:

Contact	Contact Information
Rachel Goldstein	Mobile Phone: 781-400-3814 Email: Rachel.I.goldstein@massmail.state.ma.us
T'shana Thomas	Desk Phone: (Will be checking voicemail) 617-222-7489 Email: T'shana.Thomas@MassMail.State.MA.US

1. Timesheets

Here is what all employees need to know about your timesheets over the last two days, and moving forward:

- **How to complete timesheets for Monday March 16th and Tuesday March 17th:** Enter the SKE time code for these days.
- **How to complete timesheets for Wednesday March 18th and forward:** EOEAs expectation is that all staff, unless designated by their manager for an alternative arrangement, should be working remotely. We recognize that this is a challenging time for everyone – whether employees are home with children, whose schools were closed, caring for other family members, or caring for your own health. If you have any questions about which code to use for any unique situation, please contact either T'shana Thomas or Migdalia Rodriguez. Here are our expectations for staff during this time:
 - **37.5 Hours per Week:** Unless employees have an approved Alternative Work Schedule, all employees are still required to work a total of 37.5 hours per week. If employees have an Alternative Work Schedule, those arrangements remain in effect. If any employee needs to amend their standard Alternative Work Schedule during this remote work period, please email T'shana Thomas.
 - **Existing FMLA Arrangements:** If employees have an approved FMLA schedule, employees should continue with that arrangement as normal. Employees should continue with your existing schedule and time entry codes.
 - **Remote Work Schedules:** Supervisors will be required to document each employee's estimated work schedule using a standard template (forthcoming), and submit this information to myself and T'shana Thomas. The agency may request changes to work schedules based on the agency's needs. Remote work schedules should be as consistent from day to day as possible, but supervisors are encouraged to be as flexible as possible about reasonable changes during the remote work period. Employees must get permission from their supervisors if they need to change their remote work schedule.
 - **Flexible Hours:** EOEAs allowing (with supervisor approval) flexible schedules to work outside of normal business hours. If an employee feels that they may need to work during non-traditional hours during the remote work period (with a start time before 9:00 AM, an end time of after 4:30 PM, or with intermittent stops/starts during the day of 1 hour or more), employees should email their supervisors to request this. Supervisors are encouraged to approve all requests, as long as these arrangements don't compromise the unit's ability to execute required functions.

- **If you are working remotely**, use the time code TEL. Only use this code for the amount of time you spend working remotely per day. Do not use this code for time you are not working (see below).
- **If you are home sick or caring for someone who is sick**, you can use your Sick time. You should use either the SIC or SIF time code, as appropriate.
- **If you are home, *not* sick or caring for a sick person, and *not* working**, you must use you must use your Vacation (time code: VAC) or Personal time (time code: PER). We all recognize the need to be flexible and adapt to our new environment, particularly for employees who are home caring for children or other family members. You should communicate with your supervisor about any needs you have related to an alternative Remote Work Schedule.
- **If you need to use Sick, Vacation, or Personal time, but have a have zero available balance**, you should enter INP (if you are sick) and LNP (if you are not sick).
- ***All timesheet deadlines still apply in this remote work period. This is extremely important***; it is highly unlikely that emergency checks will be issued during the immediate future. **Time reporting and approvals must meet the deadlines, or you will not be paid.** As a reminder, you can access SSTA 24/7 from any internet-connected device from this link: <http://www.mass.gov/masshr>. Here are the critical deadlines that apply every week:
 - The deadline for you to submit your timesheets is every Thursday, by 12:00 PM.
 - If you change your time after it has been approved, you must notify your approver so that the time can be reapproved. Your approver does not receive a notification when you change your time after it has been approved.
 - The deadline to approve all staff timesheets is every Thursday, by 5:00 PM. *If you will not be available to approve time by the deadline, you must delegate this task to another approver.*
 - Links to the job aids for approving time and time approver delegation can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/guide-for-approving-time-and-time-approval-delegation-managers-and-supervisors>.

1. Information Technology Resources

At this point, EOEA does not have any additional IT resources to distribute to staff (including laptops or VPN credentials). If staff has personal computers, tablets, or smartphones, we're asking that staff use those resources to complete their work. Please see the next section of this guidance for next steps regarding IT planning.

2. Remote Work Management Practices

While we're all adapting this new way of work, it is important that we set up consistent practices for each organizational unit. ***Please take the following steps by the deadlines noted below:***

- **Information Technology Resources** – Staff should take the following actions:
 - ✓ **Action Item:** Employees should email their supervisors to tell them what IT resources they have available to perform assigned tasks (e.g. laptop, tablet, smart phone, etc.) by *5:00 PM on Wednesday March 18th*.
 - ✓ **Action Item:** Supervisors should send a consolidated list of this information for all of their direct reports to Rachel Goldstein and T'shana Thomas by *12:00 PM on Thursday March 19th*.
- **Projects to Work On:** During this remote work period, EOEa asks that staff continue to work on either operational assignments or special projects as much as they can. We know that not all work will be able to be done remotely, so employees should focus on the work that can be done.
 - ✓ **Action Item:** Supervisors should connect with each of their direct reports to start an initial list of the operational assignments and special projects that each person can work on remotely. Please document any system or document access needs employees have to complete each assignment. Throughout this remote work period, managers will work with staff and supervisors to share documents via email and obtain necessary system access based on the agency's needs and available resources. We expect that this list of projects will evolve during the remote work period. Supervisors do not need to submit this information tomorrow, but we will be asking for it in the coming days.
- **Online/Offline Work Notifications to Supervisors:** Throughout the remote work period we will be requiring that, on a daily basis, all employees notify their supervisor when they begin work in the morning, when they're signing off for breaks of 1 hour or more, and when they're ending work for the day.
 - ✓ **Action Item:** Supervisors should define an initial format for *how* they want to receive these notifications (e.g. phone call, email, text, etc.) and distribute that guidance to their direct reports via email by *12:00 PM on Thursday March 19th*. Please copy Rachel Goldstein and T'shana Thomas on the email.
- **Daily Activity Logs:** We will be requiring that staff send a daily email update to their supervisors updating them on their activities for the day and what they accomplished.

- ✓ **Action Item:** Supervisors should define an initial template for how they want their staff to submit this information and distribute that guidance to their direct reports via email by *12:00 PM on Thursday March 19th*. Supervisors should copy Rachel Goldstein and T'shana Thomas on the email to staff.

- **Set up email and voice mail messages noting remote work:** It will be important to let internal and external stakeholders know that we're working remotely. All employees should take the following steps by *5:00 PM on Wednesday March 18th*, to the best of their ability. If employees are unable to complete this today due to technological limitations, employees should complete these steps as soon as possible.
 - ✓ **Action Item:** All employees should set up an out of office message on your email account, explaining that you're working remotely during this time and that you're checking email regularly. You may leave an alternative phone number where you can be reached if you want to, but are not required to do so. You can access Outlook Web Application here: <https://email.state.ma.us/owa>.
 - ✓ **Action Item:** All employees should change your voicemail greeting to note that you're working remotely. I've attached instructions for how to change your voicemail greeting remotely.

Throughout this remote work period, we will be asking that staff perform the following activities:

Table 1 Ongoing Activities During Remote Work Period

Frequency	Activity
Daily	Establish alternative work schedules as needed
Daily	Work on the operational and special projects you have discussed with your supervisor, and add to the list as necessary
Daily	Communicate with other staff as necessary through email, phone, etc.
Daily	Check in with your supervisor each day when you're starting work, signing off for breaks, and ending your work day
Daily	Send daily activity logs to your supervisor before you sign off each day, letting them know what you worked on and what you accomplished
Daily	Check your email and voicemail hourly during your established work hours
Weekly	Enter your timesheets by 12:00 PM every Thursday and approve all timesheets by 5:00 PM every Thursday .

3. Returning to Work to Obtain Personal Items

EOEA staff is permitted to come back to the office to pick up their personal belongings or work items that they need to work remotely at their convenience any time *before 5:00PM on Wednesday March 25th*. If you need to access the building after that time, please notify your supervisor.

4. Agency Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

EOEA maintains a Continuity of Operations Plan (also known as a COOP), which explains our procedures for what we do in an emergency. We work diligently all year to maintain our continuity of operations plans for situations like this. We are prepared, engaged, and committed to continuing to serve older adults across the Commonwealth throughout this uncertain time. We have the critical functions in place to maintain our operations and keep the agency's most essential work going. The latest COOP is attached for your reference.

5. Social Distancing and Other Protective Practices

Social distancing is critically important now. This means limiting in-person interaction significantly. This is a shift in our normal practice and may feel awkward. Each of us plays a role in limiting the spread of this illness, with our own behavior and how we model for others. As an agency, we'll be relying on email, telephone, and WebEX wherever viable. All employees should wash hands with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based sanitizing gel frequently, including before and after in-person contact with others. Employees should continue to follow existing and future public health guidance as it is issued.

6. COVID-19 Communications

We all must continue to follow the agency's communication protocols regarding COVID-19 response. Please do not send any communications to any internal or external party regarding COVID-19, without express permission from Robin Lipson or Julia Kapp. If you are contacted by the press, do not respond and please refer them to Brooke Karanovich, the Media Relations Manager for EOHHS, at Brooke.karanovich2@MassMail.State.MA.US.

7. Approved Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations

If employees have approved ADA accommodations that are required for them to be able to work at home, please notify your supervisor.

8. Information Technology Requirements and Resources

Thanks to Joan O'Rourke and the SIMS team for putting together this list of important IT contacts to have on file while working remotely. Importantly, this list identifies which applications require VPN access, and which do not. Please retain this for use during and after the remote work period.

***Note on VPN Use:** Employees with active VPN credentials are required to only use VPN when absolutely necessary, and to disconnect when not actively using applications that require it. During the week of March 16th, the Commonwealth exceeded its VPN capacity and users were not able to access VPN. To preserve access for everyone who needs it, employees must limit their time on the network to what is absolutely critical.

****Note on Data and Protected Information:*** Employees must continue to take appropriate measures to safeguard EOE data while working remotely. All existing data security agreements and provisions apply during this remote work period.

- **Many applications do not require VPN access to use remotely.** These include:
 - Access emails – You can access the Outlook Web Application using any web browser at this link: <https://email.state.ma.us/owa/>. Login with your domain (ehs\userid) and existing password. Simply use your user your existing login credentials. (Example: EHS/PSmith Password: Calm2020!)
 - Access SAMS application: You can copy and paste the following link into Internet Explorer: <https://login.harmonyis.net>. Users need to use Internet Explorer and SilverLight needs to be installed on their computer.
 - Access APS application: You can copy and paste the following link into Internet Explorer: <https://fw1.harmonyis.net/MAAPSLive/Pages/Login.aspx?ec=5>. The computer needs to be configured to [WellSky Configuration Guidelines](#) found on PS Bulletin Board.
 - Access Virtual Gateway applications - You can copy and paste the following link into any web browser: <https://sso.hhs.state.ma.us/>. Simply use your existing login credentials.
 - Access SSTA (Time & Attendance) - You can copy and paste the following link into any web browser: <http://www.mass.gov/masshr>. Simply use your existing login credentials.
 - Access PACE for training - You can copy and paste the following link into any web browser:
https://www.pace.state.ma.us/kc/login/login.asp?kc_ident=kc0001&strUrl=https://www.pace.state.ma.us/EOHHS/default.asp. Simply use your existing login credentials.
 - Host and attend Webex meetings - You can copy and paste the following link into any web browser: <https://statema.webex.com/>. Simply use your existing login credentials.
- **Some applications or situations require VPN access.** These include:
 - Internally Facing or Secure Applications
 - Budget and Contract applications, including MMARS, Mobius, CIW, and Impact
 - Shared network drives
 - Work requiring access to secure data
 - Work that can only be done from your work desktop due to Security requirements

If any employee has files or data that can practically, safely, and securely be shared via email, they are welcome to use that option as a workaround. Employees should work with their

supervisors and managers to identify the critical content that they need. Managers will mobilize resources to assist with obtaining and sharing documents and data as appropriate.

Table 2 IT Support Contacts

Support Type	Who to Contact	Contact Information
VPN Support	EOTSS VPN Team	Phone: 866-888-2808 Website: https://www.mass.gov/service-details/eotss-vpn-support
General IT Support	EOHHS Service and Support Center	Phone: 617-994-5050 Email: ELD-DL-ITRequests@MassMail.state.ma.us Hours of Operation: 6:00 AM – Midnight, Monday - Friday