



## Office of the Township Administrator

**To:** Township Employees

**From:** Christopher D. Gilbert, Township Administrator

**Date:** 3/13/2020

**Re:** COVID-19 / Township Response and Internal Operational Protocols

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The response to the COVID-19 public health crisis is rapidly evolving. The recent declarations by the Governor, although necessary, add complexities to how we function as a local government organization. Some of you may have questions related to how we will continue to operate over the next few weeks as our community, the State of Ohio, and the Country respond to this evolving situation. It is my sincere hope that this information will provide some clarity and comfort in our response and plan moving forward.

As I stated in an email yesterday, our priority remains to limit the exposure and spread of the virus among our employees and throughout the community. I met with the Department Heads this morning to unify our internal operational plans in response to COVID-19. The following is a list of the steps which we are taking now to limit the exposure and spread of the virus:

### **PLANS TO LIMIT EXPOSURE AND SPREAD OF THE DISEASE WHILE PROVIDING SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC:**

To limit the exposure and possible spread of the virus in our interactions with members of the public, we have implemented the following:

- **New Internal Protocols by Department:** Each Department has developed new internal protocols for public interaction to help limit exposure and reduce the likelihood of spreading the disease. These protocols involve, but are not limited to, specific response procedures if we suspect someone in the public may be infected. If you have not already been briefed on the new protocols in your Department, please discuss them with your supervisor immediately.
- **Elimination of Travel to Non-essential Community/Inter-Agency Meetings:** Across all Departments, we ask that employees cease any travel to or participation in meetings outside of our organization which are not essential to performing vital services for Township residents. Department Heads in each Department are responsible for determining what meetings and travel are and are not essential.
- **Encouraging Persons Doing Business with or for the Township to Hold Meeting by Telephone:** The Township is requesting that all of its vendors and/or members of the public with whom it does business or who have business with the Township conduct that business, wherever possible, by telephone. In-person meetings are discouraged unless absolutely necessary.
- **Cancellation of Outside Organization Meetings in Township Meeting Rooms:** The Township has indefinitely postponed all meetings scheduled by outside organizations in Township meeting facilities.

- **Cancellation of Township Events:** The Township has already cancelled or postponed all Township and ArtsConnect Events and programming in an effort to limit employee exposure during non-essential functions.

#### **PLANS TO LIMIT EXPOSURE AND SPREAD OF THE DISEASE INTERNALLY:**

To limit the exposure and possible spread of the virus in our interactions with other Township employees, we have implemented the following:

- **Encouraging Employees to Protect and Remain Vigilant/Aware of Their Own Health Condition:** All Township employees should remember their obligations as First-Responders to serve and protect our residents during this difficult and confusing time. Employees should do their best to remain healthy by following the CDC guidelines regarding rest and sanitation (especially vigilant and regular hand washing). Employees should follow cough protocols and avoid touching their faces whenever possible. It is critical that our employees take care of themselves so that they can remain healthy and continue to help their families, each other, and our residents.
- **Encouraging Employees to Utilize Teladoc:** Springfield Township employees and their families have access to Teladoc, which connects them to a doctor via phone or the internet. Employees are encouraged to use this service if they feel they are ill. Teladoc physicians are able to ask employees COVID-19 screening questions and make necessary referrals. They can be reached by telephone at 1-800-362-2667) or via the internet at [www.teladoc.com](http://www.teladoc.com).
- **Requiring Employees to Notify their Supervisor or Department Head When They or a Family Member (or person with whom they reside) Become Ill:** Employees who are exhibiting symptoms of acute respiratory illness or who reside with a family member or other person who has exhibited such symptoms **MUST** notify their supervisor or Department Head. Employees who are exhibiting such symptoms or who have family members or persons residing with them exhibiting such symptoms may be assigned to separate work locations
- **Encouraging Employees With Respiratory Symptoms but No Fever to Stay at Home:** Employees who are exhibiting symptoms of acute respiratory illness without a fever are encouraged to stay home until they have been cleared by a medical professional to return to work.
- **Requiring Employees Registering a Fever over 100 Degrees to Stay at Home:** Employees who exhibit symptoms of respiratory illness *and* experience a fever of 100.4° F or greater **MUST** stay home. Such employees may only return to work after being fever-free for 48 hours and after consultation with their Department Head. A medical clearance may be required to return to work.
- **Strict Enforcement of Township Policies Regarding Sending Sick Employees Home:** Section 605 of the Springfield Township Personnel Policy authorizes Department Heads to send employees home if they are exhibiting symptoms of a communicable disease. This authority will be used judiciously and as consistently as possible. However, as the Township's top priority is to protect the health of our employees, their families, and our residents, we will be utilizing this Policy where it is necessary to limit the spread of illness. As always, the Township will comply with all requirements of the FMLA and the ADA, where applicable, as it responds to illnesses related to COVID-19.
- **Communications Regarding Infected Employees to Co-Workers:** The Township will inform employees who were exposed to any employee who has been confirmed to have COVID-19. The Township and employees informed as to the health status of another employee must maintain confidentiality as required by the ADA and HIPAA. Only employees who have been exposed to employees who are confirmed to have COVID-19 will be informed and those employees are prohibited from disclosing the identity of the infected employee to anyone.

- **Expanding Environmental Cleaning:** The Township will be expanding the scope and frequency of cleaning the public spaces in the Township. Employees are encouraged to clean their workstations, desktops and keyboards to reduce the spread of the disease.

We are very aware of the strain the threat of the COVID-19 may have on our employees and their families, especially in light of the most recent school closures. Please understand that the Department Heads and I are continually evaluating and balancing the needs of the organization with the demands that you are experiencing at home.

**If you have any concerns, requests, or suggestions as to how we can better support and protect you and your family while you protect our community, please do not hesitate to talk to me or your Department Head. We remain dedicated to working with all of you through this challenging time.**

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank you all for your continued service and dedication to Springfield Township. While situations like this can be difficult, it is people like our employees whose sacrifice truly makes a difference in the lives of others. Protecting your health and safety so that you can help others in need is our main goal.

We know we have the very best professionals working for us. And, we know that together, we can get through this.