



Metro

Interoffice Memo

Date	March 13, 2020
To	Metro Employees
cc	Board of Directors and Board Staff
Thru	Phillip A. Washington, Chief Executive Officer
From	Joanne Peterson, Chief of Human Capital & Development Yvette Rapose, Chief Communications Officer
Subject	COVID-19 FAQs

1. What are my responsibilities as a Metro employee and public servant during this crisis?

Metro understands that this is an extremely stressful time for employees, so we encourage you to support each other. We ask that you stay informed and focus on facts, not fears, as we work through the uncertainty of this rapidly evolving situation. During these challenging times, Metro depends more than ever on the dedication of its employees to deliver the best services possible to meet the daily transit needs of L.A. County residents. We are working proactively to administer this great public responsibility while also ensuring that we provide every safety protection possible for our employees. We share this responsibility with you, our workforce. Metro will be taking a number of expanded measures to help provide the safest working conditions possible for all employees. In turn, if utilizing these measures, Metro relies on you to exercise personal responsibility to ensure that our agency continues to be a good and prudent steward of taxpayer funds.

2. What is Metro doing to ensure a safe and healthy workplace for its employees?

Metro is in close communication with Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH). They are in turn working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), government agencies, and local teams to stay on top of this evolving situation. Additionally, members of the Senior Leadership Team have been assigned to serve on a Task Force to address matters related to the virus. This task force will be reporting to our CEO daily to be certain that Metro is using the best information possible to make any necessary decisions. Metro has also committed to meeting with leaders from our five labor unions on a weekly basis to ensure that we have a partnership approach in our response to the COVID-19.

Specific actions presently being taken include:

- Metro is following the orders and recommendations from LACDPH and the CDC. Representatives from Metro serve on LA County's Emergency Management Team.
- Our primary direction to our workforce is to protect yourselves and others through good personal hygiene practices and other precautions.
- Metro has strengthened its cleaning regimes within buses, trains, stations and work spaces.
- We request that employees stay home if they are sick and avoid close contact with others.
- The task force will be reviewing sick leave utilization on a bi-weekly basis to ensure that Metro does not have any patterns of concern.
- Management and Labor will conduct weekly meetings to discuss our responses and actions.

3. What should I do if I need to stay home because my child's school/day care is closed due to the COVID-19?

Please inform and work directly with your supervisor. You will receive a Request for Time Off Due to School Closure form to complete. You may be eligible to change your shift start time, telecommute, or receive time off with pay subject to management's approval. Once authorized, the leave code should be tagged as COV for e-time. See questions 17 and 18 below for more information and refer to the Telecommuting (HR 19) Policy. Agreements for this time off shall be reviewed by management every 14 calendar days.

4. What should I do if I need to stay home to care for a sick family member, or if I am directed to self-quarantine?

Please inform and work directly with your supervisor. You may be eligible for Family Medical Leave. Please review Metro's Family Medical Leave (HR 33) policy for more information. You may also be eligible to telecommute subject to management's approval. See questions 16 and 17 below for more information and refer to the Telecommuting (HR 19) Policy.

5. I think I may have been exposed to the COVID-19 (i.e., next to passenger on a train with flu-like symptoms) and have elected to self-quarantine. Am I required to use TOWP?

If you think you may have been exposed to the virus for whatever reason and elect to self-quarantine, you must notify your management of your need for leave and will be required to use TOWP for the duration of your absence. You will also be required to furnish a medical note clearing you to return to work. We highly recommend you speak to your healthcare provider to assess your health condition in the event you feel you may have been exposed to the COVID-19 or any other viruses.

6. My supervisor sent me home because they say I have flu-like symptoms. Is this allowed?

Yes. Metro has a heightened duty to maintain safe and healthy working conditions for all employees and must use reasonable care to provide for the safety of its

employees and in furnishing a suitable and safe place of work. Therefore, employees who come to work showing signs and symptoms of flu-like illness, including but not limited to fever, coughing, sneezing, body aches, sore throat, headache or other objective symptoms of the flu or cold may be removed from service at management's discretion. It does not matter if you insist you are *not* experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, unless you are able to produce a doctor's note certifying your ability to work fully and safely.

7. My supervisor sent me home because I have flu-like symptoms. How will I be paid?
Employees sent home due to suspected illness will be paid for the workday, and thereafter will be required to use their accrued paid leave (TOWP, vacation time, sick time, etc.). Employees will need to furnish a medical note clearing them to return to work. Sick employees may be eligible for wage replacement benefits such as State Disability Insurance through the California Employment Development Department (EDD). These benefits can be integrated with any accrued paid leaves the employee has available. Please work directly with your supervisor for questions about how you will be paid while on leave, or you can email LOAmical@metro.net to request information.
8. My supervisor sent me home because I have flu-like symptoms. When and how can I return to work?
As a provider of public transportation services, Metro has a heightened duty to ensure the health and safety of its workforce. A return to work will be in accordance with Metro's Attendance (HR 21) Policy and/or collective bargaining agreements (CBA), which generally require that an employee furnish a doctor's clearance prior to returning to work. Please refer to the relevant policy/CBA for more information.
9. I am a supervisor and my employee is exhibiting flu-like symptoms. Am I required to send them home?
You are only *required* to send an employee home if they have a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. Otherwise, it is strongly recommended that you send employees exhibiting flu-like symptoms home in order to maintain a safe and healthy workplace for all.
10. If I am sent home from work due to exhibiting flu-like symptoms, will be absence be considered chargeable?
Employees needing to take leave for illness related to COVID-19 will be required to use their leave, however the leave incident will not be tracked as chargeable. This means that the potential discipline around the use of leave will be suspended for COVID-19 related absences.
11. One of my employees recently returned from travel to an area with a COVID-19 outbreak. What should I do?
Prior to their return, you should ask the employee whether they were provided guidance from government authorities to self-quarantine, and if so, the employee should be placed on leave for the appropriate time period.

If the employee has not been provided with guidance to self-quarantine, then the employee should be allowed to return to work. If the employee exhibits flu-like symptoms, refer to the guidance above.

12. My employee has upcoming international travel plans. What should I do?

Encourage your employee to monitor travel advisories published by the CDC at <https://www.cdc.gov/COVID-19/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

13. Is Metro suspending travel?

At this time, only international business travel has been suspended.

14. Is Metro canceling all meetings and events?

As the current situation unfolds, upcoming events and meetings will be canceled or postponed as appropriate. Please refer to management and/or event organizers for more details leading up to the event. As of right now, all public events at LA Union Station have been canceled through the end of April. Public meetings in support of planning projects and construction projects have also been canceled and may be virtualized through the end of April. Committee meetings will take place next week, although with some changes. All others will be determined.

15. Can I get a COVID-19 test at one of Metro's contracted medical clinics?

Currently, Metro's clinics are not providing testing or treatment for COVID-19 symptoms. Please see your personal medical provider for testing or treatment.

16. I need resources such as medical care or child care. Where can I get help?

Metro's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free and confidential service offering resources such as mental health counseling, referrals to elder and child care, financial counseling, and many other services. EAP can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (877) 335-5327 or at www.guidanceresources.com.

17. Can I telecommute?

It depends. A few considerations include:

- a. The character of your responsibilities and whether the work you perform can reasonably be performed remotely.
- b. The reason you are requesting to telecommute; if you are off-work because you are ill, telecommuting is not available.
- c. Ultimately, approval of telecommuting requests is at management's discretion and must be authorized by your department's Executive Officer.

Generally, pursuant to Telecommuting (HR 19), telecommuting is only available to Non-Contract, Regular Full-Time employees. Talent Management has implemented a temporary exception to this policy that will allow Temporary Employees, Administrative Interns, Transportation Associates, and Intermittent Employees to telecommute, where appropriate. Approval is subject to the above-mentioned considerations. The eligibility criteria must still be met.

18. How can I request to telecommute?

Telecommuting requests are governed by the Telecommuting (HR 19) Policy and approval is at management's discretion. Request forms are attached to the policy. Requests, approvals, and agreements must be documented and monitored by management.

Due to the current situation, Talent Management has determined that while the eligibility criteria must still be met, the telecommuting approval process will be relaxed to no longer require the approval of the Director, HR and EO, Talent Management. Telecommuting requests may be approved by the department's respective Executive Officer on a temporary basis and until further notice.

Talent Management has also revised current policy to state that all telecommuting agreements arising out of the current COVID-19 situation shall be reviewed by management every 14 calendar days and re-approved as appropriate. This temporary provision will remain in effect until further notice.