



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

NED LAMONT
GOVERNOR

MIRIAM E. DELPHIN-RITTMON, Ph.D.
COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

To: DMHAS Staff

From: Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D. *MDR*
Commissioner

Date: Monday, March 16, 2020

Subject: COVID-19: ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR TELEWORK

In response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Lamont, through the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and the Office of Labor Relations (OLR), has advised Commissioners on the need to promote social distancing. This includes increased opportunities for telework and staggered reporting times for employees as needed while maintaining agency operations and providing necessary services.

As a large health care agency providing direct care to over 100,000 clients, telework is not an option for all DMHAS employees. However, the Department is working to allow for flexibility to help ensure the safety of clients and staff.

Individuals whose job classifications are approved by DAS, OLR, and their collective bargaining unit for telework may submit a request to telework to their Facility Chief Operating Officer (CEO) or Senior Manager. CEOs and Senior Managers will then make recommendations to the DMHAS Commissioner for final review and approval.

Telework requests will be granted on a case-by-case basis based on the individual's current work assignment and the business needs of the Department. Requests must include:

- Employee's name and title;
- Bargaining unit;
- Employee's IT resource need (complete the attached IT Resource Questionnaire form);
- Proposed weekly telework plan (developed in conjunction with the requestor's supervisor and manager);
- Brief statement of duties and functions to be performed while teleworking; and,
- Factors by which the agency can verify the employee is performing the required duties.

Supervisors and managers are responsible for tracking daily telework plan progress. Individuals approved to telework will be required to check-in with their supervisor at the end of each day to provide updates on progress with the individual's telework plan. Staff who have been approved to telework may be asked to perform duties or other agency functions which cannot be accomplished through telework. Approved staff should also review procedures for accessing voicemail offsite.

The Department will consider flexibility for individuals whose job classifications do not allow them to work from home for reasons including, but not limited to: providing direct care, clerical support and essential administrative functions. Such flexibility will also be given to those employees who have to stay home due to school closures. These staff may arrange to stagger arrival and departure times, modify work schedules or even work on weekends to help promote social distancing.

Governor Ned Lamont has added up to 14 days of paid leave for employees who are unable to work because they are sick with COVID-19, are caring for a family member who is sick with COVID-19, or must provide childcare/eldercare in the event of facility closures. In accordance with DMHAS' medical leave policy and to ensure the safety of our staff and clients, employees who stay home due to illness must submit the appropriate medical certificate and fitness of duty form upon return to work.

Please note this is not a shut-down or closure of client care buildings or DMHAS operations. The DMHAS Incident Command Team will continue to re-evaluate this plan and notify staff of any changes. Staff who telework are expected to comply with all state and federal privacy laws as well as any Department policies related to privacy and confidentiality. The DMHAS confidentiality statement and technology policy when working from home are attached for your review.

The Department is committed to the health and safety of the people we serve and our staff. To promote social distancing, we encourage staff to telework or work flexible schedules to limit direct contact with others whenever permissible.

If you have questions related to this memorandum, please contact your supervisor.