



MEMORANDUM

From: Coronavirus Taskforce

To: All Employees

Date: October 16, 2020

Re: MORE COVID-19 Updates:

- **LUNCH ROOMS AND BREAK ROOMS CLOSED**
- **WORK FROM HOME POLICY FOR MINOR ILLNESS**

In addition to last week's Mask Policy Update, please see the two additional new policies set forth below.

1. LUNCH ROOMS AND BREAK ROOMS CLOSED

As reported in Governor Raimondo's press briefing on Thursday, October 15th, Covid cases are on the rise again in Rhode Island. **The Governor has therefore ordered, effective immediately, that all office break rooms and common areas be shut down for the next three months** in a bid to slow an uptick in coronavirus cases across the state.

Under the mask policy which we issued last week, eating in the lunchrooms was already prohibited. This additional government restriction reinforces that requirement, but also bans other socializing in break rooms and lunch rooms. This does not, however, affect individual use of refrigerators or coffee machines, which will continue to be available, provided that employees do not "congregate."

Please contact HR with any questions. Otherwise, please **DO NOT SIT, EAT or DRINK in any common areas, breakrooms or lunchrooms.**

2. WORK FROM HOME POLICY FOR MINOR ILLNESS – NON UNION ONLY

Due to the rise of Covid cases combined with cold and flu season approaching, and keeping the safety of all our employees in mind, we are updating our Remote Work

Policy. The new policy will allow up to 3 days per month of remote work for employees with mild cold, flu or similar symptoms who are still able to perform their job duties. By allowing this, employees who are able to effectively work from home can help prevent inadvertent transmission of Covid – since some symptoms of Covid are similar to symptoms of cold and flu – but won't be forced to use their PTO time unnecessarily in order to do so.

To use this policy, employees experiencing mild cold or flu symptoms, such as sneezing or coughing, must notify their supervisor and receive approval to work remotely for **up to 3 days per month**. If the employee is able to effectively perform their work from home and the supervisor approves it, **the supervisor then must get approval from HR, either Vlatka Drocic or Lisa Seidel. If approved, and if the employee performs a full day's work, no PTO time will be deducted for the day.** If employees are too sick to perform a full day's work from home or need more than three days to work remotely, they will be required to use PTO time.

The employee will be required to submit a Remote Work Verification form to their supervisor and HR each day as to tasks performed and hours worked. As before, employees will be expected to function as close to normally as possible, including following all schedules and meeting all deadlines. Everyone is expected to be productive and responsive to all emails and voicemails. The ability to work remotely can be revoked at any time if an employee is found to not be keeping up with their work.

In deciding whether to approve a request under this policy, supervisors and HR will consider the following:

- How essential their physical presence in the office is to accomplishing their work;
- If they are technologically capable of working remotely, including having the necessary hardware and comfort-level with software;
- If they will be able to digitally receive all materials necessary for their work;
- The reliability of the employee to complete their work remotely.

We will continue to monitor all guidance from state and federal agencies to update this policy as necessary. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the implementation of this policy, please contact Vlatka Drocic, HR Director.

As always, your cooperation is appreciated.