

Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Schenectady County Human Resource Policy Manual

Policy Code – Subject (Type)

1102– Public Health Emergency Plan (Local)

Extension Administration Issue Date, Last Revised Date

Not applicable

Association Adoption Date

03/19/2021

Association Effective Date

03/19/2021

Purpose

The Association’s Public Health Emergency Plan provides for the continuation of operations in the event that the governor declares a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease. Given the dynamic nature of public health emergencies, the Association will monitor and follow federal, state, county, and local requirements as needed.

Communicable Disease

Communicable disease shall mean an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxins that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its products from an infected individual.

Essential & Non-essential Employees

Essential employees are required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job. Non-essential employees are not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job. Such designations may be changed at any time at the sole discretion of the Association. The following types of positions are considered essential in the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce. However, the types of positions considered essential may vary depending on the nature of the public health emergency. In addition, some functions may be essential but may not require employees to be present at a work site every day. The Association will monitor and follow federal, state, county, and local essential employee guidance.

Management Staff – Develops and implements overall policy and procedures. Ensures all essential functions are maintained.

Facilities Staff - Performs cleaning, sanitization and necessary upkeep and security of the building.

Educator Staff – Provides informal education to the public. In some cases educators may be required to perform in-person education or visits as part of their essential responsibilities.

Operations Staff – (IT, HR, Administrative functions, etc.) Manages and oversees office operations, public health emergency plan functions, policies, recordkeeping, staffing, and building access.

Finance Staff – Authorizes payment of bills and purchases, receives cash/check payments, deposits funds, prints and prepares checks and payments.

Remote Work Protocols

During a public health emergency reduced staffing levels in the Association offices may be implemented. In such cases the Association will utilize remote work (or telecommuting), to the extent possible. Staff may request, or the Association may require, remote work at the discretion of the employee's supervisor and/or the Executive Director. Such arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis as some positions do not lend themselves to remote work.

Technology considerations related to remote work may include, but are not limited to, facilitating or requesting the purchasing, distribution, downloading and installation of any needed technology, including software, data, and the transferring of office phone lines to work or personal cell phones as practicable or applicable to the workplace, and may include technology devices. All IT equipment or other purchase requests related to remote work are subject to the review and approval by the Association Executive Director or their designee.

Staggered Shifts

During a public health emergency staggered shifts (including alternative hours or days) may be implemented, to the extent possible. Staff may request or the Association may require staggered shifts at the discretion of the employee's supervisor and/or the Association Executive Director. Such arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis as some positions do not lend themselves to staggered shifts.

Personal Protective Equipment

During a public health emergency the Association will provide essential employees with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at no-cost to the employee in order for them to complete the essential functions of their position. The Association will maintain an adequate supply of PPE in case of replacement. PPE shall mean all equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards, including gloves, masks, face shields, foot and eye protection, protective hearing devices, respirators, hard hats, and disposable gowns and aprons. Staff who perform cleaning and disinfecting responsibilities will be provided disposable and/or reusable gloves and other PPE.

During a public health emergency inventory of PPE supplies will be completed weekly, or more frequently if needed. PPE supplies will be procured by the Association utilizing current or new vendors as needed. PPE will be stored in clean, dry locations and will permit immediate access in the event of an emergency declaration. PPE will be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation.

Employee Exposure Protocols

During a public health emergency, the Association may implement screening procedures based on federal, state, county, or local requirements. Employees must immediately notify the Association Executive Director or their designee if they have been diagnosed with (test positive), exposed to, or are experiencing symptoms of communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency. Employees may also contact their healthcare provider for guidance and support.

An employee who has been diagnosed with (tests positive), or exposed to, or is experiencing symptoms of communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency must remain at home and may not report to the worksite. An employee who exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency while at work should be immediately separated from other employees, program participants, volunteers, visitors, and others and sent home.

All such employees may not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue isolation or quarantine based on federal, state, county, or local requirements or recommendations. Employees with work responsibilities that align with remote work will be permitted to work remotely during periods of isolation or quarantine, to the extent possible.

Disinfection Protocols

During a public health emergency, the Association will implement disinfection protocols based upon federal, state, county, or local requirements or recommendations. The Association will thoroughly disinfect the work area of any employee known or suspected to be infected with the communicable disease as well as any common area surface and shared equipment such employee may have touched.

Employee Leave

The Association will provide existing leave (or implement new leave as required under federal, state, county, or local law) to eligible employees who are sick, or to receive testing, treatment, isolation, or quarantine for a communicable disease during a public health emergency. Staff who are affected by a communicable disease during a public health emergency should contact their local Human Resources contact for information on leave benefits which may be available for them.

Documenting Hours & Work Locations

The Association will follow federal, state, county, or local protocols to assist with contact tracing and notification of close contacts of possible exposure. Protocols include but are not limited to documenting work hours and work locations, including off-site visits, for essential employees.

Housing for Essential Employees

In the instance of a public health emergency it may be necessary for essential employees to be lodged to help prevent the spread of a communicable disease and to protect these employees from potential exposures. The Association Executive Director or their designee will coordinate with the local, county, or state emergency management offices to help identify and arrange for these housing needs, to the extent applicable based on the needs of the Association.

Other Requirements

The Association will adopt any other requirements determined by departments of health such as contact tracing or testing, social distancing, hand hygiene and disinfectant, or mask wearing as needed.

Retaliation

The Association shall not take retaliatory action or otherwise discriminate against any employee for making recommendations regarding the content of this Plan.