



# WORK ARRANGEMENTS DURING COVID-19

COVID-19

POLICY #: 901.3

EFFECTIVE 5/1/2020

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

As we continue through this situation and work to provide continued services it is important that we don't lose sight of who we are: Mission; Stewards of Progress, Anticipating Needs, Engaged with our Community, Serving with Excellence. Our first and highest priority is to the people of Ferndale, and the City is open for business. We remain available to help when and where we're needed. To ensure the appropriate precautions, we'll be continuing some procedural changes and implementing new ones as we prepare to re-open the City. Below are some ongoing systems that continue to be in place.

### The "Families First Act"

It is important to note that **beginning April 2, 2020**, Public Employers must recognize The Emergency Families First Coronavirus Response Act (H.R. 6201) "Family First Act". The City would like to make this retroactive to March 18, the date that Act was signed where appropriate.

*There are two laws within this act:*

- The Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLA) which is an expansion of FMLA, and
- Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) (stand-alone law)

These laws provide a portion of an employee's pay and job protections under certain circumstances related to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak. An explanation of these laws is provided under separate cover.

In order to comply with Governor Whitmer's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order and to support social distancing for essential personnel, it has become necessary to limit staff from coming to work when possible. The City has developed the following parameters to ensure services are ongoing and staff are as productive as possible during this time.

## TELECOMMUTING / WORK FROM HOME / ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

It is necessary for the public good for emergency personnel such as Police Officers and Firefighters to continue working in our City. Some procedures have been modified to help fulfill the County's protocol for minimal personal contact.

**Salaried and full-time hourly employees** - Effective beginning 5/1/2020 until further notice, all active salaried and active full-time hourly employees who can work from home will work from home. A determination of which employees can or must work from home will be made by the Department Head, subject to the approval of the City Manager. This includes Salaried employees and Full-time hourly employees. Employees are expected to perform the same volume of work that they would otherwise perform with some exceptions for Police Officers, Firefighters, and DPW Personnel who will be working rotating shifts.

Full-time hourly employees should keep track of the projects that they are working on so progress toward goals can be monitored, <https://ferndalemi.seamlessdocs.com/f/COVID19RemoteLog>. Time should be reported in the usual manner in BS&A or to your department admin.

This is a continuation of our current process.

## **LIMITATION OF ON-SITE WORK AND AFFECTED EMPLOYEES**

**Police Officers** and **Firefighters** are first responders, and as such, designated as Essential Employees. The work that **DPW** performs is essential to the continuation of City Services and **DPW workers** are also considered essential. In an effort to limit contact between individuals, these departments will be utilizing a rotational reduced staffing model as determined with the approval of the Department Head until further notice. Therefore, all active employees are expected to be available for work when scheduled or called in to cover these duties. **All overtime must be approved in advance** by your Department Head. Requests must be sent in an email outlining the specific need for overtime to your Department Head. You may not work the overtime until you receive a return email approving the overtime. If you are scheduled overtime or asked to work overtime by your Department Head, then you can work the overtime, as always. Department heads must pre-approve all overtime using this form (attach link). Your Department Heads will require you to work on professional development projects while you are on call but not on-site. If for any reason an employee is unable to work, they must notify the department according to the normal process. It is imperative that leadership can expect the person they are calling to come into work when notified.

It is important to note that workers will receive full pay only if they are ready and available for work. Some pay may be available under the EFMLA and the EPSLA. If an employee is sick for reasons not related to COVID-19 or if an employee needs a day off to handle personal affairs, the appropriate time off banks must be used. You and your Department Head should work with HR to determine appropriate use if there are any questions.

**Part-time employees** – Active Part-time employees who can work from home must work from home. A determination of how much time a part-time employee is needed to work from home will be made by the Department Head, subject to the approval of the City Manager. Employees will only be paid for time actually worked. These employees must keep a log of the work performed. The work log can be accessed at this link:

<https://ferndalemi.seamlessdocs.com/f/COVID19RemoteLog>

This is also a continuation of our current process.

## **PAY AND BENEFITS**

**Vacation / Time off Requests** - As we prepare for the summer months, employees will be requesting vacation time. The process for requesting time will be the same as it has always been. However, it is important employees understand that the Travel and Returns – Covid-19 Policy remains in effect. This policy reflects current guidance on travel as recommended by the CDC and Oakland County.\* Currently, we require that all employees returning from international or domestic travel outside of Michigan self-quarantine for 14-days. City employees will be required to use personal time, vacation time, or unpaid leave during this 14 day period. See the

policy for complete details. **We will continue to monitor CDC and Oakland County guidelines and will modify these requirements when appropriate.**

All active salaried and full-time employees will be paid their full regular straight-time wages until 5/15/2020 as long as they are available for work and/or meeting the criteria described above. It is imperative that any time not worked be coded correctly for accounting purposes. If an employee is currently on-leave or takes approved time off that is not related to the Coronavirus, they should code that time off as they always do. Time paid but not worked due to rotational staffing must be coded as Emergency Leave. Any employee on paid leave that is provided by EFMLA or EPSLA should be coded correctly. HR will work with EFMLA or EPSLA eligible employees or their supervisors to ensure proper recording.

### **Payroll example:**

You are a full-time hourly employee working from home and you normally work 40 hours in a week. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday you work 8 hours each day. On Thursday, you call in sick. On Friday, you are on call and spend 2 hours at home taking an Office 365 online tutorial for which you provide documentation to your supervisor. Your time should be coded as follow:

- Monday – 8 hours REG (as you would normally code time worked)
- Tuesday – 8 hours REG
- Wednesday – 8 hours REG
- Thursday – 8 hours (SICK U) (as you would normally code sick time)
- Friday – 6 hours Emergency Leave, 2 hours REG (DPS)

Note: Different departments have different schedules. The example above may not reflect your regularly scheduled hours.

### **Benefits:**

1. Benefits continue as usual during this time.
2. All normal benefit contributions will be deducted from an employee's bi-weekly payroll check.
3. Employees will continue to accrue vacation time.

We appreciate everyone's patience and commitment during this time. You are all valued members of our team.

- The City reserves the right to modify this program should circumstances change during the COVID-19 crises.
- All emergency situations are unique. Procedures listed in this policy are in no way meant to serve as precedent in other emergent situations.

\* Link to Oakland County Emergency Order 202-7 which includes guidelines on travel during COVID -19, <https://www.oakgov.com/covid/Pages/Health-Orders.aspx>