

INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL AND EMERGENCY LEAVE POLICY

From time to time, the public and employees in Sweetwater County will be confronted with the threat of contagious and sometimes deadly disease. The County will take proactive measures to protect the workplace in the event of an infectious disease outbreak. In such circumstances, the County will consult and rely upon information obtained from reliable sources, such as the County and State Health Officers, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other professional sources of guidance. In these circumstances, the County will strive to balance the need for public services against the risk of disease exposure to those providing the service and to those receiving services, with safety being paramount. To accomplish this, Sweetwater County has developed the following policies, practices and procedures to address employee safety, building closures and other important considerations.

Section 1: Preventing the Spread of Infection in the Workplace

- A.** Sweetwater County will ensure a clean workplace, including the regular cleaning of objects and areas frequently used, such as the bathrooms, break rooms, door handles and railings.
- B.** To prevent disease spread in the workplace and at home, Sweetwater County asks all employees to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of infectious disease in the workplace. The best strategy remains the most obvious;
 - 1. Frequent hand washing with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
 - 2. Cover your mouth whenever you sneeze or cough.
 - 3. Discard used tissue in the wastebasket.
 - 4. In the event hand washing is not possible or practical, the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be appropriate.
- C. Limiting Travel:** All nonessential travel should be avoided until further notice. Employees who travel as an essential part of their job should consult with their supervisor on appropriate actions. Business travel outside of the United States will not be authorized until further notice.
 - 1. Employees should avoid crowded public transportation when possible. Alternative scheduling options, ride-sharing resources and/or parking assistance may be provided on a case-by-case basis. Contact Human Resources for more information.
- D. Telecommuting:** Telework request shall be handled on a case-by-case basis. While not all positions will be eligible, all requests for temporary telecommuting should be submitted to your department manager for consideration.
- E. Staying Home When Ill:** During an infectious disease outbreak, it is critical that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing the following symptoms;
 - 1. Fever
 - 2. Cough
 - 3. Sore Throat
 - 4. Runny or stuffy nose
 - 5. Body aches
 - 6. Headache
 - 7. Chills
 - 8. Fatigue

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9. Currently, the CDC recommends that people with an infectious illness such as the flu remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F. or 38.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever reducing medications.

F. Requests for Medical Information and/or Documentation: If you are out sick or show symptoms of being ill, it may become necessary to request information from you and/or your health care provider. In general, we would request medical information to confirm your need to be absent, to know whether and how an absence relates to the infection, and to know that it is appropriate for you to return to work. As always, we expect and appreciate your cooperation, if and when, medical information is sought.

G. Confidentiality of Medical Information and/or Documentation: Our policy is to treat any medical information as a confidential medical record. In furtherance of this policy, any disclosure of medical information is in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel and government officials as required by law.

H. Social Distancing: In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, Sweetwater County may implement these social distancing guidelines to minimize the spread of the disease among the staff. During the workday, employees are requested to;

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1. Avoid meeting people face-to-face. Employees are encouraged to use the telephone, online conferencing, e-mail or instant messaging to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building.
2. If a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable, minimize the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one yard from each other if possible; avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands.
3. Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone nonessential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions.
4. Do not congregate in workrooms, pantries, copier rooms or other areas where people socialize.
5. Bring lunch and eat at your desk or away from others (avoid lunchrooms and crowded restaurants).
6. Encourage members and others to request information and orders via phone and e-mail in order to minimize person-to-person contact. Have the orders, materials and information ready for fast pick-up or delivery.
7. Avoid public transportation (walk, cycle, drive a car) or go early or late to avoid rush-hour crowding on public transportation.
8. Avoid recreational or other leisure classes, meetings, activities, etc., where employees might come into contact with contagious people.

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Section 2: Personnel Who Have Been Infected or Exposed to an Infectious Disease

- A. Any employee exposed to a contagious disease shall be eligible for up to 80 hours of paid emergency leave in accordance with the following;
1. The employee has a current diagnosis of an infectious disease.
 2. The employee is quarantined (including self-imposed quarantine), at the instruction of a health care provider, employer or government official to prevent the spread of an infectious disease.
 3. The employee is caring for another person who has an infectious disease or who is under a quarantine related to management of an infectious disease.
 4. The employee is caring for a child or other individual who is unable to care of themselves due to the infectious disease-related closing of their school, child-care facility, or other care program.

Section 3: At-Risk Employees

- A. Employees who have not been infected or do not have a known exposure, but are determined to be at a higher risk, due to existing health conditions, as determined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), may be allowed to work from home if feasible. Supervisors should be creative in finding ways for employees to continue to be productive.
- B. If the employee's job is such that working from home is not feasible, employee will be provided paid emergency leave up to a maximum of 80 hours.
- C. If employee is unable to return to work or work from home after exhausting emergency leave, the employee may use his/her own accrued leave, including compensatory time.
- D. Requests to work from home must be approved by employee's department head or elected official.