

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 25, 2021

To: Executive Branch Agency Leadership & HR Directors

From: DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Secretary of Administration

Subject: UPDATED State Agency Guidance - COVID-19 Delta

Unfortunately, after less than a month since the last update, the continued spread of the Delta variant has again forced us to re-assess several aspects of the previous guidance due to this far more contagious strain. Therefore, effective immediately, the following provisions are to be implemented by all agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction.

Remote Work

All agencies under the authority of the Governor are hereby directed to resume remote work for all State of Kansas employees who can work remotely and are effective in executing the duties of their jobs in a remote work environment. **This transition to remote work may begin as soon as feasible but must be completed no later than the close of business on Friday, September 3, 2021.**

If an employee was previously able to effectively work remotely, at any point during the pandemic, they should do so again. If an employee is unable to work remotely due to the nature of their job, all necessary precautions and COVID-mitigation measures should be utilized to keep them safe and State of Kansas offices open to the public. Onsite staffing should be limited to only those necessary to safely conduct agency operations.

This remote work model will remain in place through October 4, 2021. This decision will be reassessed in late September, at which time a determination will be made as to whether employees will be asked to return to State offices or remain on remote work.

Masks

Masks or other facial coverings will continue to be required in any State of Kansas facilities under the jurisdiction of the Governor, and the requirement applies to fully vaccinated Executive Branch employees as well as to those who remain unvaccinated. **This requirement is no longer based on the level of community transmission within a county but is effective statewide throughout all such facilities under the jurisdiction of the Governor.** This requirement applies to all employees as well as anyone else entering such premises, including vendors, visitors or any other individual wishing to enter such a facility.

Individuals are required to wear masks or other face coverings in all common areas, such as break rooms, elevators, hallways, restrooms and stairwells, or otherwise when unable to maintain social distancing. Employees who are required to work onsite are not required to wear masks or other facial coverings when they are alone or at least six feet away from others in their own workspaces. Otherwise, if there is any doubt as to whether a mask should be worn in a particular situation, agencies and employees should err on the side of being overly careful and wear a mask.

Notice of this requirement will be posted at entrances to all State of Kansas buildings and public facing offices throughout the state, including satellite facilities and offices. Additionally, as appropriate, agencies should make

facial masks available (free of charge) to employees and visitors at all appropriate entrances, especially those accessed by the public.

Mask Exemptions

Children under the age of 2, anyone who is unable to wear a mask or facial covering due to a medical condition, persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, or communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication, and persons for whom wearing a face mask would create a risk to the person related to their work are exempt from this requirement. Exceptions for other reasons will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Social Distancing

Agencies should continue to take all necessary steps to ensure that at least six feet of space can be maintained within offices. This may include the minor reconfiguration or reorganization of floorplans or workstations, as well as the incorporation of engineering controls such as physical barriers like plexiglass screens, where appropriate. Signs and floor markings will continue to be used throughout State of Kansas buildings to reinforce the importance of social distancing.

Public Facing Operations

Those agencies with public facing operations are encouraged to, at the discretion of the agency head, re-institute mitigation measures that were previously utilized during the pandemic, such as scheduling “by appointment only” or making allowances for virtual as opposed to in-person interactions. All such measures should have as minimal an impact or inconvenience on customers and the public as possible. Masks or other facial coverings are mandatory for the public or other visitors, regardless of the individual’s vaccination status.

Onsite staffing should be limited to only those necessary to safely conduct agency operations.

Meetings & Other Gatherings

In-person gatherings should be avoided, and virtual meeting tools should continue to be used whenever possible to limit in-person meetings. If meetings are in-person, social distancing of at least six feet must be adhered to and if that is not possible, the meeting should be virtual.

Travel

Agencies are encouraged to limit travel to only that required for the continued operations of the agency. Travel to any location listed at the following link may only be approved due to an emergency or extreme circumstance: <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/175/Travel-Exposure-Related-Isolation-Quaran>

There are no restrictions on employees traveling outside of work, but employees who travel to or through any location identified at the above referenced link are subject to quarantine unless they are fully vaccinated. The leave to be used for that quarantine depends on the circumstances of the travel, as indicated in the section on leave in previously issued guidance.

If not specifically referenced in this document, all other provisions of the guidance in the memorandum dated July 29, 2021, remain in effect.