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MEMORANDUM

PERSONNEL MEMO 20-02

To: Constitutional Officers
Cabinet Secretaries
Agency Heads
Human Resource (HR) Administrators

From: Gerina D. Whethers, Secretary

Date: March 13, 2020

Re: **HR Protocols for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Agency Staffing**

To assure consistency in our policies, protocols, and HR applications across the enterprise, and as a follow-up to Governor Beshear's Executive Order 2020-215, declaring a State of Emergency in response to 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), please be advised of the following:

For the purposes of maintaining social distance under the CDC guidelines, and to promote the health and well-being of our state employees to reduce the community spread of disease, **beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, but no later than Friday, March 20, 2020**, agencies shall reduce on-site staffing by **up to fifty percent (50%)** during the State of Emergency where duties can be performed remotely. Not all job functions may be performed remotely and this policy does not apply to those functions. In those circumstances, additional unused office space should be equipped for use to achieve social distancing. This protocol is focused on locations where office space is predominately in cubicle form. In implementing this up to 50% telecommuting protocol the following conditions should be considered:

- Essential services must be maintained, whether by on-site or telecommuting staff;
- Ensure that on-site and telecommuting staffing assignments are administered in a fair and equitable manner without discrimination;
- To maintain essential functions, agencies are reminded to consider implementation of their Continuity of Operations Plan;
- In implementing the up to 50% telecommuting protocol, and as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), agencies should maintain social distancing of all individuals. Workstations should be separated by six (6) feet, and individuals should avoid crowds. Where possible, staff should rotate telecommuting and on-site staffing assignments. For example:
 - Team A telecommutes for weeks 1 and 2. Team B telecommutes for weeks 3 and 4.

- Consider staggering duty hours and shift assignment of employees. Managers are encouraged to be flexible when developing work schedules while ensuring essential services are maintained;
- Agencies should require employees/managers to provide a tracking mechanism (i.e. daily or weekly status reports) to ensure work product accountability;
- Please provide special consideration to employees who self-identify as falling within CDC guidelines for high risk groups when determining telecommuting assignments. Neither HR nor supervisors should assume or select an employee for telecommuting based on any assumed or known risk categories; and
- During the State of Emergency, staff should continue to take appropriate steps to routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, copiers, elevator buttons, countertops, and doorknobs.

The Personnel Cabinet is available to provide guidance and assistance to agencies with implementation of this directive. Requests through the Personnel Cabinet to go above 50% telecommuting may be granted if the agency can perform its essential duties or if health, safety and welfare require it.

This directive is in effect until further notice. It should be liberally construed and we encourage flexibility. Please work with COT for technology needs to implement this protocol.

For additional information about the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), please review the Personnel Cabinet Memorandum dated March 10, 2020, and visit www.kycovid19.ky.gov.