EMERGENCY EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC POLICY

Promulgated: May 22, 2020

Application

This policy is promulgated by the Office of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield and applies to clergy and employees who minister and work at the Bishop Maguire Pastoral Center, Diocesan offices, Cemeteries and the Chancery offices.*

Implementation

The Diocese of Springfield has complied with government guidelines since March 13, 2020 resulting in the closure of our churches and offices.

Governor Baker has recently updated guidance on the COVID19 closure of businesses that has set May 26, 2020 as the date that some non-essential businesses may be allowed to reopen. Additional guidance from the Federal and State government will be taken into consideration with any subsequent updates to this policy. Policies have been developed by the Diocese of Springfield, Catholic Schools Office around distance learning in our Catholic Schools and the Catholic Cemeteries Corporation has additional policies in place to continue to serve our community throughout the pandemic.

As of Phase 1, we are allowing up to 25% of our staffing occupancy levels to return to the office, and Human Resources is coordinating this with the Diocesan Directors. For now, this is a gradual reopening of 20 people a day. Your supervisors will communicate directly with you regarding your return to the
office. Many essential operational personnel have been working on staggered
shifts since March 13, and so the actual numbers of additional individuals
returning to the office in Phase 1 will be small. If you have any concerns please
contact your Director or Cathi Farr, Human Resources, 452-0683.

The Phases of the Governor’s plan will accelerate depending on the statistics
surrounding the number of new cases of COVID-19. You can review his updates
on the mass.gov website.

Our Churches are also reopening gradually, limited to 40% of their occupancy
rate. We are looking forward to small community worship and receiving Eucharist
at our parishes.

We are going to maintain a “no visitor” policy without an appointment and keep
those numbers to the lowest level possible.

**Cleanliness**

The Diocese has enhanced our procedures with respect to routine
environmental cleaning. We have consulted with a professional industrial
engineer and are following CDC and OSHA guidelines. However, this situation
calls for all of us to be aware and willing to pitch in. If you see something, say
something.

Supplies are on hand for departments to participate in cleaning their high
“touch” areas and pay special attention to take initiative to clean them with a
sanitizing wipe. This includes daily cleaning of your workstation, including your
desk surface, keyboard, telephone, etc. Hand Sanitizer, in addition to the
dispensers, will be provided for the workplace. As many of you know, these
are in short supply so please leave them at your workplace.

We strongly recommend the following:

- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- Avoiding touching the eyes, nose and mouth
- Put mask and take off mask within CDC guidelines and wash masks daily.
- Covering a cough or sneeze with a tissue and immediately throwing the tissue in the trash.
- Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

Using the copiers, department faxes. You can use hand sanitizer after and/or wash your hands.
**Staffing**

- All employees, and visitors, including contractors will be a temperature checked upon first entering a facility. Initially with low staffing levels, employees will report to HR during Phase I. In the future with increased staffing levels there will be three stations at the Pastoral Center, 1st floor reception (for employees on 1st floor and all visitors including vendors); 2nd floor switchboard (for 2nd floor employees); 3rd floor HR Office (3rd floor employees). In addition all employees and visitors are required to wear masks in the common areas. All visitors and employees will be temperature checked prior to entry at the Chancery. Please review the Health Assessment questionnaire attached. Employees will be asked to verify this information in writing on @14 day schedule.
- We are aware that public and private schools have suspended all in-classroom instruction for the remainder of the current academic year. Employees who have young children are encouraged to work with their supervisors to identify alternative work schedules, for example: different working hours may be accommodated.
- Supervisors are required to provide the HR Department with timesheets Monday morning of the following week. For payroll weeks, larger departments, Cemeteries, Catholic Communications and Catholic Charities, spreadsheets to HR Payroll by Monday at 4:00 p.m. for timely submission to Checkwriters.
- Any employee who becomes infected with the virus will be required to follow their doctor’s orders and quarantine. Directors will inform Human Resources immediately upon learning of anyone with the virus, or related circumstances. We want to Be Safe, Work Safe.

**Remote Working Arrangements**

While remote working arrangements are generally the exception rather than the norm, as not all positions are not conducive to remote work, the Diocese has been flexible in light of the pandemic situation and taken measures to allow employees to temporarily work remotely. Positions with primary job duties that
can be primarily, or for a designated period, effectively performed remotely will be given consideration. You should discuss with your supervisor and if in agreement this arrangement must be documented by completing a Telework Request Form which you can request from Human Resources (HR)

Working remotely involves IT services from time to time and these will continue to remain available by contacting the Departmental Director who initiates a service ticket with HR, Mark Dupont or Colleen DiMarzio (depending on your floor). Any IT equipment services are done at 65 Elliot Street. IT contracted personnel do not come to homes. The Diocese will not modify anyone’s personal computer.

**Leaves of Absence**

- Employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day will be sent home and advised to contact their own health care provider for evaluation as appropriate.
- Paycheck Protection Act will provide us the ability to compensate (until June 30, 2020) employees for any COVID19 related illness and employees will be required to supply documentation prior to return to the workplace, and complete FMLA paperwork. Your supervisor will work with you and HR to assess your need for any accommodation prior your return to work.
- After June 30, 2020 employees who are ill with non-COVID19 related illness, should use their available sick time. Anyone without sick leave should submit a request for an unpaid leave. Any non-COVID19 serious illness lasting beyond three (3) days will be treated under the current FMLA policy.
- Symptomatic employees or those who have a family member with symptoms may also qualify for job protected Federal FMLA.
Wellness Resources

- Employees who participate in the Anthem Blue Cross Health Plan have access to Web MD and their staff of trained wellness coaches through the website and are able to schedule coaching calls of 30 minutes in duration.
- We are installing an Employee Assistance Program that will assist employees with stress management and other situations that can cause stress. Additional Information will be forthcoming. Your health is important to us.
- Anthem Blue Cross is covering the costs of COVID19 testing for members enrolled in the plan and other testing and treatment that may arise from COVID19 at 100%.
- Flexible Spending Accounts through Checkwriters can be used for an expanded list of products. You must be enrolled in any one of our health care offering to have a FSA account. www.fcastore.com has a FSA Eligibility List and accepts your FSA MasterCard

Direct questions regarding any of the above to the Human Resources department, 452-0683 or 452-0691.

New procedures in the workplace

- You will find notices posted in common areas regarding the appropriate distancing or use of that space. Please adhere to guidelines; they are for your protection and that of co-workers and visitors.
- Employees should contact the Human Resources Department and their Supervisor if unable to work due to fever or a need to self-quarantine.
- We want to avoid gossip and rumors. ADA regulations do not allow us to divulge personal medical information. We cannot ask employees to tell co-workers if diagnosed with the virus. It is their personal choice whether or not they wish to divulge that information. Be sensitive to employees who
may share information directly with you or your team by not spreading details outside the department.

- If we are aware someone in the workplace has become diagnosed with COVID19 we will take the appropriate measures to clean the environment thoroughly with CDC sanitization methods and OSHA approved methods.
- Departments have differing client service needs and will coordinate with the Pandemic Response Team if other guidelines or actions are necessary, and communicate to you.
- Hand washing posters are over every sink in the building
- How to effectively wear a mask is also posted
- Supervisors are encouraged to communicate with all employees the importance of maintaining business operations, and that employees are required to report to work as scheduled. Employees may continue to request sick time, personal and or vacation time for non-work time.

**COMMON AREAS – Hand Sanitizer dispensers are on the outside door frames at ea break room**

- Employees may not congregate in the kitchen/break rooms. Rules are be posted that indicate:
  - Please wash your hands prior to using microwave or toaster oven
  - Break room is for food prep or coffee/tea only
  - No more than two people will be allowed at any time
  - Use your own utensils, mugs, plates, etc. and keep in your office. No storage of coffee cups or utensils in the break room Please bring what you need and keep it at your desk. This includes condiments, salt/pepper etc.
  - Any food, milk or creamers brought in from home and put in the refrigerator must be in a bag with your name and date clearly visible, or they will be disposed of.
  - No bulk sized condiments can be stored in the refrigerator. (no gallons of milk, etc)
• Wipe down touched surfaces with sanitizer wipes provided when done.

• Only One person is allowed in the bathroom at a time. There are signs that say Occupied and flip over to Unoccupied for your convenience and safety.

• If you have a favorite mug, in the kitchen please pick it up your first day back to the office, or have a co-worker, or supervisor grab it for you. We will be purging the kitchens of these items. Mugs will be boxed in the kitchen for retrieval.

**Meetings – During Pandemic Restricted Working Conditions**

• *all leaders are encouraged to conduct all internal meetings via telephone, conference call or video conference and limit 1:1 meetings*

• if meetings are necessary, leaders are advised to limit meeting attendees to the minimum number required and abide by the CDC’s social distancing and mask guidelines in effect at the time.

• The Bishop Marshall Center will be available during Phase I to accommodate meetings with government issued pandemic protocols adhered to.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask. If you see unsafe practices, say something to your supervisor or call HR. We are a faith-based community committed individually and collectively to fulfilling our mission in support of the Diocese. “It takes a Village” is a common saying, and We are a Village!