

STATE OF TEXAS §
 COUNTY OF POLK §



BY MOTION MADE AND SECONDED IN AN OPEN MEETING OF THE POLK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT ON THE 24TH DAY OF MARCH 2020, THE MEMBERS OF THE COURT DO HEREBY APPROVE THE FOLLOWING RULES AND GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK.

In light of the ongoing global coronavirus, now known more specifically as COVID-19, outbreak, the Polk County Commissioners Court resolves to promote the safety and wellbeing of our employees and their families, as well as the general public.

The health and safety of our employees, their families and our citizens is our number one goal during this outbreak. COVID-19 is a respiratory virus with symptoms that are similar to influenza or 'the flu.' As of the date of this court order, COVID-19 continues to spread and new clusters have developed throughout the United States, including Texas.

1. Employee Personal Travel to Areas with Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

Employees engaging in personal travel should carefully consider their plans and monitor the evolving health situations prior to traveling. While we recognize that personal travel decisions are your choice, we urge you to carefully consider those decisions to avoid personal risk to you or your families. In particular, be aware of possible travel and screening restrictions and that possible incidences of exposure in restricted or high-risk areas may result in quarantine procedures in those regions. Further, we ask that supervisors refer employees to Human Resources who are returning from travel, whether in or outside of the United States, so we can ensure proper return to work procedures are followed.

2. Tips to Minimize Business Disruptions

- a) Ensure employee contact information is up to date.
- b) Have backup plan for staffing if employee (or employees) fall ill.
- c) Maintain a list of essential personnel and ensure that Polk County Office of Emergency Management and Department of Human Resources has a copy.
- d) Have plenty of disinfecting wipes/spray, tissues & hand sanitizer for employee and public use.
- e) Confirm to your staff that safety/health is our primary concern.
- f) Reinforce hand washing & housekeeping with all staff members.
- g) Elected Officials/Department Heads are encourage to send sick employees home; short-term inconvenience is better than widespread illness.

3. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- a) The ADA gives an employee the right to privacy in his/her medical condition.
- b) If the employee informs the supervisor that he or she has a communicable disease that will affect his or her performance on the job, Human Resources can require a medical exam or health certification to confirm the illness, just as it can with any other ADA disability, and the employee will be responsible for making the appointment with their physician, the claim would be filed on the employee's insurance and any expense would be paid by the employee.
- c) If an employee is exposed to someone who is a 'presumptive positive' or tests positive for COVID-19, the employee should be sent home until the person's test results are returned as negative or until their quarantine expires, whichever is first. Contact HR for specific instruction.
- d) If an employee does not tell his or her supervisor that he or she has a communicable disease, the employer's options are much more limited. Suspicion of a communicable disease is not enough to justify inquiry or a medical exam.

- e) However, if the employee reports to work with a wheezing cough, or complains of chills and aches, the supervisor shall direct the employee to go to his/her doctor and/or local health department. Then contact Human Resources. Again, the employee will be responsible for making the appointment with their physician, the claim would be filed on the employee's insurance and any expense would be paid by the employee. Note that until further notice, the Texas Association of Counties will waive cost-sharing for COVID-19 testing to employees and covered dependents.
- f) Decline to give specifics about employee's medical condition to other employees.
- g) Polk County is permitted to disclose needed protected health information to a public health authority, such as the CDC or a state or local health department, that is authorize by law to collect or receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (Source: Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, February 2020)

4. Paid Leave of Absence

Up to 10 workdays of Paid Administrative Leave will be provided to each Polk County employee to the extent that the employee is unable to work (or telework) due to a need for leave because:

- a) The employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19.
- b) The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
- c) The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
- d) The employee is caring for an individual who is subject to an order as described in subparagraph (a) or has been advised as described in paragraph (b).
- e) The employee is caring for a son or daughter of such employee if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, or the child care provider of such son or daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.
- f) The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor.

Polk County has a strong commitment to safety and the overall health and well-being of all employees and their families. We will continue to evolve our policies as this outbreak develops.

Thank you for your support and understanding as we work together as a team through this situation.

**Adopted by the Polk County Commissioners Court
in a Regular Session duly posted and held on March 24, 2020**

Sydney Murphy
County Judge

Bob Willis
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Ronnie Vincent
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Milt Purvis
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Tommy Overstreet
Commissioner, Precinct 4