Congregational Staff Guidelines for Returning to Work during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Employees must adhere to an On-Site Health Screening Protocol that must be established by congregation's Health Team) before returning to work or entering company-provided transportation.

Employees must not come to work if they suspect they are sick or if they have symptoms such as fever or difficulty breathing, or have been in contact with other people who have any confirmed respiratory illness or disease in the past 7 days.

Section I: Minimizing Workplace Anxiety for Staff

- Ensure you communicate with your staff before you expect them to return to work that their safety and good health are of primary importance to the congregation. Good communication and cooperation will help to address fears. At no time will anyone be expected to return to work if he or she is ill.

- Prepare them in advance for modifications that will exist upon their arrival to your facility in advance.

Advance communications should include some of the following:

- Employees must adhere to the scheduled dates and times of attendance as per the church administrator in order to ensure staggered attendance does not exceed mandated limitations for Phases II, III and IV, including visitors, volunteers.

- New protocols for entering the building such as changes to entry location, expectations to utilize hand-sanitizing stations once inside the facility.

- What items the church will provide to them as employees, such as masks, latex gloves, disinfectant wipes, and hand sanitizer.

- What items the church will not provide employees, such as personal items for eating their lunch or snacks such as utensils, cups.

- Instructions for bringing personal equipment, including laptops, and sanitation requirements upon entry.

- Site changes to the work environment including relocation of office equipment, desks and workstations, any modifications to space that will alter expectations.

Section II: Employee Arrival to Facility Procedures

- Please practice workplace hygiene and infection control practices when in the facility, including frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, utilize hand sanitizer and wipes in common areas.

- Employees will not be able to bring family or friends into the building during their work hours.

- Staff are expected to arrive as per the schedule provided to them prior to their arrival time in order to stagger the number of persons in the facility. This includes volunteers.

- Employees are expected to adhere to prescribed social distancing standards at all times in the facility or grounds. There is a 6 Feet Office Protocol will be utilized in order to keep a healthy distance from one another to put safety first.

- Employees may have restrictions on access to various areas in the facility in order to minimize use and the necessity to re-sanitize every surface after each use.

- Please remove non-essential items from your workspace or desk, but rather enclosed in cabinets or drawers.

- If utilizing a shared workspace, disinfect the all surfaces upon your arrival each day.

Collaboration Tools

- Disinfectant wipes should be accessible for use with shared items such as copy machines, office phones, and whiteboards. Please use the wipes with each use.

- Do not require employees to use a shared sign-in sheet during this time. Provide individual forms for reporting, or use alternative processes.

Section III: Protocols for Safety

Communicate if you will perform temperature checks for employees, particularly if they exhibit symptoms of a virus. If so, who will provide them, or will it be a third party.

Monitor and plan for absenteeism. Require sick staff and volunteers to stay home.

- Require staff to stay home when sick, even without documentation from doctors. Use flexibility, when possible, to allow staff to stay home to care for sick family or household members or care for children in the event of school dismissals. Develop flexible telework policies as appropriate.

- Identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff to help ensure that essential jobs will be covered if people must miss work. Prepare a contingency plan for staff.

- Identify jobs that can be performed at home. A system using emailed or telephoned messages to homebound staff and volunteers can be used to relay work assignments.

- Set up flexible work hours and schedules (e.g., staggered shifts) for essential jobs to limit the number of people who must gather at the workplace at one time.

- Determine what level of staff and volunteer absenteeism will disrupt continuity of services.

- Review the usual absenteeism patterns at your organization among staff, volunteers, and regular members and people you serve.

- Alert local health officials about large increases in absenteeism, particularly if absences appear due to respiratory illnesses (like the common cold or the "flu," which have symptoms similar to COVID-19).