



M E M O R A N D U M

To: Heads of State Government

From: Timothy K. Fleming *T.K.F.*
Chief of Staff & Executive Secretary

Date: March 12, 2020

Re: State Workforce Readiness for COVID-19

As the United States experiences the spread of COVID-19, it is important to keep our workforce healthy in order to maintain state operations. One of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of this virus is social distancing.

Agencies should immediately implement telework options for staff who can telework without interruption to their duties. For those employees who are not able to telework, agencies should increase work schedule flexibility to reduce the number of employees on-site at any one time.

If your agency has public-facing employees, please encourage citizens to utilize your agency's web-based resources to avoid interpersonal contact at office locations.

Additionally, to maintain employee health, agencies should suspend non-essential travel. This includes travel to conferences, particularly those held out-of-state, training, site visits, and any other non-essential activities. Agencies should also utilize options for virtual meetings or teleconferences in lieu of in-person meetings when possible.

Finally, please ensure that your employees know it is important to stay home if they or someone in their household is ill. Employees may use any available accumulated leave to remain at home while they or a member of their household recovers. If an employee has exhausted their leave, they may request to have previously forfeited leave restored. Employees should return to work, only when they have met the minimum requirements of CDC guidance.

Agency heads may also establish voluntary leave donation programs within their agency that would allow for other staff members to donate leave to impacted employees in order to reduce any financial hardship that leave without pay may have on an individual. If no other leave options are available, employees should be notified that they may take "authorized leave without pay" without negatively impacting their continued participation in the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP).

I appreciate your assistance in taking proactive measures to ensure the health of our workforce and the safety of Georgia's citizens while ensuring continuity for the important business of the state.