

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>POLICY DIRECTIVE</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>PROCEDURAL DIRECTIVE</b>
Subject <b>CDOT Emergency Work From Home and Office Protocol During the COVID-19 Response</b>		Number <b>1230.5</b>
Effective 3/16/2020	Supersedes N/A	Originating Office <b>Office of the Executive Director</b>

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide interim guidance to optimize the performance of all CDOT functions during a period where the agency is responding to COVID-19. The policy is focused on ensuring that: all agency functions remain open for business; protecting the continuity of all operations, including critical safety services related to operation of Colorado’s roadways; and protecting the physical and mental wellness of roughly 3,300 CDOT employees and their families and communities. To that end, this document outlines interim protocols for telework and work-from-home, as well as social distancing protocols for employees working in the office environment, that ensure these goals are met.

## II. AUTHORITY

Executive Director, pursuant to § 43-1-103 and Sec.42-105 (c), C. R. S., following guidance from the Office of the Governor, Department of Personnel Administration, and the Department of Public Health and Environment.

## III. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to all CDOT divisions, branches, regions, and offices of CDOT, any consultants and contractors that work at CDOT facilities, and any guests or visitors to CDOT facilities.

## IV. DEFINITIONS

**Social Distancing:** Social distancing means remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible.

**Work From Home:** Like flexplace- The practice of working at home or at an alternate site instead of physically traveling to a central work place. For the purposes of this directive, work from home may be implemented or rescinded by the Executive Director for the purposes of keeping CDOT employees as safe as possible, while fulfilling the department’s critical business functions.

## V. OBJECTIVES

### A. Ensuring that all agency functions remain open for business

- Provide certainty to CDOT staff and customers to optimize productivity during a period of global uncertainty;
- Normalize work from home protocols during the COVID-19 response to help facilitate consistency and maximize time spent on work itself.

- Reduce stigma associated with working from home so that employees who need to for specific health reasons continue to be regarded as valued and productive members of the CDOT community during the COVID-19 response.

## **B. Protecting the continuity of operations**

- Aim to reduce probability of COVID-19 exposure among critical employees who cannot perform their functions from home by increasing telework among employees whose functions can be performed remotely as a way to expand social distancing;
- Decrease the number of people working in larger facilities at any given time to reduce the likelihood of having to temporarily vacate business locations due to exposure;
- Ensure that work-from-home protocols are implemented in a calm and intentional manner to avoid a “shock” in the event that any facilities do need to temporarily vacate for health reasons.

## **C. Protect the health and wellness of CDOT employees as well as their families and dependents**

- Provide clear protocols for employees who are in a vulnerable or medical situation, or care for someone else in a vulnerable situation.
- Provide greater flexibility for parents or caretakers of school aged children.
- Address mental health considerations associated with fear of contagion.
- Support overall social distancing efforts to limit large convening and contact.

# **VI. PROCEDURES**

## **A. Telework and Work From Home**

- Many functions at CDOT can be performed remotely. For these functions, managers shall approve employee requests to work from home during the COVID-19 response, provided that employees comply with accountability and performance guidelines detailed in this guidance, which includes developing interim telework schedules with each employee. Importantly, working from home is *not* leave, and accountability for delivery of CDOT functions during telework is of the utmost importance to ensure that CDOT is delivering results for the citizens of Colorado.
- Managers may, on a case-by-case basis identify other functions that can be performed remotely. Approval for requests that deviate from previously identified emergency telework functions should be submitted to division heads (RTD or supervising executive team manager) for approval.
- Managers must be familiar with and follow the defined parameters consistent with guidance from DPA (FAQ #11) which states that, “if an employee can work from home with minimal impact to business operations, they should coordinate with their supervisor first to determine the appropriate time to begin working from home.”

## **B. Accountability for Performance When Working From Home**

In order to ensure that employees and their managers are accountable for performance while working from home, CDOT managers must take a number of steps when an employee transitions

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to partially or completely working from home during the COVID-19 response. These steps include:

- **Documenting that the employee is transitioning to partial or complete work-from-home protocol:** a central list of employees working from home will be maintained by HR. Managers must submit employee information to Kristi Gitkind via [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSew1PjV2nzRB6CVT7TQB7POruzQImNuh\\_0Uxfsc0DivqCIPg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSew1PjV2nzRB6CVT7TQB7POruzQImNuh_0Uxfsc0DivqCIPg/viewform?usp=sf_link)
- **Following DPA protocols if transition to telework is related to health issues that could impact other employees:** there is a specific health related reason that could be relevant to the health of other employees (e.g. quarantine order or symptoms, please document those reasons), please document those reasons consistent with DPA protocols. Please note that a recent executive order has suspended the requirement for doctor's notes following 3 days or more of absence due to sick leave, but that employees are required to fill out a self-certification form before returning to the office.
- **Documenting any changes to standard work shift (e.g. to manage childcare responsibilities):** managers should document if they are approving employee requests to shift their workday hours, and why the shift was needed (e.g. childcare responsibilities). Managers must keep in mind the need to maintain continuity during normal workday hours when approving changes to hours worked and balancing schedule changes across the employees on their teams.
- **Keeping comprehensive records of hours worked from home versus in the office:** managers should track hours that employees work from home versus hours in the office, as well as functions performed during different work periods. Reports should identify hours for which VPN access was needed in order to help monitor VPN capacity needs.
- **Tracking results:** managers should track employee work product using HR template.
- **Setting employees up for success while working from home:** managers should work with employees to identify tasks that will be conducive to working from home, to help them optimize productivity during this period of time. For example, it may be a good time to work on policy updates, documentation requirements, online trainings, and other activities that are conducive to telework environments.

### C. Social Distancing at CDOT

As noted above, one benefit of providing telework/work from home options to more employees is that it will limit the density of gatherings in the work environment and help limit possible incidences of exposure for employees who cannot work from home. For ongoing functions within the office environment, CDOT is taking a number of measures to increase social distancing, including:

- **Limiting in-person meetings and trainings that create physical contact between maintenance and operations and other mission-critical teams:** Given the unusual circumstances created by COVID-19, CDOT is suspending trainings and in-person gatherings to limit the possibility of contagion between teams, many of whom work in patrol sites with only a small group of people. Meetings (e.g. superintendents meetings) will be held virtually for the time being, and some trainings will be deferred until the summer or fall. Division Directors must receive approval from Executive Leadership for any core function trainings

needed during this time. Such a request must include a plan for social distancing and maintaining a clean and safe environment.

- **Delaying truck roadeos, employee appreciation events, and other large gatherings to protect the health of employees:** The state is temporarily limiting large gatherings, especially those above 250 people. Larger events will thus be deferred until the summer. In the interim, CDOT will look to other opportunities to show employee appreciation and to support staff.
- **Shifting to meetings that are partially or fully remote, where possible:** wherever possible, meetings should include capabilities for remote participation, both to limit the density of gatherings and to fully include those who are working remotely. When booking rooms for in-person meetings, be cognizant of the number of people participating and select a location where participants can sit 3-6 feet apart from one another. Try to limit meetings to in-person participation of 10 or fewer. If the meeting needs to be larger, try to shift some or all of it to remote participation.
- **Holding board, commission, and stakeholder meetings remotely.** CDOT is shifting public meetings to remote during the COVID-19 response. The Attorney General's office is providing guidance on how to ensure compliance with open meeting rules. Please consult with Herman Stockinger if you have inquiries on how to shift board and commission meetings to remote. Please note that project-based meetings (Eg, NEPA public hearings, community meetings etc), should also be shifted to remote (Eg telephone town halls) for the time being.
- **Non-essential travel is restricted for at least the next 30 days:** As a general rule, CDOT is temporarily suspending out of state travel, using discretion provided by DPA. Employees should consult with their supervisor if they believe an exception is needed. These will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Please note that employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with CDC travel guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html> for situational awareness of how to best protect public health and safety during the COVID-19 response.
- **Out-of-state consultant visits:** We value our partners, whatever state they are from. However, until further notice, please schedule meetings with our out-of-state consulting partners via teleconference or video conference.

Please note that all are subject to CDC and CDPHE protocols for personal wellbeing and protecting the wellbeing of others. If an employee is asked to stay in quarantine or isolation, that employee must stay home. Employees who are not feeling well or are exhibiting symptoms should stay home, seek medical care if appropriate, and comply with all guidance provided by DPA regarding protocols for sick leave and family medical leave.

CDOT managers are performing an analysis of redundancy capabilities across the agency and within geographic proximity (Eg nearby maintenance patrols) to determine individuals and groups with the training and skill sets to substitute for one another in the event of health related absences.

#### **D. Maintaining Healthy Workplaces**

A number of additional protocols will be put in place, aimed at creating a healthy and supportive work environment during a challenging period of time. These include:

- **More frequent cleaning of restrooms and work surfaces with disinfectant:** all regions have been asked to increase their supply of disinfectant and to put in place interim protocols for additional cleaning of key surfaces.
- **Establishing clear protocols for sanitizing light and heavy duty equipment before and after use:** CDOT will provide clear protocols for which surfaces should be sanitized after equipment use, and for ensuring that proper sanitation products are available in equipment including plows, loaders, attenuators, other heavy equipment, as well as light trucks and passenger cars in the CDOT fleet.
- **Avoiding open food in the office:** while sharing snacks and home cooked treats in common areas is often a highlight of our shared office experience, it is important to be extra careful about the spread of germs during this emergency. Employees are asked not to leave open food into the office for the time being. However, teams will be allocated some additional employee appreciation budget to provide healthy, sealed snacks for those working in offices during this time. Please use your best judgment if ordering-in for meals. For example, if you offer a pizza at the command center during a snowstorm, wash your hands and don't touch your neighbor's slice when you retrieve your own!
- **Let's go business casual!** One of the impacts of social distancing is that many of us probably have fewer public meetings and speaking events. So, let's dress down a bit so everyone in the office can be a little more comfortable.

These guidelines will likely be supplemented by additional internal guidance as well as protocols from DPA and CDPHE. CDOT EMT will continue to provide up-to-date information as it becomes available, and encourage all managers and team leaders to communicate regularly with their teams to ensure that information is distributed throughout the organization and that questions are elevated, and can be answered, quickly.

## VI. IMPORTANT EXTERNAL RESOURCE LINKS

- CDPHE FAQs: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vSMeOLVZJs9LZRxy6eaYNFXUtBAM7GTnYbbnDCd94HFs5vwLVG7Nur3Cw62T8xOw44v\\_2KNTk8epAZH/pub](https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vSMeOLVZJs9LZRxy6eaYNFXUtBAM7GTnYbbnDCd94HFs5vwLVG7Nur3Cw62T8xOw44v_2KNTk8epAZH/pub)
- DPA FAQs: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dhr/covid-19-personnel-information>

## VII. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This Directive shall become effective immediately upon signature, and shall be implemented by CDOT's Executive Management Team and Appointing Authorities.

## VIII. REVIEW DATE

This Procedural Directive shall be reviewed and updated as continued guidance is provided by the Governor, DPA, CDPHE, and the CDOT Executive Director.

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Shoshana Lew  
Executive Director

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Date of Approval

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**Appendix “A”**

**Appendix “B”**