

# Updated Message to all City Staff from the City Manager and Chief People Officer: Update on COVID-19

As you may have heard, the Province has declared a state of emergency in Ontario and is closing many services and businesses. The health and safety of our employees is of paramount importance to the City and we will continue to take all precautions necessary to keep you safe and healthy. The City is also committed to supporting the vulnerable communities requiring support throughout this time. Following the advice of the City's Medical Officer of Health to increase social distancing, the City has decided to scale back and/or modify delivery of all non-essential services until April 5, 2020.

Essential and/or critical services that will remain operational are those that:

- are required to meet legislative requirements
- support employee and public health, safety and security
- enable critical community services and supports, including COVID-19 mitigation and recovery
- support services necessary to keep essential services operating
- protect & operate vital infrastructure
- fulfill contractual, legal & financial obligations.

City Hall, Metro Hall and all civic centres will be closed to public access effective tomorrow.

The Mayor will be announcing this at a media conference today at 2:30 p.m.

**This afternoon, staff will receive direction from their division heads on how this affects the services they deliver.** For those employees required to report to work in their regular locations, know that we continue to maintain a safe and healthy workplace, and will comply with the best public health and occupational health advice available to keep you safe.

## **Working from home**

Employees who are directed to work from home are asked to **take the tools you need to work from home** (please check with your manager if you are unsure what these tools are). At the present time, the City's technology system does not have the capacity to support all City employees working remotely at the same time. Other organizations have suffered system shut downs when unusually high numbers of staff have logged in remotely. The current system was built on previous remote working requirements to support a set number of teleworking staff, including those with accessibility needs. While we work to provide more technology capacity, we are developing a plan to manage the volume of logins. Over the next few days, we will make decisions about remote opportunities for staff and will communicate direction to all staff through ELI and by email, where possible. Until you receive that direction, we encourage you to:

- limit system access remotely and log off when you are not active
- limit web-surfing to work-related activities (including streaming of music)

- use your personal devices for web-surfing and non-work-related activities
- use City-issued smart phones when possible (for communications and email)
- save required documents and work offline (especially with large files)

## **Resources for staff**

### **Intranet and ELI – available from anywhere**

We have revised our COVID-19 intranet [page](#) to make it more user friendly and informative and have repurposed the City's ELI system as a knowledge base for employees. As many staff are unable to access the intranet, ELI can be accessed from anywhere at [toronto.csod.com](http://toronto.csod.com). All you need to log in is your employee number and password. If you've forgotten your password, you can reset it from the log-in page. It's accessible from any personal device. Log in directions are available on [ELI](#) and will be available on the City's website. If you are a new ELI user, contact the Technology Services Desk at [techservice@toronto.ca](mailto:techservice@toronto.ca) or [416-338-2255](tel:416-338-2255) for a temporary password. We encourage employees to visit ELI regularly to get updates on the City's response to the current situation and for helpful information about their work.

### **Dedicated email for staff questions**

We have set up a dedicated email address for you to send any questions you may have about COVID-19 and how it's impacting you in the workplace. The email address is [covid19staffsupport@toronto.ca](mailto:covid19staffsupport@toronto.ca) and it's being monitored daily by staff in People & Equity and Pension, Payroll & Employee Benefits. It might take us a day to get back to you depending on the volume of questions we receive.

### **Employee Assistance Program**

We also want to remind you that you can access the City's [Employee Assistance Program](#) if you or your family members require support during this stressful time. Telephone advice and consultation with a professional counsellor is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week by calling [416-392-6633](tel:416-392-6633).

**All City employees will be paid as usual between now and [April 5, 2020](#).** Based on current information, the COVID-19 pandemic will extend beyond [April 5](#). As such, employees who are not remaining at work to provide essential and/or critical services at this time should expect to return to work on a triaged priority basis as the situation evolves, possibly [before April 5, 2020](#). All employees may be called back into their base positions or redeployed into other roles, based on the need and priority of service delivery. Employees who are called back into redeployed roles will be provided the training and tools necessary to perform those functions safely. As call-back decisions are made, we will communicate them to staff.

This is an evolving situation. We encourage staff to get accurate information through the [Toronto Public Health site](#). We greatly value the outstanding work the Toronto Public Service does in service of this great community. This has been a very challenging time for our staff and public. We will get through this together and will continue to work and association partners and appreciate their support as we all work to address this situation. We thank you for your dedication. We will continue to update you as things evolve.