

Suffolk County Water Authority

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Chairman and Board Members
From: Jeff Szabo, Chief Executive Officer
Re: COVID-19 Phase I Response Plan
Date: May 14, 2020

The historic COVID-19 pandemic has forced a reckoning on how Americans and people from all around the world live. Throughout this crisis, which at last count has taken more than 80,000 American lives and more than 275,000 worldwide, Suffolk County Water Authority employees have made sure that SCWA customers' drinking water supply always remains safe and reliable.

And SCWA has achieved this while also instituting measures that have protected the health of its employees, including a daily symptom check, closing offices to the public, adopting additional bill payment plan options, and allowing employees to work remotely. Now it is time to transition our operations to accommodate the ongoing pandemic reality in a way that safeguards our staff and that is consistent with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New York State Department of Health. This will occur in phases.

Phase I of this plan will return some employees working remotely to their offices and is described in the attached document. It institutionalizes the measures we have implemented over the past several weeks and changes the way our offices look, how we work and how we interact with our colleagues. Later phases will increase the scope of services provided to the public and access to our facilities. Each phase will build upon the success of earlier phases. Our efforts will be measured by our ability to provide a full range of services while minimizing the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

COVID-19 has caused fundamental changes. However, it did not disrupt SCWA's commitment to the Suffolk residents we serve. SCWA will adapt to these new challenges as it always has, with resolve and resiliency.

Suffolk County Water Authority

Guidance – COVID-19 Phase I Response Plan

SCWA responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by significantly modifying its work practices, allowing employees to work remotely, staggering shifts, preventing employees from congregating, shifting work stations to create social distance between employees, curtailing public access to its facilities and limiting services provided. As of May 21, 2020, SCWA's remote workers will begin to transition back to their office environment in a way that addresses the current pandemic condition.

Phase I creates structural changes and fosters safe practices to limit the transmission of COVID-19 while maintaining continuity of SCWA's essential function. This phase begins the process of returning SCWA employees to their SCWA work environment. Operational needs may dictate modifications to the protocols.

Office Return Team: SCWA establishes an Office Return Team, led by the Chief Human Resources Officer or her designee. Representatives of Emergency Management, Human Resources, Safety and the Senior Leadership Team will review, advise, and implement this guidance.

- Components of Phase I Protocol:
- I. Workplace Safety Measures
 - II. Individual Safety Measures
 - III. Facility Safety Measures
 - IV. Operational Requirements, Ongoing Monitoring and Response Measures

I. Workplace Safety Measures

Central to the Phase I return is the implementation of workplace behaviors to increase social distancing and healthy hygiene practices among SCWA employees, enforceable by management. Employees not exercising these practices are subject to progressive discipline.

- A. To institutionalize social distancing, SCWA will:
 - 1. Increase the height of individual cubicles or partitions to no less than 60 inches and install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, around workstations within six feet of another workstation
 - 2. Redesign, where feasible, workplaces to create six-foot social distance between employees, through seating or workstation location changes
 - 3. Stagger lunch and break times and use alternative locations to maintain

six-foot social distance between employees

4. Modify Time Clock Plus procedures as follows: employees working in offices will clock in/out using TCP app on their computer, field employees with Toughbook or laptop computers will clock in/out using TCP app on their computer, all other employees will put on face coverings and clock in/out at TCP swipe location at their place of work, secure the materials necessary for their work and report directly to their vehicle without congregating with their colleagues
5. Modify shifts to limit the number of employees in the workplace at the same time as deemed practicable and to maintain six-foot social distance between employees
6. Rotate employees between working remotely and at a SCWA facility to limit the number of employees in the workplace at the same time as deemed practicable
7. Limit the number of employees in lunchroom, breakrooms and shape up areas to maintain social distance between employees
8. Limit vehicle and elevator occupancy to one person to the extent possible and require face coverings when more than one person is in the same vehicle or elevator
9. Replace in-person meeting with video or teleconference calls whenever possible, and where meetings are required, participants must wear face coverings when a six-foot social distance cannot be maintained between participants

B. To maintain a healthy workplace, SCWA will:

1. Identify those employees to return to the office under Phase I taking into consideration each employee's unique age, pre-existing conditions, child and family care needs
2. Perform daily symptom check of employee by taking employee's temperature, and asking whether they are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell. Records of the checks will be submitted to and maintained by Human Resources in accordance with regulations governing privacy of medical information

3. Ask each employee if anyone in their household or in close contact with the employee has any COVID-19 symptoms
4. In consultation with Human Resources, direct employees exhibiting symptoms to quarantine and remain quarantined consistent with CDC, NYSDOH or SCDHS guidance until such time that they are cleared to return
5. Notify employees in close contact with a COVID-19 symptomatic or positive employee in accordance with regulations governing privacy of medical information and direct them home consistent with CDC, NYSDOH or SCDHS guidance
6. Disinfect workstations of symptomatic employee as appropriate
7. Maintain current mail and delivery practices by leaving mail in vestibules and lobbies of offices

C. To enhance workplace safety, SCWA will:

1. Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer and wipes with at least 60 percent alcohol
2. Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19
3. Provide “Occupied” or “Unoccupied” signs to designate whether public bathrooms are in use or available for use
4. Require its cleaners to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, (i.e., bathroom surfaces, door handles, kitchen surfaces and copy machines) at least daily
5. Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly to increase amount of fresh air introduced into office spaces as appropriate and feasible
6. Continue to provide portable bathrooms for use by vendors and delivery people

II. Individual Safety Measures

SCWA employees will be required to maintain healthy practices to ensure a healthy workplace for themselves and their co-workers

- A. Employees are required to stay home if they feel sick

- B. Employees will be required to:
 - 1. Leave the workplace if directed by Human Resources or Supervisor
 - 2. Wear a face covering when in a meeting when six-foot social distancing cannot be maintained, in common areas inside a building, in a shared vehicle, or in an elevator
 - 3. Wash their hands or use a hand sanitizer after they cough, sneeze, use a bathroom

III. Facility Safety Measures

- A. SCWA Offices will remain closed to the public except to SCWA invitees, who will be required to follow SCWA protective measures, such as undergoing a COVID-19 symptom check or wearing a face covering
- B. Limit SCWA field employees' customer contact to emergency situations only
- C. Human Resources interviews will be conducted remotely
- D. SCWA Board meetings will be conducted remotely in accordance with Executive Orders
- E. SCWA Bid Openings will be conducted in accordance with Executive Orders

IV. Operational Requirements, Ongoing Monitoring and Response Measures

- A. Operational Requirements
 - 1. SCWA may require an employee's attendance in a meeting, or at a SCWA facility to personally participate in a project or assignment
 - 2. Employee shall report to SCWA's facility as required
- B. SCWA will monitor CDC and NYSDOH guidance and adjust protocol as necessary
- C. SCWA will develop a plan to respond to governmental order if new outbreak occurs
- D. Continue COVID-19 communications with employees to keep employees up to date with current conditions