

Suffolk County Water Authority

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Chairman, Board Members and all SCWA Employees
From: Jeffrey W. Szabo, CEO
Re: COVID-19 Response Plan - Phase IV, Resumption of a Full Workplace
Date: September 8, 2020

SCWA responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by developing and implementing a phased Response Plan. Phase I governed the structural changes necessary to institutionalize social distancing within the workplace and in SCWA practices. As these changes were being implemented 144 employees worked remotely. Phase II guided the return of most of them. Resumption of full SCWA operations in the COVID environment occurred under Phase III.

Phase IV of the Response Plan building upon the workplace modifications instituted under the prior Phases, the low detection rate of COVID-19 in Suffolk County and SCWA employee compliance with the protocols placed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, returns all of the SCWA workforce to the workplace. What remains unchanged from the prior Phases is public access to SCWA buildings.

Phase IV recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic is dynamic and establishes a metric to determine whether SCWA employees at a higher risk should remain in the workplace. If there is a spike in COVID-19 positive test results in Suffolk, these workers may be requested to telework.

Phase IV will be implemented immediately.

Suffolk County Water Authority

Guidance – COVID-19 Response Plan - Phase IV – Resumption of a Full Workplace

- Components of Phase IV Protocol: I. SCWA-Wide Protocols
 II. Duration of Phase IV

I. SCWA Wide Protocols

A. Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Leave

FFCRA telework arrangements made under Phase II of SCWA’s COVID-19 Response Plan shall terminate on September 18, 2020 unless otherwise extended by the Deputy CEO for Administration.

Employees on FFCRA leave shall return to their workplace unless they qualify to continue their leave under FFCRA. An employee must provide reasonable documentation to establish the employee’s eligibility for a FFCRA leave or an employee’s continuing qualification for a FFCRA leave. An employee’s leave request may be denied if the employee fails to provide appropriate documentation. An employee’s leave may be terminated if the employee fails to provide appropriate documentation demonstrating a basis for a continued leave.

Telework will not be permitted under FFCRA.

B. Employees with Certain Medical Conditions

Telework arrangements for employees with the conditions identified in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance, “Coronavirus Disease 2019, People with Certain Medical Conditions,” (July 17, 2020) shall terminate on September 18 unless otherwise extended by the Deputy CEO for Administration.

Employees with a condition identified by the CDC in the guidance and recognized under the Americans with Disability Act, may seek an accommodation, including telework if their job functions may be performed remotely, under SCWA Policy 209, Disability Accommodation. An employee must provide reasonable documentation to establish the employee’s eligibility for an accommodation. An employee’s accommodation request may be denied if the employee fails to provide appropriate documentation. An employee’s accommodation may be terminated if the employee fails to provide appropriate documentation demonstrating a basis for a continued accommodation.

Employees who do not qualify for a Disability Accommodation shall return to their workplaces by September 21, 2020 provided modifications to their workplace are instituted to provide adequate social distance.

SCWA shall monitor the COVID positive test result rate in Suffolk County as determined by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services. If the rate, on a seven-day rolling average, exceeds 5%, SCWA may permit higher risk employees to telework.

C. Enhanced Flex Time

Enhanced Flex Time arrangements made under Phase II shall terminate on September 18, 2020. Employees may apply for flex time under SCWA Policy 113. No further Enhanced Flex Time arrangements shall be made.

D. Time Management Plus

Effective September 22, 2020, all employees shall document their time using TimeClock Plus. The provision under Phase II allowing an employee to report directly to their vehicle shall terminate on September 21, 2020.

E. Management Employee Shift Changes

Management Employee Shift Changes authorized under Phase III may continue at the discretion of the authorizing Executive. New shift change may be instituted pursuant to Phase III guidance.

F. Union Employee Shift Changes

SCWA remains willing to continue certain shift changes for Union personnel upon the Union's request and negotiation for the same.

G. Management Vacation Carryover

SCWA Policy 105 is modified to allow consecutive year approval for requests to carry excess vacation into 2021. The modification removes the consecutive year prohibition in the Policy and applies only to employees who received approval in 2019 to carry excess vacation into 2020.

H. Violations of COVID Response Plan Protocols.

Any employee violating a COVID -19 Response Plan protocol shall be subject to Corrective Action pursuant to SCWA Policy 406.

I. Adoption and Incorporation of Phase I, II, and III Protocols

The measures instituted under Phase IV are additive and supplementary to those implemented under Phases I, II, and III. SCWA through its COVID Response Plan is building layer upon layer of best practices to create and maintain a safe working environment. The Office Return Team shall resolve conflicts between the Phases.

II. Phase IV Duration

The CEO, in consultation with the Board, Senior Leadership Team and Office of Emergency Management, shall determine the duration of the Phase IV protocols. The CEO is authorized to modify or terminate any of the COVID Response Plan protocols issued under any Phase, or issue new Phases, as conditions require without action of the Board.