
SUBJECT:

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As the City of Binghamton (“City”) continues to navigate various Federal and State guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, the City endeavors to create a safe working environment for all employees. Therefore, the City will be implementing various, temporary, workplace safety measures. Due to the dynamic nature of this pandemic this plan is subject to change. If an employee has questions regarding the safety measures, they can contact the Office of Personnel and Safety.

Office Spaces

The efficacy of social distancing in the workplace is dependent upon employee responsibility and good judgment. Employees shall be no closer than six (6) feet apart. To ensure social distancing within departments, employees are encouraged to limit in-person direct contact where feasible. Therefore, employees are to utilize the intercom function on desk-top phones or email for *intradepartmental* correspondence, rather than in-person meetings.

Office spaces are to be occupied by the employee whose office it is. Employees are not to go into another employee’s office space. Employees shall not share any supplies, phone, computer, etc. or obtain supplies from another employee’s office. Unless otherwise designated, employees are to stay no closer than the doorway of another employee’s office. The City will designate some office spaces in which other employees can enter. Department Heads will be notified of such offices and it should be posted for their department to view.

Employees are responsible for sanitization of their own office/work spaces. Such spaces shall be kept clean, with minimal items left on desks at the end of each shift or work day. At the end of each work day, the City expects that the employee shall sanitize/wipe down their desk, computer, key board, phone, and other common touchpoints.

For *interdepartmental* correspondence, employees are to use email or their desk phone. If an employee has to go to another department, such employee is to call the person they intend to visit to ensure they are in their office and available. Employees are encouraged to make appointments with employees in other departments to facilitate readiness of the workspace for social distancing. **Employees are not to make “social-calls” to other departments until further notice.**

There is to be no congregating in groups for “social-calls” within department common spaces. Common spaces should be only used for necessary in person meetings. In these areas, please maintain social distancing and a face covering/mask must be worn. Employees shall follow the capacity postings for common areas where applicable.

Kitchenettes are to be for hand washing only. All personal items (i.e. mugs, plates, cutlery, etc...) are to be taken home or stored at an employee’s desk. All communal appliances (i.e. coffee makers, refrigerators, microwaves, toasters, etc....) are to be unplugged and usage is not allowed. Shared water coolers are to be closed off.

In addition to the closure of kitchenettes, all vending machines and water fountains will be closed. Shared food items are not allowed, which includes bringing in cakes, bagels, pizza, cookies, etc....

If an employee orders take-out and has food delivered, they are to instruct delivery personnel to meet them outside of their respective building.

Any public space in an office is to be clear of communal magazines, pamphlets, pens, etc.... Departments can post materials available for the public. If an employee uses a common area office supply, it is to disinfect with a sanitizing wipe.

Copy machines are to be wiped down after use. Any shared computers and telephones are also to be wiped down with the appropriate cleaning materials prior to and after each use. Any other shared devices are to follow the same procedure (i.e. car keys, radios, body cameras, etc.)

Entrances to departments located at City Hall shall remain open during office hours, with the exception of: Police Main Desk, Police Administration, Police Traffic Division, Police Juvenile Division, all offices located in the basement of City Hall, and Information Technology.

Entrances to office spaces at the DPW Garage, Parks Garage, and Water Plant shall remain open while occupied. For security purposes, the DPW dispatch office door, parts department door, all store room doors, and the Water Plant laboratory door shall remain closed.

Conference Rooms

The City encourages alternatives to in-person meetings, such as virtual meetings and conference calls. As a result, conference rooms shall be considered closed, unless necessary for use, which is subject to prior approval by a department head.

All conference rooms will have a maximum capacity, which must be followed by employees. A sign will be posted on the exterior doors. Employees must maintain six-foot social distancing and wear a face covering/mask during any necessary in-person meeting. Employees must disinfect the spaces (including computer keyboards/mice/ phones, if applicable) used with a sanitizing wipe upon leaving.

Break Rooms and Common Areas

The tables and chairs in the Atrium on the second floor of City Hall will be closed off for usage for lunches/breaks. The break rooms at all facilities will be temporarily closed. **The meeting area in the Atrium is not to be used for lunches/breaks.**

Vehicles

A vehicle log will be kept in each vehicle for employees to complete once they are done using said vehicle. Employees should sanitize the touch points upon entering and exiting the vehicle. If there is more than one occupant in a vehicle, a face covering/mask must be worn. Employees are to notify their Supervisor or Department Head if a vehicle needs to be restocked with cleaning supplies.

If possible, the same employee should be assigned to a vehicle. If this is not possible, within each department, a method should be in place as to who drives the vehicle each day for the purpose of contact tracing. If your department does not currently utilize a vehicle log, please contact the Office of Personnel and Safety and one will be supplied to you.

Face covering/Masks

A cloth face covering/mask must be worn upon entering all City buildings. The face covering/mask does not have to be worn at an employees work station. However, when an employee has to walk away from their work station, they must put a face covering/mask on. If an employee enters any personal office space, both individuals must wear a mask. Face coverings are also to be worn in all meetings.

When wearing a face covering/mask, the CDC recommends not to touch the covering while in place, or if need be to ensure your hands are washed before and after touching.

Face coverings/masks and cleaning supplies are available through your Department Head. Each department will be responsible for maintaining adequate supplies within their departments. Employees are accountable and responsible for the supplies provided to them.

Elevators

Maximum capacity signs for elevators must be followed. There are to be no more than two (2) people in an elevator and face coverings/mask are required, even if alone. Occupants are to stand corner to corner. Use hand sanitizer station located near elevators upon exit of elevators.

Other Important Information

Social distancing and hand washing are the two most important practices that will prevent COVID-19. Employees are required to observe these practices. The wearing of face coverings/mask does not negate the need to follow social distancing.

Various hand sanitizer stations have been placed around all City locations. If hand washing is not an option, employees are to use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting doors; using time clocks; or when necessary.

Prevent risk of transmitting COVID-19, avoid any immediate contact such as handshaking or fist bumping.

Employees are responsible for monitoring COVID-19 related symptoms and are encouraged to immediately contact their personal healthcare provider or virtual health clinic, such as nyuhs.org/virtualhealth, and undergo an evaluation/virtual appointment if they are sick. Employees should not come to work if they are sick.

Non-essential travel shall be cancelled until further notice.

Disciplinary Action

If an employee is not abiding by this policy, they will be in non-compliance and subject to discipline per their union contract and/or Civil Service is applicable. Any questions or requests for reasonable accommodations, please contact the Office of Personnel and Safety.

Adopted: May 14, 2020



Department of Personnel and Safety

Richard C. David, Mayor

Patricia Keppler, Personnel & Safety Director

Leana Testani, Assistant Director of Personnel & Safety

I hereby acknowledge that I received information and have the opportunity to ask questions about the Health and Safety Policy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employee Name (Print)

Department

Signature of Employee

Date