



Eve A. Cullinan  
County Administrator

# Board of Chosen Freeholders County of Burlington

## Office of the Board of Chosen Freeholders

P.O. Box 6000, Mount Holly, NJ 08060  
(609) 265-5020 • Fax: (609) 702-7000

## Burlington County Freeholders

Felicia Hopson, *Director*  
Tom Pullion, *Deputy*  
Linda A. Hynes  
Daniel J. O'Connell  
Balvir Singh

### BURLINGTON COUNTY

### COVID-19 PERSONNEL POLICY

**MARCH 12, 2020**

On March 9, 2020, Governor Philip D. Murphy signed Executive Order No. 103 in response to the Coronavirus disease ("COVID-19") invoking "a State of Emergency pursuant to N.J.S.A. App. A:9-33 et seq. and a Public Health Emergency as contemplated by N.J.S.A. 26:13-1 et seq." Executive Order No. 103 further prohibits any political subdivision of the State, including Burlington County, from enforcing any "rule, regulation, ordinance, or resolution, which will or might in any way, conflict with any of the provisions of this Order, or which will in any way interfere with or impede the achievement of the purpose of this Order."

In furtherance of Executive Order No. 103, on March 10, 2020, the New Jersey Civil Service Commission ("CSC") adopted "Guidelines For State Employee Leave Time And Staffing – COVID-19." ("CSC Guidelines") While the CSC Guidelines are not directly applicable to employees of Burlington County, they offer guidance to other employers regarding effective steps to manage the shared responsibility to protect the health and well-being of New Jersey residents.

Burlington County will abide by the guidelines set forth by the CSC and Executive Order No. 103, to protect the health and well-being of our employees, their families, and loved ones, while continuing to provide essential services to the residents of the County.

To this end, the County Administrator has confirmed that the County's vendor is using products and methods for cleaning County facilities which are consistent with the State Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") recommendations. The vendor has incorporated additional personnel during the day to disinfect all touch points of high traffic areas, such as elevators, door handles, push plates, rails, water fountains and vending machines. At night, crews have been providing a more thorough cleaning of offices and public areas, including spray mist of disinfectant in large areas. The administration will continue these efforts as this situation progresses and encourage personnel to place a work order if soap is empty or any area needs attention.

The County Administrator has already undertaken an evaluation of current contingencies plans for the continuation of operations. She is working with the Coronavirus Task Force, and County departments and agencies in order to verify essential functions of each unit, and essential employees. Those efforts are ongoing during this rapidly evolving outbreak of COVID-19.

Thus, in accordance with Executive Order No. 103, and guided by the CSC Guidelines, the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders issue the following COVID-19 Personnel Policy:

1. **APPLICABILITY:** The COVID-19 Personnel Policy shall be applicable to all full-time and part-time employees of the County of Burlington, including non-affiliated employees and those subject to a collective negotiations agreement. The COVID-19 Personnel Policy shall amend the Burlington County Human Resources Policy and Procedure Manual and current collective negotiations agreements currently in place, (CWA Local 1036 Prosecutor's Clerical Unit, CWA 1036 Supervisors Unit, CWA 1036 Main Unit, PBA 249 Corrections Officers, PBA 249 Superior Officers, PBA 320 Detectives and Investigators, PBA 320 Sergeants and Lieutenants, Prosecutor's Associations Union and FOP 166) only to the extent that the express provisions herein conflict with the collective negotiation agreement or the other policies currently in place. To the extent that there is not a conflict between these COVID-19 policies and existing policies or agreements, the existing policy or agreement shall remain in place.
2. **DURATION:** The COVID-19 Personnel Policy shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effective until either the expiration of the declared New Jersey State of Emergency or it is revoked by the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders, whichever comes first.
3. **ALTERNATIVES TO EXISTING WORK ARRANGEMENTS:** All Burlington County Departments may implement flextime programs, alternative workweek programs, and adjusted daily or shift hours with the express written approval of the County Administrator or her designee. These flextime arrangements may include modifications regarding hours of work and break times. Prior to implementing a new program or a modification of an existing program, Department Heads shall advise the Solicitor's Office of any anticipated modifications to hours of work or leave times so that Solicitor may notify affected negotiations representatives of the modifications before implementation.
4. **APPLICABLE LEAVE TIME PROCEDURES:** If an employee is (i) diagnosed with COVID-19, (ii) directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19, and/or (iii) undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations, the employee shall immediately notify Human Resources. In such circumstances, the employee will not be required to utilize accumulated leave time if they provide documentation verifying the same within three work days of the initial absence. As with any documentation of an illness, the documentation should be provided to the Human Resources. If an employee does not provide such documentation, then the employee will be required to utilize their own accumulated leave time. If the absence is caused by the employee's need to care for an immediate family member who (i) has been diagnosed with COVID-19, (ii) was directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19, and/or (iii) is undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to

public health assessment recommendations, the employee shall submit documentation verifying the family member's COVID-19-related illness, exposure, and/or quarantine period to the Human Resources within three days of the employee's initial absence. If no such documentation is received, the employee will be required to use accumulated leave time in accordance with existing policies or collective negotiation agreements. Employees who have been exposed to or diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus will not be permitted to enter the workplace until they are either medically cleared (regarding those with COVID-19) or until the expiration of the recommended 14-day period of quarantine from the point of last exposure (regarding those who were exposed). Until further notice, employees who had previously been subjected to documentation requirements due to excessive absenteeism or abuse of sick leave shall not be disciplined for future absences that occur as a result of their being suspected of or diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus or having to be absent to care for a family member impacted by the virus.

5. **School Closures:** Employees who are not under suspicion of having been exposed to the virus or diagnosed with the virus but must stay home with a child due to the closure of a preschool program, elementary or secondary school, or child care center related to COVID-19, will be required to provide documentation verifying the closing. Both essential and non-essential employees may be required to work from home during the period of school closure in order to ensure continued operation of County services. If a work from home arrangement cannot be accommodated, such employee will not be required to use accumulated leave during the period of the COVID-19-related closure. If an employee chooses not to work from home where a work from home arrangement is offered, the employee will be required to use accumulated leave time in accordance with existing policies or collective negotiation agreements. If the employee is staying home to care for a child who is under suspicion of having the virus or has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee will be required to provide documentation from a medical professional or government agency in order for the leave time procedures outlined above to apply. Certain employees working in the County Correctional Facility, Prosecutor's Office, County Health Department, Sherriff's Department, Public Safety Department or other Department may be required to show up to their designated workplace or other place as directed, in spite of a school closure, if necessary for the public health and safety.
6. **Staffing:** In the event of staffing shortages that disrupt the usual delivery of County services due to diagnosis and/or necessity of quarantine, it may become necessary for the Administration to reassign essential work duties to ensure continuity of operations. Prior to reassigning duties, Department Heads shall ensure that (1) the employee is otherwise qualified for the out of title work, (for example, if a temporary assignment requires an employee to be licensed in a particular trade, management may not assign someone without such a license to perform the work), (2) the assignment is temporary in nature, and (3) the employee's normal job duties resume upon return of the absent employee(s). Compensation for out of title work will be determined in accordance with existing collective negotiations agreement, where applicable.

7. **Required Medical Documentation:** For cases where individuals are undergoing a period of isolation or quarantine under the circumstances described above, documentation from a local, state or federal governmental agency, a medical professional, office, or hospital or proof that the employee was recently in a location where the recommendation by a governmental agency is to self-quarantine will satisfy the requirement to provide documentation. Additional forms of documentation may be permitted by Human Resources. For cases where individuals are caring for an immediate family member sickened by or diagnosed with COVID-19, then the employee shall submit documentation verifying the family member's COVID-19-related illness to the Human Resources Office within three days of the employee's initial absence. If an employee is absent from work without sufficient documentation confirming diagnosis or quarantine or isolation due to exposure or potential exposure, standard leave rules apply.