

**Office of the Director**

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**Governor** Gavin Newsom  
**Secretary, Government Operations Agency** Yolanda Richardson  
**Director** Eraina Ortega

March 18, 2020

To All State Employees:

As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to impact your daily lives, I want to assure you that your health and the health of your family is a priority for the administration. This is a challenging time for state employees and the State of California, but together, we will continue to serve and provide the services that millions of people rely on every day. We are so proud of your commitment to continue to balance your job duties with your family responsibilities during this difficult time. We are here to support you as the needs of the state change in the coming weeks and months.

California has a strong health care system and public health infrastructure. The administration is focused on increasing the state's testing capabilities and strengthening the state's hospital readiness. The Governor has advised individuals considered at greatest risk of COVID-19, including people who have serious chronic medical conditions or are aged 65 and older, to self-isolate to avoid the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, prohibitions on mass gatherings are in place and social distancing should be practiced.

We are looking at all opportunities to provide telework and social distancing at work, and we are cancelling all non-essential travel. We are ensuring our continuity of government by relying on departmental plans that focus on essential functions. Some state employees, such as health care workers, peace officers, firefighters, and those working at the DMV and the Employment Development Department, as well as many other state employees, perform critical services that can't be done from home. The state will follow all guidance to keep them safe.

The best way you can protect yourself continues to be common-sense precautionary measures: Wash your hands often with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow, avoid contact with people who are sick and stay home if you get sick. Please continue to stay informed by visiting the federal [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#) and the [California Department of Public Health website](#). Both websites are updated daily with the latest information and advice for the public. Please also visit local public health websites for local guidance.

Remember, as a State of California employee, you and your eligible dependents have access to the Employee Assistance program (EAP). It is offered at no charge to the

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employee and provides a valuable resource for support and information during difficult times, as well as consultation on day-to-day concerns. EAP is an assessment, short-term counseling, and referral service designed to provide you and your family with assistance in managing everyday concerns. More information can be found by visiting the [EAP webpage](#).

We appreciate your contribution in this difficult time, and we sincerely thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Eraina Ortega  
Director