

WESTMORELAND COUNTY

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Subject: Pandemic Activation & Response

Policy Number: VIII.4

Effective Date: 3/17/2020

I. PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines and rules that go into effect when a pandemic is declared having organizational impact.

II. SCOPE:

This policy will allow employees to be aware of the process when Westmoreland County Government experiences a partial or total shutdown or reduction in workforce (hereafter collectively referred to as shutdown) that impacts operations. The shutdown must be in response to a pandemic situation requiring social distancing to prevent communicable transmission.

III. DEFINITIONS:

Essential Personnel

Due to the nature of their work, employees of the following agencies must report to work as scheduled regardless of the shutdown:

- Scheduled Correctional Lieutenants, Sergeants & Officers and employees of the County Jail deemed necessary by the Warden
- Westmoreland Manor employees deemed necessary by the Administrator
- Scheduled Telecommunication Supervisors & Telecommunication Employees of the Department of Emergency Services Communications Center deemed necessary by the Director of Public Safety
- Department Heads/Senior Executives, and employees deemed necessary based on operational needs as determined by the Department Head/Senior Executive
- AAA, Behavioral Health and Children's Bureau employees deemed essential by the Department Director
- Employees who work in a row office and deemed essential by that Row Officer
- County-paid court personnel deemed necessary by the President Judge

Non-Essential Personnel:

All other personnel not classified as Essential Personnel as outlined above.

Shutdown:

All County offices operating with a reduced workforce, reduced hours, or closure.

Pandemic Leave Pay:

Straight time pay for employees placed on leave due to a shutdown and employees working from home.

Pandemic Premium Pay:

Time and a half the regular rate of pay.

IV. PROCEDURE:

Westmoreland County Government recognizes that during a shutdown some County operations may be required to remain open to meet statutory regulations, safety, and security needs.

The decision to close County offices or reduce the workforce shall be made by the County Commissioners. The President Judge will issue an Order of Court determining essential vs. non-essential operations for the Courts. If a closing occurs during the workday, Department Heads/Elected Officials must be mindful that all facilities should close at the same time. The County Commissioners' office will notify Departments/Elected Officials of the closing time.

Departments involved in safety and security or required to remain open, which is determined to be "Essential" in nature, will be required to report to work in the event of a shutdown. The Department Heads/Senior Executives/Elected Officials of these facilities must have plans designed to determine the necessary employees in their work area and will communicate that plan to their employees.

In the event of a shutdown, employees will be notified via the County website, Code Red, and/or County email. In addition, every attempt will be made to have the shutdown reported to the media for disclosure.

The Westmoreland County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to terminate or amend this policy, at any time, without liability to any person who may be affected by such termination or amendment.

Falsification of time records will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

It is expected that each pandemic situation may have several modifications as other levels of government enact emergency legislation dealing with the same.

V. COMPENSATION DURING A SHUTDOWN:

When a shutdown occurs, "Essential" employees required to report, with the exception of Elected Officials, Chief Deputies, Senior Executives, Department Heads and Assistant Department Heads, will be paid pandemic premium pay for a period not to exceed ten (10) work days unless extended at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners. Children's Bureau, Behavioral Health and AAA employees deemed essential working remotely, who have signed off on a telecommuter agreement, will be paid pandemic premium pay.

Elected Officials, Chief Deputies, Senior Executives, and Department Heads, will be paid their regular salary during a shutdown.

Employees with the capability to work from home and Non-Essential employees will be paid pandemic leave pay for a period not to exceed ten (10) work days unless extended at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners.

Pandemic leave pay will not be counted as hours worked for purposes of determining overtime pay.

Essential Personnel unable to work under extenuating circumstances may request pandemic leave if they meet one of the follow criteria:

- Caring for a household member who has been diagnosed with the pandemic infection.
- Diagnosed with pandemic infection.
- Unable to secure childcare accommodations after exhausting all childcare options, including a family member, or
- Directed by a doctor not to report to work because of an underlying health condition and unable to work from home.

If personnel fall into one of the categories above, they must complete the application process for requesting COVID-19 leave and email it to EmergencyLeave@co.westmoreland.pa.us. (See Application for COVID-19 Leave) Essential Personnel are expected to make every effort to report to work. Essential Personnel refusing to work without justification will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Essential and Non-Essential Personnel, who previously scheduled time off, may not cancel their time off to receive pandemic premium pay unless there is an emergency staffing need. In cases of an emergency need for staff, employees scheduled off may be offered available work.

Essential and Non-Essential Personnel, on a leave of absence prior to the shutdown will not be eligible for pandemic leave.

Employees who are required to be on-call during a shutdown, will be paid in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement and expected to respond to calls as needed to assure the safety of the individual(s) in question and the public.

Part-time and Casual employees will only be paid pandemic leave pay if they are scheduled to work on the day of the partial or complete closure.

* This policy is not intended to supersede or override any provisions of the Courts as a result of inherent and exclusive rights and powers of the judiciary accorded to it by Article V of the Pennsylvania Constitution and Section 1620 of the County Code.

APPROVED THIS 17th DAY OF MARCH 2020

WESTMORELAND COUNTY BOARD OF

COMMISSIONERS

Sean Kertes, Chairman

Doug Chew, Vice Chairman

Gina Cerilli, Secretary