

DATE: April 1, 2020
TO: GRU Employees
FROM: Ed Bielarski, General Manager
SUBJECT: Your Work in Uncertain Times

I want to thank all of our employees for being on the front lines of this crisis. The community may not realize the sacrifices you all make to keep Gainesville functioning, but I can assure you I do, and I appreciate every one of you.

As we navigate this unfamiliar terrain together, I will do my best to keep you apprised of important decisions that could impact your work. Today, I'd like to cover a few of these subjects:

Employee Tests

Over the past few weeks, several GRU employees have been tested for COVID-19. As of today, I'm happy to report that no employee has produced a positive result.

When an employee presents COVID-19 symptoms, communicates with EHS and receives a test, we make sure that all of the folks who may come into regular contact with that employee are aware that a colleague has been tested. We also ensure the area is thoroughly sanitized.

If a GRU employee tests positive for COVID-19, we will notify all GRU employees because we believe it is your right know. We will not tell you the person's name because we respect the privacy of our employees and do not want to cause anyone any additional distress.

First line of defense

While we are taking extreme precautions to keep everyone healthy — including altering schedules and working remotely — *you* are your first and best line of defense. I have changed my own habits based on recommended CDC guidelines, and I urge you to do the same.

I can't emphasize enough how important you folks are to helping our city maintain a semblance of normalcy during these chaotic times, so please:

- Maintain a 6-foot social distance.
- Wash your hands with soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily, including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones and keyboards.

INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

General Manager's Office

GRU Employees are Critical

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, along with an expansion of the Family Medical Leave Act requires certain employers to provide for up to 12 weeks of "paid expanded family and medical leave" for people unable to work due to childcare needs.

GRU employees who are considered "essential critical infrastructure workers" under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security are exempt from this requirement. I will be working with leadership to provide more guidance on this in upcoming days.

Employees already approved by their supervisors to work remotely may continue to do so under the current city guidelines.

I understand and appreciate the sacrifices you make as critical workers and how hard it is to balance the needs of your family with the needs of the job. While we are responsible for keeping this community running in times of crisis, we are also mothers, fathers and sons and daughters. I get that.

Again, I want to thank all of you for being on the front lines. According to the experts, Gainesville has not yet seen its viral peak, so I can't stress enough how important it is for all of you to stay healthy.