

## **Employment-Related Frequently Asked Questions Specific to COVID-19**

*\*This matter continues to evolve. These FAQ's are subject to change as determine by the City of Gainesville. Please continue to monitor the City's website and these FAQ's for further information.*

**Updated 3/19/2020**

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### **1. Is the City open for business?**

Yes. Please note that, unless deemed necessary to remain open by the City Manager, City Buildings have been closed to the public as of Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at close of business. The GRU lobby will remain open during normal business hours. The GPD lobby will remain open 24/7. It is critical that we remain open for business to continue to meet the needs of the Gainesville community and our customers.

### **2. Will City Community Builders Continue to Work?**

All Community Builders who are able to work from home will begin transitioning to remote work beginning today, Thursday, March 19, 2020 and that transition is to be completed no later than Friday, March 20, 2020. Community Builders will be information by their Department/Division Director if they must report to work. Duties will be assigned to those who will be working from home and protocols will be established for work assignments and communication of work in process and/or completion by Community Builders to their respective supervisors. Field workers will continue to perform their tasks but may not be reporting to an office. Examples: Public Works, GPD/GFR, Code Enforcement, Facilities.

### **3. Will Community Builders be assigned to other work assignments during this time?**

Due to event cancellations and/or other interim measures taken to maintain operations, the City may reassign Community Builders to do other work as long as they can be trained to perform those tasks, which can also be done utilizing telework arrangements, if appropriate. Managers may reach out to Human Resource Leadership about applicable rules for the Community Builders for whom they are considering alternative work arrangements.

### **4. How can a department take proactive measures related to infectious disease preparedness?**

Community Builders should be mindful of hygiene protocol and practice good hygiene washing hands often and thoroughly, with soap and warm water, for at least 20 seconds. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used as a backup. Other infection-control measures include, not shaking hands, coughing into elbow, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces with a regular household cleaning spray or wipe, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

### **5. Should departments encourage employees to telework?**

Yes, telework should be considered, encouraged and utilized where feasible or reasonable, i.e., job duties can be performed without disrupting operations. Telework must be approved by the supervisor of the department unless otherwise directed by the senior level leader of the department/unit. For those community builders required to report to their regular place of work, they are expected to be mindful of hygiene protocol and practice good hygiene (see #4 above). If telework options are not feasible, limit the number of in-person meetings and include dial-in, WebEx or Skype meeting options, if possible. Maintaining a six-foot distance from others is recommended as safest.

**\*\*Update departmental contact lists with current telephone numbers, emergency contacts and address information for your staff.**

## 6. Are HR offices open for walk-in appointments and other in-person service requests?

The health and safety of our Community Builders, their families and those we interact with and serve on a daily basis is our utmost priority. Effective immediately, please utilize phone/email/fax to communicate, provide paperwork, etc. in lieu of walk in services. HR staff will begin telecommuting as of noon on Thursday, March 19, 2019 and we will continue our business operations to the extent possible until further notice, barring unforeseen circumstances. In this virtual office environment, we foresee Human Resource continuing to provide full services, with the exception of facilitator led GCU classes and New Employee Orientation.

Please direct staff to send HR related request and inquires to Human Resources Department at [hr@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:hr@cityofgainesville.org). We will route each inquiry to the appropriate HR staff member for prompt and courteous response.

If it is critical to speak directly with a member of HR Leadership, please contact:

- Veronica Davis, Assistant Human Resources Director  
[Davisv1@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:Davisv1@cityofgainesville.org)
- Scott Heffner, Employee and Labor Relations Manager  
[heffnersd@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:heffnersd@cityofgainesville.org)
- Mary Grant, Total Rewards Manager  
[Grantm1@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:Grantm1@cityofgainesville.org)
- Lisa Redmon, Interim Talent Acquisition Manager  
[redmonLA@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:redmonLA@cityofgainesville.org)

## 7. What if an employee needs support?

As a reminder, the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) services provided by Clinical Psychology Associates of North Central Florida (CPANCF) is devoted to providing quality consultation, assessment and psychotherapeutic services to children, adolescents, adults and families. It provides EAP services to the city of Gainesville's Community Builders, spouses, significant others and dependent children at no cost to the Community Builders or their dependents. Health insurance coverage through the City's health plan is **NOT REQUIRED** to access EAP services.

CPANCF provides up to three (3) EAP sessions for crisis stabilization, referral or brief counseling at no cost. Sworn GPD officers receive unlimited visits and their dependents receive six (6) annual visits at no cost to the Community Builders and their dependents. CPANCF deals with a full range of mental health and adjustment issues and also provides referrals for legal, financial or other types of assistance. If you wish to schedule a visit or would like more information, please visit [www.cpancf.com](http://www.cpancf.com) or call 352-336-2888.

During the Coronavirus crisis, CPANCF will provide tele therapy visits at the patient's request. These will not be 24/7 services.

## 8. What is the option for support from Florida Blue for those Community Builders enrolled in the City's health insurance plan at this time?

Florida Blue is offering counseling for members feeling stress related to the novel coronavirus. In partnership with New Directions Behavioral Health, you can speak with specially trained behavioral health counselors at no cost. You can speak with a counselor 24/7 about stress you may be feeling by calling the toll-free help line at 833-848-1762. Please note that the counselors will not be able to assist with questions

about COVID-19 testing or treatment, so please call Florida Blue at the number on the back of your member ID card (800-664-5295) or call 800-352-2583 for help with those questions.

Please also note that the City's health insurance plan does offer a Telemedicine benefit. Telemedicine is the remote diagnosis and treatment of patients by means of telecommunications technology. Covered members may also reach out to Florida Blue for more information. For enrolled members, the City's health insurance plan provides for coronavirus testing at no cost.

In addition, due to the Coronavirus, Florida Blue is increasing access to necessary medications. Florida Blue is waiving early medication refill limits on 30-day prescription maintenance medications and/or encouraging members to use 90-day mail order benefit. If help is needed with mail order, please call Florida Blue at the customer service number on the back of the member ID card (800-664-5295).

For assistance from the Risk Management Department, please contact Risk Management at 352-334-5045 or [RiskManagement@ci.gainesville.fl.us](mailto:RiskManagement@ci.gainesville.fl.us)

**9. What signs and symptoms may indicate that a Community Builder has become ill with COVID-19?**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that COVID-19 symptoms (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html>) include fever, cough and shortness of breath. At present, the CDC also includes epidemiologic risk factors such as a history of travel from affected geographic areas within 14 days of symptom onset or close contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient within 14 days of symptom onset-as criteria for health care professionals to identify individuals under investigation. Refer to the most current CDC guidance as the criteria will likely change as further information becomes available.

**10. What if a Community Builder believes they have been exposed to COVID-19?**

Employee Health Services and Risk Management (EHS) have developed an Employee Management Process and Screening Questionnaire to assess and refer our workforce. Please refer to Human Resource Procedure L-2, Coronavirus Related Leave adopted 3/16/2020 which may be accessed through the link below (#11).

**11. How will Coronavirus related leave be administered?**

Please refer to Human Resource Procedure L-2, Coronavirus Related Leave adopted 3/16/2020. The Procedure may be found [here](#)

**12. How will Workers' Compensation be administered?**

During the duration of the current event, if a Community Builder is injured we will be handling referrals via phone through the Risk Management Department. The Community Builder will need to complete the accident report located on the City's intranet site:

<http://ggsppr01/Forms/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fForms%2fRisk%20Management%2fWorkers%20Compensation%20and%20Safety&FolderCTID=&View=%7b99D139AF%2dD725%2d4180%2dB63E%2d6C16BFF077F3%7d>

To get a referral for Workers' Compensation related medical care call either David Jarvis 352-316-2697 or Doug Prentiss 352-316-4235.

**13. May the City prohibit a Community Builder from coming to work if the Community Builder is known to have contracted Covid-19, or to have had close contact with someone who has?**

Yes. The City is obligated to provide a safe workplace and may take necessary and reasonable steps to minimize the health risks for its Community Builders, such as requiring employees not to come to work if they have been diagnosed with, or have been exposed to, COVID-19.

Supervisors are permitted to ask employees whether they have symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19. The information received during this emergency situation is only to be used to support and monitor the health and safety of the workplace and will be treated as confidential. Only questions about symptoms are needed, disclosure of underlying medical conditions is not required and should not be provided. Supervisors will then direct Community Builders to speak with Employee Health Services (EHS) in accordance with the Coronavirus Related Leave Human Resource Procedure L-2 (see #11).

**14. What should a Community Builder do if they have recently traveled (flight or cruise or any distance outside of their normal commute to their normal place of work) but are asymptomatic?**

Supervisors should be aware of any Community Builder's recent leave or upcoming leave. Any Community Builder who falls into any of these categories may be expected to contact EHS for further advisement and may be required to use their PTO to be compensated for any period of self-quarantine. The Coronavirus Related Leave Policy (see #11) contains a provision for the denial of Coronavirus Related Leave if the Community Builder voluntarily and knowingly put themselves in a quarantine situation during the current public health crisis. In such cases, the employee will be required to use his/her accrued appropriate leave, if available, and/or they will be placed in a non-pay status, unless and until cleared to return to work in accordance with EHS protocols.

**15. What if a Community Builder has traveled and experiences a delay or inability to return due to travel restrictions?**

Telework should be considered and utilized where appropriate per management authorization. If telework is unavailable, the employee is eligible to use PTO or Sick Leave or Leave without Pay.

**HELPFUL LINKS:**

<https://www.cdc.gov>

[www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov)

<https://www.who.int>

[www.sbac.edu](http://www.sbac.edu)