

Chris Fetzer
Executive Director

TO: Senior Management Team / ALL NACOG STAFF
FROM: Gayle Benton, Human Resources Director
DATE: March 27, 2020
RE: COVID-19 Related Policies

On March 25, 2020, the NACOG Regional Council Executive Committee approved three policies; 1) Paid Emergency Leave Policy, 2) Temporary Leave Policy Regarding COVID-19 Pandemic, 3) Telecommuting Policy. All three policies are effective 3/16/2020.

Paid Emergency Leave Policy

This policy allows for the Executive Director to determine employee pay during a full or partial closure of NACOG (Agency) in the event of an extraordinary circumstance, such as the COVID-19 public health pandemic we are currently facing as a society. Full or partial closure is defined as a mandated closure of operations by the Executive Director, federal, state, or local authorities. This policy expands the existing Emergency Leave policy in a manner that aligns with the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Below is the Paid Emergency Leave Policy as written and approved.

“In certain extraordinary circumstances (i.e. natural disaster, pandemic public health crisis, fire, flood or other environmental situation), it may be necessary for agency offices and/or facilities to close and some or all employees may be required to remain home. Full or partial closure is defined as a mandated closure of operations by the Executive Director, federal, state, or local authorities. The Executive Director may decide to pay all employees their usual salary and continue any applicable benefits through the duration of closure. This will be clearly communicated in writing to employees from the Executive Director or their designee. Paid Emergency Leave days are not accrued, will not be paid out upon termination of employment, and will not be carried over from year to year. In the event of an agency-wide or program specific closure during an employee’s previously scheduled time off, the time off must be charged in accordance to that leave. Paid Emergency Leave shall not be used. The use of Paid Emergency Leave is solely the decision of the Executive Director, or their designee, and will be used only under the provisions that the agency cannot reasonably offer work on-site or through telecommuting.”

Temporary Leave Policy Regarding COVID-19 Pandemic

As an extension of the Paid Emergency Leave Policy, this temporary policy applies specifically to the COVID-19 public health pandemic and allows emergency paid leave to address those circumstances when individual employees may be impacted by COVID-19 in advance of agency or site closures. Below is the Temporary Policy Regarding COVID-19 Pandemic as written and approved.

“In addition to the provisions of the Paid Emergency Leave policy related to agency office or facility closures, in certain circumstances individual employees may be unable to work due to quarantine (self; advisement of health care provider; required by NACOG; or subject to federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19), employee experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or other flu-like symptoms, seeking medical diagnosis, caring for employee’s child if the school or place of care has been closed or childcare provider is unavailable, the need to care for an ill family member and is subject to quarantine or self-quarantine as indicated above, or other pandemic related reasons. In these circumstances individual employees may also use paid emergency leave for a period of time as approved by the Program Director and Executive Director.”

Telecommuting

The Telecommuting Policy details the criteria in which employees can work remotely from home and provides Program Directors the ability to determine whether or not to implement telecommuting within their respective program. Below is the Telecommuting Policy as written and approved.

“Telecommuting is working at a location other than the conventional office, usually at home or a place closer to home. Simply-put, telecommuting means moving work to workers instead of moving workers to work. Telecommuting can provide a host of benefits for the community, employees, and employers; such as reducing commuting costs, reducing stress, increasing job satisfaction, providing flexibility with work and family schedules, and enabling employees to work at their most creative and productive times, easing traffic congestion and improving air quality. Telecommuting can also be used when in an event of the Executive Director, local, state, or federal authorities mandate a shutdown due to public health pandemic, fire, flood, inclement, or natural disaster.

Not all NACOG programs/departments or positions are suited for telecommuting. The program director will determine whether or not to implement a telecommuting program within his/her own department, as well as what positions will be eligible to participate in such program.

The following guidelines outline the policy governing telecommuting.

- 1. Employee salary, benefits and insurance coverage will not change as a result of telecommuting.*
- 2. Each employee and his/her supervisor shall work with their supervisor to establish a work schedule, production of work performed, and specific conditions relating to the employee working at home. These Agreements will vary from department to department, and require program director approval.*
- 3. Employees must continue to follow NACOG Rules and Regulations, and specifically Rule 3.18 Confidentiality to protect and secure sensitive and confidential information of applicants, clients, enrollees, trainees, employees, or others benefiting from programs administered by NACOG.*
- 4. Agency-owned equipment in the home office is to be used solely by the employee and for work purposes only.*
- 5. Agency-owned equipment will be supported by the Information Technology Department, or the department’s designated I.T. support staff and must be brought to that department’s premise for*

needed work to be performed. No computer repair/maintenance work will be done at the employee's home. Damage to the Agency's equipment resulting from the employee's negligence is the responsibility of the employee.

- 6. Agency-owned software shall not be duplicated.*
- 7. To ensure hardware and software security, employees shall not install software on Agency equipment unless purchased by the Agency with the approval of the Information Technology Director. Games are not allowed on Agency equipment.*
- 8. The employee must use a surge protector on all Agency equipment.*
- 9. Restricted access materials shall not be taken out of the office, or accessed through the computer, unless approved in advance by the telecommuter's supervisor.*
- 10. Immediately upon separation of employment, the telecommuter's supervisor shall contact the Information Technology Director to terminate log-on access for the telecommuting employee and to arrange for the return of Agency owned equipment.*
- 11. Agency-owned equipment must be kept up to date with the latest Manufacturer and Security updates.*
- 12. All wired or wireless communication shall be limited to Secure or approved Agency VPN connections. Equipment shall not be connected to "Free" wireless connectivity options that are frequently available in coffee shops, restaurants, airports or hotels unless it is through a Secured connection.*

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment."

NACOG AGENCY-WIDE COMMUNICATION

With regard to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic, communication to employees is distributed via program directors. In addition, staff announcements related to internal business operations (HR, Finance, I.T.) as well as all communication regarding COVID-19, policies, resources, NACOG forms (limited) will also be accessible on NACOG's website at www.nacog.org. Click on STAFF LINKS. This format will provide NACOG employees with a common place to obtain information currently, as well in the event of a possible and mandatory closure of NACOG.