



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES NEW TEMPORARY WORKFORCE POLICIES AS CITY  
BEGINS TO REDUCE NON-ESSENTIAL SERVICES**

*New policies to expand work from home, telework supports, and Telehealth services for employees as City works to mitigate spread of COVID-19*

CHICAGO —As part of an effort to ensure the health and safety of Chicago's residents and to prevent the further spread of the COVID-19 virus, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced new temporary workforce policies that will protect City workers and workplaces while maintaining the continuity of essential city services. Starting tomorrow, new temporary policies permit all eligible employees, as authorized by their departments, to telework from home. The City will also adopt new Telehealth services for employees and take steps this week to ramp down non-essential government services.

This is the latest in a series of preventative and precautionary actions taken by the administration as the City works in close coordination with guidance by state officials and public health experts to prevent further spread of COVID-19 while maintaining essential city services.

“The City remains committed to delivering critical services to our residents throughout this difficult time. Now and in the weeks ahead, perhaps more than ever, Chicagoans will rely on us to deliver for them, to cushion the blow from this terrible disruption, and extend a hand to those most in need,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “However, we must balance our mission of service delivery with the need to keep our workforce and the community safe and these new policies are designed to do just that.”

All employees — whether they are working on-site, working from home, or if their function is suspended — will be paid and will continue to receive their normal benefits, including health care. The reduction of non-essential City services and new temporary policies are subject to change as the situation continues to evolve over the weeks ahead.

In consideration of each department's operational needs, all City Department heads have been permitted to permit employees to do their work from home beginning tomorrow. Last week, the Mayor directed each Department to evaluate their entire workforce to determine who could perform the core duties of their jobs from home while ensuring that essential employees are in place and critical government services continue to be provided to Chicago's residents.



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In order to protect the health of its workforce and the community at large, the City will begin the process of suspending certain non-essential government services that cannot be performed from home by employees. However, all public safety departments, including the Chicago Police Department, Chicago Fire Department and the Office Emergency Management & Communications, will continue to operate at full staffing levels. Critical services including sanitation, water, and airport operations will remain fully staffed and operational.

To support employees conducting their work from home, the Department of Assets, Information and Services (AIS), which will also remain fully staffed during this time, has expanded telework services and training across departments to ensure workers have the necessary IT resources and services, including VPN access, additional laptops and conference call services. This new temporary policy builds on last week's announcement which previously only allowed those who were under quarantine or had certain medical conditions to telework.

Throughout this time, employees and their dependents enrolled in the City's Healthcare Plans will have access to Telehealth services to connect with their physicians through live interactive telephone communication and digital video consultations as part of an effort to reduce the risk of exposure to contagious viruses or further illness. Furthermore, City employees will have all charges for home delivery and early refill limits on 30-day prescriptions waived.

Following Governor Pritzker's and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines announced on Monday limiting gatherings, the City has directed all employees to conduct meetings with more than 10 people through conference call as opposed to in-person. Given the rapidly evolving nature of this situation, the City is working diligently to provide timely and transparent updates on changes that pertain to Chicagoans.

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