



OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Berke Attila
Director

MEMORANDUM

Friday, May 29, 2020

TO: Department and Office Directors
MLS
Public Safety Managers

FROM: Berke Attila, Director, Office of Human Resources
Michael Coveyou, Director, Department of Finance
Avinash G. Shetty, Director, Office of Procurement

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Michael Coveyou
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SUBJECT: Manager/Supervisor Guidance for Equipment and Supplies During COVID-19

The following Manager/Supervisor guidance regarding the purchase of equipment and supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic is attached for your reference. Please read the document carefully and ask your HR Liaisons, which are copied on this communication, to disseminate this guidance to departmental supervisors. Also, the recently released employee guidance regarding wearing cloth masks in the office is available on [OHR's Employee Coronavirus News webpage](#).

**Manager and Supervisor Guidance during COVID-19 Public Health Emergency:
Equipment and Supplies**

I. Background:

The County has no obligation to purchase supplies or equipment for employees approved to work at a Remote Work Location. Employees must come into the workplace to pick up office supplies.

During the current COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, Department Directors may find it necessary in order to meet operational needs to reimburse employees for supplies used at the employees' Remote Work Location. The decision to reimburse employees for the purchase of office supplies is at the discretion of management (not at the discretion of employees).

II. **Process:**

Equipment:

Employees will not be reimbursed for office equipment that is to be used at their Remote Work Location during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

Supplies:

The County's Telework Policy allows Managers and Supervisors to approve employees taking office supplies to their Remote Work Location; reimbursement for supplies is not allowed for supplies that are available at the Main Worksite.

Department or Office Directors should determine if an exception for reimbursement should be made, and the best method for approving the reimbursement for supplies. These exception policies and delegations, as provided for below, should be documented for possible future audit purposes.

Approvers should consider the following at the time a request is made:

- Can the employee come to the office to pick up the necessary supplies, while maintaining appropriate social distancing and other recommended health directives? This is the preferred method and should be considered before any consideration of reimbursement.
- Has the employee demonstrated an actual need for the items requested?
- Are the items requested absolutely necessary to complete their County work remotely?
- Has the employee or their Supervisor considered a process change that would eliminate the need for supplies (such as paper)? Keep in mind that re-engineering the process now will make it more likely for the employee to be approved for continued teleworking after the pandemic is over. This can act as an incentive to re-engineer processes and create efficiencies.

The Director can delegate the approval responsibility, which should be assigned to Division Chiefs or other MLS-level managers; with direction to maintain all records and documentation of approvals for possible future audit purposes.

Departments that approve reimbursement must maintain appropriate documentation, such as receipts or invoices, as these items may be subject to review and/or audit to determine that the purchase or reimbursement was in the best interest of the County. The employee must provide receipts to document costs incurred in order to qualify for reimbursement.

III. **Supply Deliveries to Employee's Homes**

The County will not deliver supplies, via a County vendor by way of PO or DPO or via County-issued P-card purchase, to a County Employee's home or other Remote Work Location.

Telework Policy

The relevant sections for equipment and supplies that are part of the current Montgomery County Telework Program, Policies and Procedures, dated October 21, 2019 are printed below for your reference:

R. Equipment

Unless equipment is provided by the County, the Teleworker is responsible for the purchase, installation, configuration, and maintenance of all equipment and services (e.g., computer, mobile computing device(s), standard software, printer, telephone, mobile phone, cellular service, internet connection, video conferencing equipment, desk, chair etc...) needed to Telework. Teleworkers requiring access to the County's Virtual Private Network (VPN) must contact the IT Help Desk at 240-777-2828, option 2, or via e-mail at helpit@montgomerycountymd.gov, to request an account. Teleworkers must maintain up-to-date anti-virus software on any computer(s) used for Teleworking. The Telework computer must meet all current VPN-related and other security requirements as established by the Department of Technology Services. Individual Departments or job classifications may have additional requirements or guidance to be followed. The County shall not be responsible for the purchase, maintenance, repair, or operational costs of any such equipment.

A Teleworker must have an operational phone so as to be available for calls from their Manager. The Teleworker may be required by their Manager to check County voice mail messages on a regular basis. A Teleworker whose normal duties include responding to emails and phone is expected to continue to respond while Teleworking.

S. Supplies

A Teleworker may take supplies needed for work at the Remote Work Location from the Teleworker's Main Worksite with the Manager's/Supervisor's approval. The Teleworker will not be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses for supplies regularly available at the Main Worksite.

The link to the Telework policy is provided for your reference:

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HR/Resources/Files/Telework/Telework_Policy.pdf

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

cc: HR Liaisons
Fariba Kassiri