




PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas A&M University System

MEMORANDUM

To: **University Employees and Supervisors**

From: Ruth J. Simmons, President 

Re: Recent Spike in Covid-19 Cases

Date: June 25, 2020

Public officials have recently alerted us to a significant increase in coronavirus cases in Texas and the Houston area. We are again being asked to take great care in following public health guidelines so as to do our part in slowing the spread of the disease. Notwithstanding our very recent return to full operations on the campus, we believe that current circumstances require us to resume campus operations under guidelines similar to those issued in March.

Therefore, as of Monday, June 29, full-time employees will return to the normal work schedule of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Until August 1, 2020, we will continue with a combination of 1) alternating individual on-campus schedules to achieve necessary coverage and 2) working from remote locations. During this period, employees must be available for assigned duties and contact during scheduled work hours. We caution, however, that the date of return to full on-campus operations might change if warranted by improved conditions; employees are encouraged to follow updates on the resumption of normal operations as posted on the PVAMU Home Page.

Operations will resume, effective Monday, June 29, under the guidelines below.

Conduct of Essential Services at PVAMU

Prairie View A&M campuses will remain open and university services will continue to be provided in all areas. These areas must remain operational in that 8-5 daily coverage is required at the discretion of the unit Vice President.

- John B. Coleman Library
- Owens Franklin Health Center
- Housing and Residential Life
- Willie A. Tempton, Sr. Memorial Student Center (MSC)
- Transportation/Shuttle Services
- University Police Department
- Information Technology (IT)
- Physical Plant
- Central University Administration/A.I. Thomas Building

The essential offices noted above will work through their area Vice Presidents to determine adequate staffing levels and rotating assignments as needed to function during this period. Keep in mind that as students and families prepare for the Fall semester, they will need to be assured that they can contact offices and have their questions answered in a timely fashion.

Remote Sites

As you consider how to provide needed services during this period, keep in mind that a telecommuting employee and alternate work arrangements must follow expected University guidelines:

- a) If performing work at a remote site, an employee must do so without diminishing the quality of the work by answering phone calls in a timely manner, producing necessary work on the required schedule, responding to emails, and participating in meetings as requested or required. No “out of the office” replies should substitute for work email responses.
- b) There is no need for employees to complete the AWL forms. Supervisors will complete one form for all employees working remotely and/or on a flexible work schedule for their department or unit.
- c) The normal work schedule of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm will remain in effect unless an alternative work schedule has been explicitly approved by the relevant supervisor. Employees must be available for regular duties and contact during the scheduled work hours.
- d) Working from a remote work site does not relieve an employee from the obligation to observe all applicable University rules, policies and procedures.
- e) Supervisors must ensure employees have the necessary equipment required for the alternative work arrangement; both employee and supervisor should review the telework guidelines to assure compliance.
- f) Employees must protect the confidentiality and security of University information and equipment used at the remote work site.
- g) Supervisors are required to provide supervision by meeting with remote employees online and receiving and reviewing work product in an on-going way.
- h) The University will not reimburse employees for out-of-pocket expenses for materials and supplies that are reasonably available at the regularly assigned place of employment.
- i) Only University approved software shall be used for connecting with the university's network from the remote work site.
- j) All departments should provide one office email address to be answered by staff and one main office phone number for incoming office calls. Office phones should be forwarded to the remote site, cell phones, or emails, where necessary to assure a high level of responsiveness and continuity of service.

- k) An employee must use vacation time and obtain approval if they are not working from home on a scheduled workday.
- l) If an employee is sick and needs to take time off, they must notify their supervisor and record the sick leave in Workday.
- m) An alternative work location may be terminated at the discretion of the supervisor.

Emergency Leave

If remote work is not possible for employees otherwise able to work but not able to report to their normal work location, TAMUS has issued further guidance recommending emergency leave in accordance with System Regulation 31.03.03, section 2.5.2. This may include employees who are unable to report to their normal work location because of the need to care for dependent children where schools or daycare facilities have closed.

For emergency leave, supervisors will make a recommendation that must include a justification and approval from the area Vice President before sending to the Office of Human Resources at leaveteam@pvamu.edu. The President is the final approver of emergency leave.

Again, we must do our part in helping to slow the spread of COVID-19. Further, we understand the need to balance employee concerns related to their own health and the health of loved ones while maintaining required operations. We hope that the flexibility described above will help to alleviate concerns for health and safety. The Office of Human Resources can assist both employees and managers with answering a variety of questions on FMLA, Leave, Remote Work, and other issues.

Please take care and continue to observe the guidance of public health professionals during this difficult and challenging period.

[Departmental Form for Alternate Work Location and Flexible Work Arrangements
Telework Guidelines](#)