



# VCERA

VENTURA COUNTY EMPLOYEES'  
RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

# COVID-19

## Worksite Reopening Plan

Agency/Department: VCERA  
Prepared: June 1, 2020



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## Overview

On March 19, 2020, the State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health issued an order requiring most Californians to stay at home to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 throughout the population. On March 19, 2020, the Ventura County Public Health Officer issued a similar Safe at Home Order.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health of Californians is not yet fully known. Reported illness ranges from some people exhibiting no symptoms at all to some suffering severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups of individuals appear more vulnerable, including people aged 65 or older and those with serious underlying medical conditions. Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact with an infected person, even if that person does not have any symptoms or has not yet developed symptoms.

As stay-at-home orders are modified and business and public facilities resume operation, it is essential that all reasonable steps be taken to provide for the safety of the County workforce and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- Physical distancing to the maximum extent possible;
- Voluntary use of face coverings when performing tasks where respiratory protection is not required;
- Frequent handwashing;
- Regular cleaning and disinfection of surfaces that may transmit disease;
- Employee training on COVID-19 prevention.

It is critical to have in place appropriate processes to identify new cases of illness and to intervene quickly by working with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus.

Up-to-date information can be found at [www.VCEmergency.com](http://www.VCEmergency.com).

## Agency/Department Action Plan

Agencies are required to develop specific workplace COVID-19 action plans and document activity monitoring the effectiveness of protective efforts. This document provides guidance for developing those plans and for protecting employees serving the public at the workplace during the COVID-19 emergency. The document sets out the agency/department roles and responsibilities with the ultimate goal of the resumption of full services. The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any employee rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive in that it does not purport to address all possible risks, exposure scenarios, and protective practices.

Employees will be provided training, a safe and clean environment and when appropriate, and personal protective equipment for the risks attendant to the employee's position.



County staff are expected to follow the directives and guidelines set forth herein and to follow the health and safety directives provided by management. Failure to do so can promote the spread of COVID-19, endangering co-workers and the public, and can result in disciplinary procedures.

## Projected Agency Return Timeline

The following timeline is subject to change, based on public health conditions.

June 15<sup>th</sup>. **Phase 1:** Partial staff (rotation) and full staff precautions in place.

July 27<sup>th</sup>. **Phase 2:** Majority staff with telecommuting on case-by-case basis, member service on site by appointment only, less than 5 minutes, and with distancing more than six (6) feet.

Aug 24<sup>th</sup>. **Phase 3:** Full Staffing and Full Public Service, Maintaining Social Distancing. Telecommuting considered on case-by-case basis.

All *Basic Infection Preventative Measures* (below) in place for all phases.

## Basic Infection Preventative Measures

Measures to protect employees and the public include emphasizing the importance of basic infection prevention measures. CDC recommended measures include:

- Promote frequent and thorough hand washing, by providing workers and the public with wash facilities, soap and water, or if unavailable, alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Encourage workers to stay home if they are sick.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Institute policies and practices to promote physical distancing and separation.
- Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and equipment.
- Provide and enforce the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for the risks associated with the task performed.

The County distributed to all County staff a Social Distancing Policy dated April 21, 2020. See Appendix A-4.

## Agency/Department Plan

This Agency/Department Plan is specific to the Ventura County Employees' Retirement Association (VCERA). The Agency/Department has approximately 30 employees, and is a multi-employer, defined benefit, public pension plan. VCERA's primary responsibility is to provide lifetime retirement benefits for eligible employees of the County of Ventura,



Ventura County Superior Court, Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (APCD), Ventura Regional Sanitation District (VRSD) and VCERA. The work performed is primarily administrative in nature, in an office setting.

## Agency/Department Worksites and Risk Assessment

VCERA employees work in the following facilities and settings:

- 1190 S. Victoria, Suite 200, Ventura CA
- Extra-county travel
- Travel throughout County facilities

## Agency/Department Risk Assessment

The Retirement Administrator, in coordination with senior staff, has conducted an initial Risk Assessment of operations specific to VCERA for the preparation of this document. This document describes the steps taken by VCERA to mitigate the risk of virus spread. The Retirement Administrator or delegatee is responsible for ensuring that the agency/department-specific risk assessment is updated as needed, should new risks be identified through the worksite evaluation process described below or protective and mitigation guidelines are revised.

The general risks associated with this agency/department are:

- Cubicle and shared office space.
- Public service space including public counters and public gathering rooms.
- Service to higher-risk population (retirees).
- Shared elevators and stairwells.
- Common staff areas, such breakrooms and restrooms.
- Shared technology equipment, such as scanning/copying stations.

## Source for COVID-19 Information

The County of Ventura policies and practices are formulated with guidance provided by the County Public Health Department. To assist County management in providing guidance to employees following a work-related exposure, three flow charts have been developed (Appendix A-2). For additional information or non-occupational exposures, employees may contact their primary care physician or phone 2-1-1.



## Employee Training and Communication

All employees shall be offered training on the health and safety directives and guidelines of the County. Appendix A-1 has been distributed countywide and will be available at the following link: <https://hr.ventura.org/benefits/covid19>. Further, training and information regarding agency/department and/or facility-specific procedures and guidelines may be offered within VCERA. Training may be provided through a variety of modalities, including electronic means, supervisor direction and written directives, memos and updates, and access to this document. Employee questions or concerns about training should be directed to the employee's supervisor.

## Regular Workplace Evaluations

The Retirement Administrator has delegated to the Chief Operations Officer (COO) the responsibility to conduct facility specific Workplace Evaluations on at least a monthly basis. Appendix A-3 contains VCERA's checklist to be used in conducting regular Workplace Evaluations to identify and correct potential sources of virus spread and to ensure compliance with COVID-19 guidelines and policies. The completed evaluation forms will be retained by the Retirement Administrator's designee.

Employee conduct demonstrating willful or repeated violation of County policy or conduct placing staff or the public at risk must be reported to the Retirement Administrator to evaluate whether disciplinary action is warranted.

The responsibility for workplace evaluation includes assisting in the investigation of any COVID-19 illnesses of VCERA staff to determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to increase the risk of infection. Investigation results may result in the need to update this Plan. Revised VCERA Plans will be emailed to Risk Management at [Risk.Management@ventura.org](mailto:Risk.Management@ventura.org).

## Agency/Department Assistance in Contact Investigation

VCERA staff may be called upon to assist County Public Health in COVID-19 contact investigation following the identification of an individual who tests positive for COVID-19. This investigation may entail evaluation of work schedules and staff assignments to identify close contacts of individuals who test positive. Close contact is defined as unprotected contact within six feet for 10 minutes or more with an infected individual. The contact investigation may result in taking steps to facilitate isolation of COVID-19 positive employee(s) and their close contacts. Refer to Appendix A-2 flow chart for guidance on quarantine decisions. Employees with specific questions should be referred to their personal physicians or they can call 2-1-1.



# Employee Screening & Control Procedures

The following procedures have been established for the facility occupied by this Agency/Department:

## VCERA OFFICE

- Telework opportunities are provided to the extent possible, in consideration of member and employee safety, continuity of service and operations, and workplace conditions.
- Informational and warning posters have been posted throughout the facility.
- Entry into the VCERA office is limited to employees and approved vendors only, prior to re-opening to the public.
- Prior to reporting to work, employees shall perform their own temperature and symptom screening. Any employee having a temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit or exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent of COVID-19, or with a recent history of exposure to COVID-19 positive individuals are not to report to work and shall inform their supervisor immediately.
- Masks are strongly encouraged in common areas, though not required.
- One occupant in an elevator at any given time.

## TRAVEL TO OUTLYING COUNTY FACILITIES

- Travel and in-person meetings will be minimized by utilizing virtual meetings where possible. Prior authorization for in-person meetings by the Retirement Administrator is required while this Plan is in effect.
- Health and safety protocol for facilities being visited will be respected.

# Physical Distancing Guidelines

The County has instituted a Social Distancing Policy (Appendix A-4). In addition to measures that have already been instituted, VCERA may institute policies and practices to promote physical distancing among employees and members of the public. Where facility alteration is needed, contact the facility maintenance department with responsibility for the building. The following measures may be taken to implement physical distancing of at least six feet:

- Installation of floor markings or signs to designate distance intervals for waiting lines;
- Installation of clear physical barriers;



- County policies have been implemented to permit telework where practicable;
- Adjusting of work schedules to allow for staggered work schedules;
- Reassign office space to separate close-quarter cubicles;
- Limit occupancy and align conference room furniture to allow separation;
- Close or limit occupancy in common areas such as breakrooms or elevators;
- Designate separate routes for entry and exit in office space to avoid close passes;
- Limit elevator to one occupant at a time;
- When using breakroom area, avoid congregating and limit visits to short visits to use equipment (microwave, refrigerator, etc.);
- Discontinue or limit nonessential travel and in-person meetings;
- Temporary removal of furniture or seating, marking social distancing spacing.

## Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures

Custodial services are provided by the property owner, M.F. Daily, through contract services. Custodial services are provided during nighttime hours to avoid workspace disruption, which also accomplishes the goal of social distancing through administrative means. M.F. Daily has acknowledged to VCERA its responsibility to work with custodial service providers to ensure sufficient restroom supplies to support frequent handwashing by employees and the public. Custodial services will continue to provide regular workplace cleaning and nightly work surface cleansing with an enhanced germicidal cleaning product. This entails the focused cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as interior and exterior doorknobs and handles, push plates, tables, counter tops, elevator buttons, sinks and railings.

VCERA work practices must include work surface sanitizing throughout the workday. VCERA is responsible for assessing and ordering the supplies necessary to fulfill VCERA's needs, such as hand and surface sanitizers for common areas and equipment. There may be times when sanitization supplies are unavailable, so VCERA acknowledges the need to be flexible in instituting alternative measures to address supply disruptions or changes in recommended practices.

VCERA staff members are expected to perform the following cleaning and disinfection measures using supplied disinfectant products:

- Thorough cleaning of public counters and common area work surfaces following use.
- Cleaning and disinfecting personal work areas often.
- Sanitizing of common touch points, such as door handles in the workspace.
- Staff should avoid sharing office equipment, such as telephones, computer keyboards and headsets. Where sharing is needed, equipment shall be disinfected between users.



Restroom facilities open to employees and the public provide soap and towels or air-drying facilities to accommodate frequent handwashing. Staff are encouraged to wash hands frequently throughout the day and following contact with others.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Cloth facemasks are available for staff. While not required by the County Health Officer, staff may wear masks on a voluntary basis. For resupply of PPE, contact County Human Resources at (805) 654-3611.



## Appendices

### **A-1: County COVID-19 Training Program - “COVID 19 Guidance for Reentry to Office Space”**



# A-2: County COVID-19 Info Sheet & Flowcharts



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# A-3: Sample Workplace Evaluation Form



# **A-4: County of Ventura COVID-19 Social Distancing Policy April 21, 2020**



# **A-5: Guidance for County Employees – Frequently Asked Questions**



# **A-6: County Quarantine Protocol Frequently Asked Questions**



# A-7: Resources