

MEMO

TO: All LASMNY EMPLOYEES
FROM: Paul J. Lupia, Executive Director
DATE: March 15, 2020
RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Flu Prevention

The Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc. (LASMNY) and Legal Services Corporation (LSCNY), consider the health and safety of our employees and their families our priority. We have been closely tracking the news of the Coronavirus (formally known as COVID-19). We value our employees and clients, and our desire is to act responsibly when considering the steps we should take in our workplaces as we respond with this pandemic, a national emergency.

However, COVID-19 continues to evolve and change daily. We will continue to provide updates to you as we become aware of them.

LASMMY and LSCNY are working on business disruption plans which should be completed by the week of March 16, 2020. These plans will address matters such as potential office closures, work-from-home capabilities and other arrangements. The instructions in this memo are preliminary and could change as events change. We have attempted to use consistent policies and practices for LASMNY and LSCNY, but given different work types of each organization and contractual obligations there may be different plans or instructions for each organization. Instructions and plans may also vary for each of our eight (8) offices.

COMMUNICATION

For LASMNY and LSCNY employees, instructions and plans will be posted on ADP's Home Page for all employees to view and emailed to all employees. Please check your emails and ADP Home Page daily as instructions are subject to change.

TEMPORARY GUIDELINES - RESPONDING TO VISITORS TO OFFICES

As new Coronavirus cases are detected in New York, we are asking for your cooperation with temporary guidelines for meetings with existing clients and applicants. These procedures are designed to protect the health of our employees and clients, including those who may be particularly vulnerable to respiratory illness.

Employees are encouraged to use telephone and video conferencing instead of face-to-face meetings as much as possible during this outbreak. Effective immediately, provide all clients your direct phone number during all conversations and, if meeting in person, provide the client with your business card.

Ask clients not to come into the office if they are ill. Inform the clients that they may be sent home upon arrival if they demonstrate virus symptoms. Offer the client to meet with them over the telephone to the extent possible.

If a client, applicant or other visitor arrives at the office with signs of respiratory illness (coughing, sneezing, etc.), you should ask them to leave for the health and safety of other clients and our employees. If you are meeting with an existing client that is unable to reschedule because the client is facing a legal emergency, then be particularly careful about the following procedures to limit the spread of any illness.

If you ask an applicant for services or an existing client facing a legal emergency to leave the office/building, you should explain that to reduce health risks to both clients and our employees, we are limiting in-person intakes and initial interviews at this time. We will prepare an instruction sheet that can be given to applicants. Be aware that we should still do our best to communicate to our potential applicants so that they understand how they can apply for services beyond just handing them the instruction sheet. Discuss and explain the information listed below with the applicant.

Call the applicant to complete an intake. For each office, you will provide the applicant the phone number of the front desk, not the Helpline number.

If the applicant has access to the internet, they can complete an online application for LASMNY.

OFFICE CLEANING

We are asking our housekeeping staff and cleaning services in all of our buildings and offices for the additional procedures they will use in their cleaning processes. We are encouraging all employees to take an active role in cleaning our work areas. We have attempted to purchase cleaning supplies, but that is not always possible given the short supplies in retail outlets and online suppliers. If any employee purchases cleaning supplies for use in the office, submit the receipt for reimbursement.

IF YOU ARE SICK

If you feel any signs of illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, sore throat, persistent chest pain/pressure), **DO NOT COME TO WORK**. Employees should seek medical care to help relieve the symptoms. Please immediately notify your supervisor **and** Director of Human Resources by phone at (315) 793-7069 or email Christine.McClean@LASMNY.org.

We are temporarily suspending the requirement of a doctor's note if you are to be out for more than three (3) days. However, if you have been out for an illness or caring for someone who is ill for five (5) or more days, please talk to the Director of Human Resources before returning to work. For the health and safety of your employees, it is required for you to provide a return to work slip from your doctor prior to returning to the office. Please contact the Director of Human Resources to discuss your specific situation. **DO NOT** bring your children or other family members or friends to the workplace.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

The plan that will be posted next week will address how and in what form we will continue operations as we respond to health concerns in our communities. Will LASMNY have sufficient revenue to pay our employees? We are currently projecting sufficient cash through the March 30th payroll. We have a \$1 million line of credit.

Our ability to meet our payroll responsibilities and processing paychecks for employees, relies on LASMNY receiving revenue from our funders. To receive the income revenue, we must bill the funders for the work we accomplished. Given the uncertainty of how the Coronavirus will affect our funding, we know that it is a possibility that our income revenues will be held up for payment. Of the many things we cannot answer right now, funding and cash flow are the highest on the list. That is why it is vitally important for all employees to keep contemporaneous time records in KEMPS so we have the ability to bill our funders for the services provided to our clients in order to receive our income revenue from our funding sources.

BUSINESS TRAVEL/TRAININGS/MEETINGS

All non-essential business travel is cancelled. LASMNY is temporarily suspending all community outreach and pro bono clinics. Employees are highly encouraged not to participate in group meetings and functions in person. We will keep you advised when we are made aware of cancellations of County Bar and CLE functions.

If you are traveling for non-business reasons (vacations, etc.), please notify your supervisor and Director of Human Resources prior to traveling to discuss, if any, what precautions should be taken upon returning to the office.

KEEPING THE WORKPLACE SAFE

The protocol for protecting yourself and others in the workplace against COVID-19 is outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. These are simple everyday practices that can be used both at home and in the workplace to protect against bacteria and viruses. We encourage employees to be proactive in taking steps to reduce the transmission of communicable diseases in the workplace. Employees are reminded of the following:

- Wash your hands frequently with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds;
- Stay home if you have symptoms of fever, coughing, sneezing and shortness of breath;
- Avoid people who are sick with respiratory symptoms;
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Maintain six (6) feet of space between others (social distancing);
- Avoid shaking hands and hugging;
- Use gloves for handling mail;
- Avoid non-essential travel and crowds;
- Change clothes after public outings.

In addition, clean and disinfect personal workspace items that are frequently touched, such as your desk, computer mouse and keyboard, copier, fax machine, door knobs, with cleaning spray or wipes.

LASMNY will provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers, cleaning wipes, Kleenex and gloves, as they are available, throughout the workplace and in common areas. Again, if you are able to purchase any supplies, LASMNY will reimburse you for the cost of the supplies.

KNOW YOUR RISK

The people that are at the highest risk are older adults, over 60, and people with serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes and lung disease.

THOUGHTS FOR PREPARATION PLAN

Given the uncertainty of circumstances, out of our control, for receiving your paycheck if you do not have direct deposit, you may want to consider the direct deposit process for your paycheck.

If you have LASMNY's Excellus medical coverage, you may want to review the process for the 90-day prescription mail order process.

HOW TO STAY INFORMED ON COVID-19

[Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

World Health Organization

NYS Department of Health

Oneida County Health Department

Excellus BlueCross Blue Shield

Thank you for your flexibility and understanding. If you have specific questions or concerns, please speak with your supervisor, myself or the Director of Human Resources.