

From: list <GOV_EmployeeCommunication@LIST.CT.GOV> on behalf of Governor Lamont <Governor.Lamont@CT.GOV>

Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 12:22:04 PM

To: GOV_EmployeeCommunication@LIST.CT.GOV <GOV_EmployeeCommunication@LIST.CT.GOV>

Subject: Getting back to our new normal

Dear fellow state employees:

Thank you for everything you have done throughout this last year to ensure that the state has been able to continue providing services to Connecticut residents and businesses throughout the pandemic. The past 15 months have tested our state in ways we never could have imagined, but your dedication has helped Connecticut mount one of the most comprehensive and effective responses in the nation to the risks and impacts of COVID-19.

Fortunately, our efforts are helping us prevail against this virus, with rapidly declining cases and hospitalizations and the highest percentage of the eligible population fully vaccinated in the nation. As a result, next week on May 19 all remaining business restrictions will be lifted, with the exception of the requirement to wear a mask indoors. In line with businesses across the state, it is time for us to plan for our new normal working environment. There are two key dates coming up:

- **June 1:** By June 1, all customer facing services will have resumed “normal business operations.” This means that those agencies that traditionally provide in-person services will do so in the same way they did prior to the pandemic, with the exception of wearing face coverings where required and limiting crowds in waiting areas. These agencies should also continue to utilize new approaches that proved effective and popular during the pandemic, such as enabling residents to make appointments in advance. Most of our customer-facing offices have already been open for months and have received a lot of great feedback on new online services and appointment strategies that have helped cut down on lines and waits, so this should bring minimal changes in most cases.
- **July 1:** By July 1, we will continue with the pre-COVID-19 interim telework guidelines, which allows eligible employees, in the covered bargaining units and

others including managers, to work from home up to 50% of the time with manager approval. Agency heads will work to stagger teleworking schedules to keep the number of people in the office reduced to support distancing, but with low levels of community spread and use of masks in common areas or where distancing is not possible, we are confident it is safe to return to the office. As we move forward, the state will continue discussions with the unions in an effort to finalize the telework guidelines that contemplates the considerable experience gained during this challenging period.

We know that you'll have questions, and we're working closely with each agency's leadership to ensure that policies are in place to keep state employees safe and healthy.

I'm sure some people will receive this news with some concern after more than a year of working from home and taking extreme precautions to keep ourselves and our families safe. I can assure you that there is nothing more effective for building confidence than getting vaccinated, as all three of the authorized vaccines have proven remarkably safe and effective at preventing COVID infection and illness. If you still need your vaccine or are looking for the latest information about the COVID-19 vaccine in Connecticut, please visit ct.gov/covidvaccine.

It was important to me to share these dates with you now so that you have time to prepare and can make any arrangements necessary to be back at the office with your colleagues as Connecticut gets back to business.

Thank you again for all that you do, and I look forward to seeing you back in the office soon.

Sincerely,

Ned Lamont

Governor