

From: [Romero, Nadine](#)
To: [Orange County](#)
Subject: Keep Each Other Safe
Date: Friday, April 10, 2020 4:34:53 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[Cloth Face Coverings Guidance.pdf](#)
[FAQ Version 5 - Disaster Service Worker Program - 4-10-20.pdf](#)

Dear County Family,

Thank you all for another week of outstanding work to support the residents of Orange County. It was an extremely busy week but also a successful one because of all of you. The week included a meeting of the Board of Supervisors (BOS) in another Tuesday Special Meeting where they received a fully briefing by many County departments on the ongoing efforts to prepare and address COVID-19 related issues. I want to thank everyone that contributes to these highly informative briefings. The volume of work that is accomplished each week is impressive and we are effectively communicating the progress and facts related to COVID-19 through many different communication channels including our website which is second to none.

As we deliver such vital services, employee safety continues to be of utmost importance. Personal protective equipment (PPE) continues to be a focus of our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team to ensure that our first responders and health care workers have the critical safety equipment they need. In addition, I am glad to announce that the County has ordered 100,000 cloth face coverings for use by all County employees. An initial shipment of 20,000 face coverings arrive tomorrow and will be immediately distributed as scheduled on Monday. The distribution will start with those employees that are coming into work but quickly all employees will be provided at least two face coverings as we soon receive the final shipments. The face coverings are washable and it will be up to each employee to maintain their individual face coverings as needed. Attached to this email is guidance provided by our Employee Health Office on how employees can safely use cloth face coverings when they are at work or when they need to leave their home for a short period to obtain essential goods or services.

As employees of the County, we are all Disaster Services Workers (DSW). It is important that we are examples to the community in taking steps to keep ourselves and our coworkers safe. Regularly washing our hands, social distancing, avoid touching our faces, among others are important but it is vital that employees that are feeling sick STAY HOME. I can't emphasize this enough. Please respect your fellow employees by continually evaluating your health and taking the steps required to protect each other.

Finally, as DSWs we need to be ready to help the Orange County community get through this crisis. Attached to this email is Version 5 of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). This version is focused on our responsibilities as a DSW. Residents are counting on us and I know we will be there to meet any challenge. As always you can discuss any questions related to the attachment with your supervisor or HR representative.

Again, thank you and have a safe weekend.



Frank Kim

County Executive Officer

County of Orange

Hall of Administration

333 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Third Floor

Santa Ana, CA 92701

Office: (714) 834-6201

www.ocgov.com

Guidance for the Use of Cloth (Washable) Face Coverings

This document provides information on how employees can safely use cloth face coverings when they are at work or need to leave their home for a short period to obtain essential goods or services.

There is limited evidence to suggest that use of cloth face coverings by the public during a pandemic could help reduce disease transmission. Their primary role is to reduce the release of infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19 but feels well.

The use of certified Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as N95 respirator masks for non-medical purposes is strongly discouraged. There is a shortage of necessary PPE medical supplies, especially masks, for our medical providers and first responders who are treating COVID-19 patients.

When to wear a cloth face covering

Orange County's Public Health Officer **strongly recommends** that you wear a cloth face covering when you will be in public for essential activities, such as your job or shopping at the grocery store. It is important to note that face coverings are not a substitute for practicing physical distancing and frequent handwashing.

How to wear a cloth face covering

Cloth face coverings should:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- Include multiple layers of fabric
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

Some people may have conditions that make it difficult to wear a face covering or mask. If you develop a skin irritation or have difficulty breathing, remove the mask and consult your supervisor.

Washing a cloth face covering

It is a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily. Have a bag or bin to keep cloth face coverings in until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face.

Discard cloth face coverings that:

- No longer cover the nose and mouth
- Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- Cannot stay on the face
- Have holes or tears in the fabric

For more information

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-faq.html>
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Face-Coverings-Guidance.aspx>

**CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (“COVID-19”)
GUIDANCE FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
APPLICABLE THROUGH March 31, 2020 *Extended to April 30, 2020
SUBJECT TO UPDATE AND EXTENSION-Version 5**

DISASTER SERVICE WORKER PROGRAM

The County values its employees and understands that the COVID-19 crisis may be creating a difficult and stressful situation for employees’ work and personal lives. The County is committed to providing employees with as much information as possible to help navigate a variety of uncertainties, and has developed guidelines, procedures and responses to frequently asked questions below.

If questions arise that are not answered below, please contact your Department Human Resources Manager (HR). Given the fluidity of the situation, the procedures described below are subject to change. This guidance will be updated as additional information becomes available.

Please note that the County is following State and Federal guidelines to promote a safe workplace during the COVID-19 crisis. Just as we are committed to our employees, as a local government, we are also committed to providing critical health and safety services to Orange County’s citizens.

Information distributed to employees will be maintained at <http://www.ocgov.com/gov/ceo/covid19employeeinfo> for future reference. In addition, an email address has been established for employee questions (CEOCOM@ocgov.com). Responses to the questions will be provided daily to all County employees and may be incorporated into future updates of this document.

This version is dedicated to questions and answers of disaster service workers.

DISASTER SERVICE WORKER PROGRAM - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The State of California and County of Orange (County) have declared a Health Emergency in response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The emergency declaration activates the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Program for California public employees. Activation of the DSW program means that County employees will serve to protect the health, safety and preservation of lives during this crisis. DSWs are currently working to serve the needs of County residents and employees by coordinating housing, delivering meals, answering questions at call-centers, caring for children in the custody of the County and assisting the homeless, among many other critical activities.

All County employees are DSWs and can be redeployed at any time, without prior notice, to a DSW position to assist during these times of need. As departments identify employees to assume DSW assignments, they must ensure that each County employee is ready and able to handle the identified assignment.

A few departments have chosen to solicit "first takers" that have signed up for DSW assignments on a voluntary basis. Employees must be informed that the DSW role is an emergency assignment, and employees do not have the discretion to determine the type of assignment they want or when it will be worked. Also, managers and supervisors should be informed that employees assigned to full-time projects should not be called and

asked to leave the emergency assignment. Once assigned to a project, the worksite manager or coordinator will have discretion and responsibility for managing and working with the DSW to assign work as needed.

To assist departments with answers to some of the most frequently asked questions regarding the DSW Program, attached you will find a DSW Frequently Asked Questions booklet. The booklet includes detailed information about the DSW program, sample letters, and contact information should there be questions regarding the program or assignments.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and continued support of this important effort to assist our County residents during the COVID-19 emergency.

Should you have any questions, please contact your supervisor or HR representative.

46. What is the DSW Program?

State law and the County of Orange (County) Policy establish that all public employees, including County employees, are DSWs. In addition, the Orange County Code permits the County to mobilize its workforce to provide emergency services in the event of an emergency. The DSW Program facilitates deployment of public employees to perform activities outside of their regular employment to promote the protection of lives or mitigate the effects of a disaster. The DSW designation is important not only to help mobilize the County workforce to respond to an emergency, but because it also allows the County to comply with State and Federal emergency management guidelines and allows for future Federal emergency management funding.

47. What does the County consider when creating DSW assignments?

The County's DSW needs during a disaster are generally dictated by the impact of the emergency. There are two DSW duty categories: General (e.g. administrative, support staff, fiscal or logistics) and Specialized (e.g. something that requires a specialized license, experience or training). Where possible and as needed, the County will assign employees to a DSW position that most closely aligns with their customary job duties or skill sets. Depending on the emergency, employees will also be directed to work in assignments that may be different from their usual and customary duties and may also be in different locations throughout the County. DSWs will be provided with adequate, on-site, or "just-in-time" training to ensure they can complete their assigned duties safely and effectively. Employees who currently work in classifications with verifiable, certified skills will be expected to fulfill specialized DSW duties or in support of essential functions throughout the County.

48. How are Disaster Service Worker assignments determined?

Again, the County's DSW needs during a disaster are generally dictated by the impact of the emergency. When the Board of Supervisors declares an emergency, the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated. Departments that provide critical services in responding to the emergency may need additional resources to provide emergency services and request DSW support through the EOC. The EOC will work with the requesting department to determine staffing needs, and either the department or HR then secures County DSWs to support the need and provides a list to EOC. EOC then gives that list to the requesting department so it can carry out its mission with the additional DSW resources. The department or agency that requested the DSW support becomes responsible for managing the DSWs assigned to support its mission.

49. What are some examples of DSW assignments in the County of Orange?

Examples of DSW responsibilities related to the COVID-19 crisis may include: Registering or assisting people at a housing shelter; translating for non-English-speaking individuals; answering phones for a COVID-19 hotline; helping to operate temporary facilities; delivering or serving meals, etc.

50. Who can be a DSW? Which authorities designate County employees as DSWs?

Pursuant to Government Code § 3100, all public employees are declared to be disaster services workers and are subject to such disaster service activities that may be assigned to them by their superiors or by law. Under the Government Code County employees are obligated to perform disaster service duties if ordered as a result of an emergency or a disaster event. A disaster event could be any emergency situation that stems from natural, human-made, or terrorism events. County employees may not opt out of DSW participation.

Additionally, Orange County Codified Ordinance § 3-1-6(b)(3) provides that the County, through its Director of Emergency Services, is empowered to require emergency services of any County officer or employee.

As DSWs, employees will perform duties that may be different from their regular work assignments and may also be assigned to different work locations. Any public employee can be considered a DSW and may be directed to perform emergency services as required under State and local law.

51. Can Departments request "first takers" for available DSW assignments?

When a DSW need is communicated, employees may, and are encouraged to, come forward to take an assignment. However, doing so does NOT mean the DSW position is a "volunteer" assignment that can be worked and/or terminated at an employee's choice. If departments choose to solicit "first takers" rather than make assignments, the department must ensure that the employee is ready and able to be deployed to the emergency assignment.

52. What if Departments seek "first takers" for DSW assignments and get no response?

Given the emergency need, the County's expectation is that departments will affirmatively assign employees to DSW posts until the need is met. Department Heads have the ultimate authority to make work reassignments as needed. In an emergency, public employees may be released from their usual duties so that they can be assigned to assist any agency or organization carrying out its emergency response duties.

53. How should a DSW assignment be communicated to an employee?

Employees may be given verbal or written direction to report to a DSW assignment; however, if practicable employees should be given formal notice acknowledging the assignment. These notices may be issued by the department, assigned project managers, EOC Management or HRS.

Attached are sample COVID-19: Disaster Service Worker Reassignment templates. If issued, a copy of this notice should be retained in the employee's personnel file.

HRS and/or the EOC will also contact assigned employees directly to provide assignment details and reporting instructions.

54. Can an employee refuse to take a DSW assignment?

All County employees are designated by State law as DSWs and are expected to report to duty when called upon. If an employee is assigned and otherwise available but refuses to accept a DSW assignment, the department should meet with the employee to address any concerns about the assignment. If an employee identifies work restrictions that prevent DSW service, that issue must be managed as any other work restriction, including holding an Interactive Process Meeting if necessary. If the employee is unable to work the assignment, the department should consider whether there is an alternate and more appropriate assignment. If the employee is deemed able to work the assignment but continues to refuse, the department should issue the employee a direct order in writing. The direct order should inform the employee of the department's expectations and consequences should they fail to adhere to the order. If the employee does not adhere to the order, the department may take further administrative action.

55. Are Departments responsible for managing their employees assigned as DSWs?

When assigned to an emergency assignment, the site manager will have primary responsibility for managing and monitoring each of their assigned DSWs. Departments will remain responsible for administrative responsibilities associated with their employee, including but not limited to the processing of timesheets and any possible workers' compensation claims. Communication about a DSW's assignment should be directly between the employee's home department and the DSW assignment site/department. However, HRS remains available to help resolve any HR-related issues.

56. Are employees compensated for time over their regular hours?

Overtime and other compensation is provided in accordance with established law, MOUs and County policy.

57. How should employees code DSW work time?

A project code is assigned to each emergency event by the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Task orders will be determined by each department based on the task to which the employee(s) are assigned. It is possible that a given department will generate multiple task codes per each project code established by the EOC. Department administration teams will determine task codes as needed. The EOC finance section will be able to provide guidance to departments on DSW work time coding.

58. Will DSWs remain on their assigned work schedules?

Assignment managers will make every effort to keep employees on their current work schedules or shifts. Decisions whether employees will be required to alter existing schedules, work weekends, overtime or evenings will depend on the nature of the assignment.

59. Should work restrictions be considered when reassigning an employee as a DSW?

When Departments are provided descriptions of emergency assignments requiring DSWs, they should consider the appropriateness of the assignment for its employees. If there are any questions regarding the expectations of an assignment or whether an employee is appropriate for a particular emergency position, the Department should contact HR for additional guidance.

60. What if an employee is injured or becomes ill while performing DSW duties?

Claims sustained by public employees while performing disaster services shall be filed as workers' compensation claims under the same authorities and guidelines as with all County employees within their Department or agency.

61. Who should I contact with additional questions about DSW assignments?

For additional questions, please contact your supervisor or HR representative.

Sample 1 DSW Reassignment Letter



To:

Date Completed:

From:

Department:

RE: COVID-19 Disaster Services Worker Reassignment

This letter serves to inform you of your reassignment to serve as a Disaster Services Worker (DSW). The reassignment will last as long as you are needed to provide emergency assistance or upon notice from the Department or your site manager.

Your reassignment will begin effective, at and you will report to the individual and location listed below:

Site Manager:

Phone:

Reporting Location:

Print

Save

Sample 2 DSW Reassignment Letter



DATE

To:

NAME

TITLE

DIVISION

From:

NAME

TITLE

Subject: COVID-19 Disaster Services Worker Reassignment

The California Government Code, Section 3100-3109 designates public employees as Disaster Service Workers (DSW) and requires them to provide assistance and service during emergencies and in times of crises. As an employee of the County of Orange, you are required to be available for assignments when emergencies arise as requested by your department.

You have been identified as a **(General or Specialized)** Duty DSW employee. As a DSW, you will be required to report to an alternate work location for the duration of the assignment.

Effective , , you are assigned to:

DAY DATE

<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>

The purpose of this reassignment is to provide needed staffing, support and technical services to **(Department of Emergency Services)**.

During your assignment you will report to , administrator, who is also assigned as a DSW. They can be reached at .

I would like to personally thank you for your professional handling of this matter. If you have any questions, I can be reached at .

Print

Save