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Susanne R. Young, Secretary

To: All State of Vermont Employees

From: Susanne R. Young, Secretary of Administration

Date: March 10, 2020

Re: COVID-19 (coronavirus) in Vermont

Last week, the Secretary's Office advised all state employees about how to access the most current facts and guidance about the COVID-19 (coronavirus) in Vermont. The Vermont Department of Health is updating the information daily on their website at <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus>.

You are encouraged to check the site often for updated information and guidance on many frequently asked questions. The guidance includes helpful information on how to help keep respiratory illnesses like COVID-19 from spreading, travel information and situation updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

As a reminder, there are every day common sense actions every one of us can take to help keep illness from spreading at work, at home, and in our communities:

- Wash your hands often and well with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve or a tissue. Throw tissue in the trash.
- Don't shake hands as a greeting – a simple head nod achieves the same goal.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

In addition to taking the above steps individually, I have directed the Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS) to institute heightened work, engineering, and space controls to help maintain healthy buildings and help reduce the spread of illnesses in state-owned and state-leased buildings. The protocols noted below were recently developed and are currently under implementation:



- Heightened cleaning and disinfection efforts, such as frequently cleaning “high touch” surfaces including common areas, client-service areas, doorknobs, railings, and restrooms.
- Using damp rather than dry dusting to avoid spreading dust particles.
- Moving restroom wastebaskets next to restrooms doors allowing employees and visitors to use towels to open doors.
- Instituting tailored Heating, Ventilation, and Air Condition (HVAC) protocols to circulate additional fresh air into our buildings and ensure HVAC systems and components such as filters are operating at optimal performance.
- Distributing hand sanitizer in common areas of buildings that house vulnerable populations such as correctional facilities and mental health care facilities and those office that deal directly with the public on a daily basis. Hand sanitizer (see above) is not a substitute for frequent handwashing, however, use when soap and water are available.
- Displaying posters promoting proper hand-washing techniques in restrooms.

Again, we want to convey our gratitude to all our colleagues who have worked tirelessly to provide the most updated information and guidance available to our work force and all Vermonters.