COVID-19 EMPLOYEE FAQS¹ (3/23/2020)

1. Will I continue to be paid during the extended COVID-19 closure period?
   Yes, all full-time employees will continue to be compensated during the COVID-19 pandemic disaster closure.

2. Which employee groups are expected to work during the disaster declaration?
   All exempt ², professional employees, excluding Head Start center based employees are expected to work during the disaster declaration. Where feasible, exempt employees will work from home remotely, maintaining their regular hours and schedules.

   Non-exempt employees, who are deemed essential personnel may be called upon to work during the disaster declaration. All time worked by non-exempt employees, shall be tracked and will be compensated at the overtime rate of pay.

3. If I’m expected to work remotely during the regular work hours, do I need to take leave for any days or hours I’m not able to work?
   Yes, any employee who will not be available to work during normal business hours will be required to take personal leave (AL/SL), as appropriate per normal leave guidelines and policies.

4. What are the professional development expectations for employees during the COVID-19 disaster period?
   TCA is committed to highest quality, evidenced based services, as evidenced in our Strategic Direction # 4–Agency Capacity Building: TCA staff has skills, knowledge, training and competencies to ensure high quality services and improved client outcomes. TCA will utilize the COVID-19 closures to provide all staff with professional development assignments, online activities, and independent study.

5. What are the expectations for employees who do not have laptops or internet access at home?
   We are committed to all employees having access to professional development assignment’s and opportunities. One of our strategies is to provide printed workbook versions of the independent learning activities. We are continuously reviewing our professional development plans to determine how to support all of our employees.

¹ Frequently Asked Questions
² Exempt employees are employees who are exempt from hourly wage laws as defined in Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and exempt from OT pay. Specifically, that is employees whose annual salary is $35,568.00 or more.
6. **Is there any way to work from my center/ or the TCA offices? Working remotely from home isn’t a good option for me?**

Not at this time, we are following the local and state guidance, by limiting the potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus. We are directing all employees whose work duties allow them to work remotely to do so, until further guidance is provided.

7. **If I’m taking work-related calls on personal phone working remotely, will I be compensated for using my personal phone?**

TCA is not considering additional compensation for employees to use personal cell phones at this time.

8. **If I know my colleague has tested positive for the Coronavirus (COVID-19), should I share that information with my co-workers?**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) Privacy Rule (Standards for Privacy of Individuals Identifiable Health Information) establishes a set of national standards for the protection of certain health information. As the coronavirus (COVID-19) is a pandemic health emergency, TCA employees testing positive have two accountabilities: (1) reporting their contacts to the Public Health department, and following all guidelines and requirements as provided by public health; and (2) upon return to duty providing TCA with a medical clearance from a licensed health care professional.

Any communication of *an employee's* health condition, outside the organization's need to know, is a violation of HIPPA, making the individual and the agency liable.

9. **What are the expectations for parents during the school closure?**

TCA Head Start parents are expected to stay abreast of communications and updates relative to the program and TCA; and to utilize the age appropriate resources of the 30 day school readiness packet, provided at the center and on the TCA website. Parents are to contact their centers through center emergency phone number with questions or concerns. Follow the instructions and guidance of the Governor, Mayor and public health officials, keeping themselves and or children safe.

**COMPLETE the 2020 CENSUS, make sure our children are counted!**

10. **What are the resources available to employees?**

The TCA website [www.tca-nola.org](http://www.tca-nola.org) has links to several community and agency resources available during the pandemic disaster closures. Additionally, the city website [www.nola.gov](http://www.nola.gov) has resources for families, and business.

**Stressed about COVID-19? We're here to talk**

If you are feeling overwhelmed with stress, fear and anxiety about the uncertainty surrounding this public health emergency, there is a special *Keeping Calm through COVID* Hotline you can call. This connects you to trained, compassionate counselors who can offer support and who can direct you to mental health and substance abuse counseling services. **Call 1-866-310-7977 24/7** Trained counselors available 24/7. All calls are confidential.