

## Subject Line: Telework Extended Through January 8, 2021

Dear City employees,

We're experiencing one of the most consequential times in history. Right now, our city and country are facing the crises of a global COVID-19 pandemic, job losses and economic devastation not seen since the Great Depression, and a nationwide civil rights movement to reckon with police violence and systemic racism. We not only feel the weight of these crises as community members, but, as public servants, it's our responsibility to meet these challenges and help our communities in need.

As one of the largest employers in Seattle, our actions can help slow the spread of COVID-19. Public health measures like social distancing, wearing a face covering, and avoiding gatherings remain absolutely critical. One key recommendation from Public Health - Seattle & King County is to continue to telework if feasible. If we disregard public health guidance, we risk a significant surge of the virus in our communities which could overwhelm our health care system and cause another statewide stay home order.

Along with our partner governments at King County, the Port of Seattle, and some other large employers, we have extended our [telework guidance](#) through January 8, 2021. During this time, all employees who are eligible to telework should continue to telework. Some employees will return to their worksites as operational needs require. Managers will continue to be as flexible as possible in allowing for employees to continue to telework when operationally feasible, and employees should consult with their manager if they have concerns with continuing to telework. So many of our workers and first responders do not have the option of teleworking, and I am deeply grateful to all those who continue to serve on the frontlines and keep our City running. As a city, we have created free citywide testing, provided facial coverings and PPE, created new health and safety protections in each of our facilities, and we will continue to ensure public health requirements for our frontline workers.

The pandemic has continued to make difficult decisions about our workplace, and extending this telework guidance is the right thing to do. The City put together a [guide](#) to help you navigate technology needs associated with telework, and Seattle IT [hosts regular classes](#) to help employees telework comfortably. I encourage you to explore these resources if you haven't already.

The gravity of this moment has taken a toll on each of us – I know it has for me. Each day, I'm learning and growing and accepting that I don't have all the answers to these incredible circumstances facing our city and country. But part of what keeps me going is the determination and passion that exists within our 12,000-strong workforce. We have what it takes to make true and lasting change. Thanks for everything you do.

Stay safe and healthy,

Jenny