Plan for Minnesota’s schools and DOC resources

7.31.20

Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday, Governor Walz signed Executive Order 20-82, which outlines a plan for Minnesota’s K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize the impact that upcoming decisions made by your local school districts will have on you and your family. We’re all in this together, and we will continue to do what we can to honor your personal obligations while balancing the essential services we provide as a Priority 1 critical service agency.

As the school year approaches, please be in communication with your supervisor about how your local school district decisions impact you. Please explore alternative options in the case that local school district decisions to close or shift to distance learning require care for your children at home – and have a backup plan in place if you are required to report to work.

In coordination with Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB), our agency has policies and resources in place to help you if you’re affected by situations related to COVID-19. They include:

- The option to telework, even with your children present, if you are not providing direct service or security as long as you can perform your job duties;
- Paid COVID-19 Leave or Extended FMLA for health and care needs related to COVID-19;
- Access to Doctors on Demand and the agency’s in-house Peer Support team that can be reached by calling 651.361.7110 or emailing peersupportunit.doc@state.mn.us.

If you are looking for child care or school-age care information, here are some good resources:

- Child Care Aware referral line at 1-888-291-9811 lists available licensed child care providers.
- MN.gov/childcare contains a map of available providers and those willing to support distance learning.
- Parent Aware has tools and information to find the best quality child care and early education for your child. Search more than 12,000 programs by quality rating, location, schedule, ages served, and more on the website. The website is presented in four different languages.
- Community Education and other school-based care programs promote learning and social development through after school and school-age programming for students. Contact your local school district office for more information.

I do hope you’re doing as well as can be expected right now. These have been incredibly challenging times, and it feels like we can’t catch a break. Please hang in there, lean on each other and reach out if you need additional support. Thank you for the public service you provide and for your understanding as we navigate the pandemic and our budget challenges.

Stay safe, and stay healthy.

Marcus Schmit
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