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TDS Family,

Our work continues! **As a designated essential service for our communities and because of you, our faithful employees, we continue to offer a Noticeably Different, Noticeably Better service to all of our customers and the communities we serve. Please know that your work is noticed and greatly appreciated.**

Your health and safety are our top priority and we believe that the best way to support you is to provide the most current information available so that you can make the best decisions for you, your health, and your families.

### **What is COVID-19 (coronavirus)?**

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus that causes respiratory illness. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

### **How is the virus transmitted?**

The virus is thought to [spread mainly from person-to-person](#).

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Spread from contact with virus-contaminated surfaces or objects and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

### **Watch for symptoms –**

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases. [According to the CDC](#), these symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure** (based on the incubation period of MERS-CoV viruses).

- Fever greater than [100.4°F](#)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

If you develop [emergency warning signs](#) for COVID-19 get **medical attention immediately**.

Emergency warning signs include\*

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

*\*This list is not comprehensive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.*

**TRAVIS COUNTY JUDGE ORDER No. 2020-05**  
**APPLIES TO EMPLOYEES AT OUR CREEDMOOR FACILITY**

As required by the March 24, 2020 [Travis County Order](#), prior to allowing employees into any facility in the county, I ask all employees to notify their manager if they feel feverish and meet any of the COVID-19 criteria:

- has signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat;
- for Travis County facilities only - has a fever greater than 99.6°F;
- in the previous 14 days has had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 and did not have the appropriate personal protective equipment designated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); is under investigation for COVID-19; or is ill with a respiratory illness; or has traveled to an area the World Health Organization or CDC considered a “hot spot” is expected to follow the initial self-quarantine recommendations.

Employers shall direct employees to return home if the employee is exhibiting the applicable temperature and other symptoms, which presents a threat of infecting other employees at the critical infrastructure facility.

**ALL EMPLOYEES**

Employees who are concerned that they may be experiencing fever and other symptoms consistent with COVID-19 are encouraged to seek medical attention. Employees who begin to experience fever or other COVID-19 symptoms while at work should notify their manager immediately.

Employers shall direct employees to return home if the employee is exhibiting a fever and other symptoms, which presents a threat of infecting other employees.

The employee may return to work after he/she has been cleared by a medical professional. In the event an employee receives a test confirming COVID-19 infection, he/she is not allowed on work premises until he/she has submitted documentation from a medical professional to our HR department with a full clearance to return to work.

Employees may use their accrued PTO balance, and if available, their floating holiday during their COVID-19 related absence(s). Once these benefits have been exhausted, the employee's absence(s) will be unpaid by the company.

**Steps to Prevent Illness**

During this time, it is important to prevent disease from spreading. Employees can do this by doing the following:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.

**Protect yourself and others**

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Keep away from people who are sick.
- Limit close contact with others as much as possible (about 6 feet).
- Avoid congregating with co-workers in the breakrooms and common areas.
- Stay within your assigned building/work area. Do not enter other buildings unless assigned to do so.

**Paid Time Off (PTO) policy:**

As noted in the TDS Employee Handbook (page 8), PTO may be used as “sick leave” without meeting the prearrangement requirement. However, the absence must be excused under the TDS attendance policy. This policy requires that the employee notify his or her supervisor or manager three hours prior to the employee’s scheduled start time.

We care about your health and want you to do everything you can to remain symptom-free, but if you do get sick, we want you to take care of yourself and seek medical attention. Because this viral disease is transmitted from person-to-person, our facilities team will focus on proactive measures to promote a healthy workplace, including, but not limited to, the creation of separated work areas and more protected work spaces, hand sanitizing stations and social distancing. The work from home opportunities are only available depending on our ability to support computer and telephone interconnection to allow for uninterrupted services to our customers, and the need to maintain a closely managed environment. As additional information becomes available, we will evaluate and take appropriate actions. We are posting educational signage throughout our facilities. Please watch the monitors in our facilities for any updates.

Thank you for fulfilling the essential services we need to provide to our communities and for helping us meet the needs of the public. Thank you also for your understanding and your cooperation as we continue to create the needed separate work areas throughout our facilities and more protected work spaces. We are working diligently to protect each employee and to deliver the essential services our companies are relied upon to deliver, to the greatest extent we can safely do so.

I am working closely with our leadership team as we keep abreast of daily updates to legislation, regulations, and information from authoritative sources, including information on the proposed government stimulus and offerings. Please be assured that we will work to coordinate the benefits to any, and all of our employees and our companies.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 512-421-1384.

Respectfully,

Janice Brewster Martinez  
Director of Human Resources for each of our companies