

April 20, 2020

Christopher Cassidy  
AFSCME Local 2432

Sent via email: [chris.cassidy@local2432.com](mailto:chris.cassidy@local2432.com)

RE: Response to Employee Concerns Regarding Workplace Safety

Dear Mr. Cassidy: *Chris,*

We are in receipt of your letter dated March 31, 2020 regarding employee safety. As you will understand, working for a full service City such as the City of Hollywood, we have all been busy protecting the health and safety of both the public and our employees while still providing essential municipal services to our residents during this unprecedented pandemic.

As early as March 10, our Human Resources Office issued a Pandemic Preparedness and Response Policy which applies to the entire City and subsequently issued Infection Control Procedures. We began requiring employees to wear surgical masks and have their temperature taken at the beginning of each shift and upon entering our City Facilities. This also applied to all departments and divisions of the City. While the requirement is the same throughout the City, each Department has complied with it in different ways. For instance, our Parks and Recreation Department has employees reporting to the main administration building or ArtsPark for daily temperature checks before reporting to their outlying job site. We have been steadily purchasing more thermometers as Departments request them and most recently purchased Infrared Thermal Temperature Scanners for City Hall and Police Headquarters, which will make more thermometers available for outlying divisions if needed.

To make supply requests easier for Departments, we centralized logistics under our Fire and Rescue Department as early as March 25. Department Directors have all been trained on how to request supplies for their respective Departments and orders are fulfilled on a weekly, or sooner, basis. Unfortunately, we have had reports from Public Utilities of the theft of large amounts of supplies. This is disappointing during this unified effort to keep Hollywood safe and protected. As of April 1, the City has procured over \$50,000 in supplies and enhanced cleaning services and this amount increases every day. While it is discouraging to learn of much needed supplies disappearing from our facilities, it is inspiring to see so many others stepping up and donating hand sewn masks and pocket sanitizers to the City for us to distribute to our employees. These are pure acts of kindness and selflessness to help others and should be an inspiration to us all.

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Senior leadership moved quickly early on in this pandemic to secure City facilities and essential supplies; launch online services; and deploy necessary equipment to targeted areas. These decisions were in accordance with the City's emergency response plan, which helped make tough decisions easier this coordination and preparedness has proved vital as we continue to respond to COVID-19. Our first responders have the personal protective equipment (known as PPE's) they need to stay safe as they continue to respond to calls for service. Our Police Officers are on enhanced patrols, employees working at City facilities are wearing masks and practicing social distancing, and still others are telecommuting using their own resources to continue with their essential duties in service to our residents.

From the beginning of this emergency, we have strategically placed informational posters throughout our facilities to remind employees of the need to keep their work areas clean. Employees are encouraged to take individual responsibility and clean and wipe areas after using them. Our custodial personnel and services have been directed to increase the frequency of cleaning. Also, when required, we have hired outside contractors to perform deep disinfection in different work areas. As another layer of precaution, we have also ordered disinfecting apparatus for all our facilities.

While staffing at City facilities remains limited to essential personnel, employees continue to work via telecommuting options. Those who are reporting to a City facility are alternating shifts, practicing social distancing, and avoiding gathering with fellow employees. I am so very proud of how our employees have pivoted to this new normal and are embracing the tools and technologies available as they continue to provide customers with the service they expect. Any field employee who encounters a member of the public who does not adhere to the six-foot social distancing guidance issued by the CDC has been advised to tell the individual to keep their distance. Our Code Compliance Division also has the ability to remain in their vehicles and conduct inspections from their vehicles. Our Building Division worked with the Broward County Board of Rules and Appeals to launch virtual inspections for building permits.

Due to the nature of our operations, some of our maintenance employees work in teams and therefore they have to travel and perform work together. In these situations 6 feet separation cannot be maintained at all times. However, we require all the maintenance employees to wear PPE's throughout the duration of their work just as we do our Firefighters who ride in a 3 person rescue unit. In addition, we have ordered disinfecting apparatus that decontaminates all facilities and vehicles at the end of the day and as appropriate.

We have implemented both split and rotating schedules where operationally feasible. At Underground Utilities in particular, we are attempting to implement staggered schedules to avoid excess personnel at the changing facilities. We are also considering relocating a portion of the Underground Utilities employees to another building.

Because of the steadfast, early and thorough measures we have taken as a City, we are proud to report that to date, 5 employees have tested positive for COVID-19, and none of these cases was thus far deemed to be work acquired. Additionally, due to our intense mitigation, there has been no internal spread.

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We trust that AFSCME agrees that our entire workforce is working tirelessly and with fortitude, from senior leadership to emergency responders, from customer service representatives to our employees in the field. We are focused on providing our residents and our business owners with essential services during these unprecedented times, which, in turn will make us stronger as a team and more resilient as a City.

Sincerely,



Dr. Wazir Ishmael  
City Manager

cc George R. Keller, Jr. CPPT, Deputy City Manager  
Gus Zambrano, Assistant City Manager  
Adam Reichbach, Assistant City Manager  
John Berak, Local 2432 Vice President (Via E-mail [john.berak@local2432.com](mailto:john.berak@local2432.com))  
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