To our State of Connecticut executive branch agency employees,

Over the weekend we saw the first diagnosed cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Connecticut. As the disease spreads around the world, it has long been expected it would eventually surface here. We are very focused on ensuring that the offices in which each of our dedicated state employees work remain healthy and safe places to conduct business.

In addition to the prior guidance I’ve issued, including that anyone returning from a Level 2 or 3 country (China, Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea) not return to work and self-monitor at home for 14 days upon their return to the United States, we are taking some additional steps to help prevent and delay the spread of COVID-19. These actions include:

- An immediate freeze on state employee travel on state business outside of Connecticut until further notice. Any requested exceptions must be approved by your agency head in consultation with COO Josh Geballe.
- Any employees working with out-of-state contractors who travel to our Connecticut-based sites, planning to welcome out-of-state colleagues for meetings or other out-of-state visitors should evaluate whether these activities can proceed remotely though teleconference or online collaboration for the time being and, if so, should take that approach.
- I’ve asked agency heads to provide a list of any State of Connecticut-organized large meetings, conferences, or gatherings anticipated to have more than 100 people in attendance scheduled between now and April 30. Our administration will evaluate whether these events should move to teleconference or be postponed.
- For events or meetings with large numbers of people within arm’s length of each other, encourage those who are at higher risk due to age (70 or older), cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, or chronic lung diseases like COPD, as well as those with severely weakened immune systems, not to attend or dial in.
- For employees who have state-issued laptops, please get in the habit of bringing your laptops home with you each night to ensure maximum flexibility.
- We have directed our property management firms and cleaning contractors to increase the use of disinfectants when cleaning state office buildings and to increase the frequency of disinfectant cleaning, especially focusing on common touch points.

While these actions may feel overly disruptive to some given the very few cases we’ve seen so far in Connecticut, I believe they are appropriate to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and I’m encouraging all employers in Connecticut to take similar actions.

Key messages for our state employees and the general public:
• People without symptoms should not be tested for COVID-19. Testing individuals with no symptoms is not recommended by CDC.
• If you were with someone who does not have symptoms, the risk of transmission is very low.
• There are many respiratory illnesses circulating in Connecticut, such as the flu and the common cold. Having respiratory symptoms does not mean that you have COVID-19.
• People are at higher risk for COVID-19 if they have symptoms of the virus (cough, fever, shortness of breath) AND if they were in contact with a positive case of COVID-19 (or have traveled to country with community transmission, such as China, Italy, South Korea, Iran, and Japan).
• Someone is considered a contact if they have had direct, face-to-face contact with a person with COVID-19.
• People who think they have COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider. These people should not go directly to a healthcare facility without first calling a healthcare provider (unless they are experiencing a medical emergency).
• If you haven’t already, get your flu shot and make sure the people around you do the same.
• Wash your hands thoroughly and often throughout the day. Use warm water and soap. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel.
• Cough or sneeze into your elbow. Viruses can spread by coughing or sneezing on other people or into your hands.
• Stay home from work or school if you are sick.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
• Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.
• Keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant.

For the most up-to-date information from the State of Connecticut, as well as guidance and other resources, visit ct.gov/coronavirus. If you’re not already subscribed to receive press releases from my office and want the most updated announcements in your inbox, you can sign up for our mailing list by visiting my office’s website.

I appreciate the work of all of our state employees, and thank each of you for your commitment to the health and safety of our offices and our team.

Stay healthy,

Ned Lamont
Governor