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March 10, 2020

Dear [Employer],

SEIU Local 509 represents over 6,000 private sector human service workers in Massachusetts. They work in every corner of our state and serve our most vulnerable populations. In this time of uncertainty around the COVID-19, we hold our members safety and the safety of those they serve as our highest priority.

On that important note, it is our expectation that all our members - regardless of employer or title - receive support and flexibility as workplace policies adjust in direct response to the COVID-19 virus.

We envision that support in the following ways:

1. We request that any employee that needs to be out of work for COVID-19 quarantine be allowed to telecommute whenever and wherever possible.
2. If an employee should not be able to telecommute (for example, if they work in a hospital, community outreach, group home, clinic or in a day program) it is our expectation that our members not lose any pay or benefits during a quarantine and not have to use their own paid leave.
3. In the event of illness, we ask for flexibility around sick leave for our members, regardless of profession. The health and safety of our communities is the highest priority, and we don't want anyone making the choice to go to work unwell because of dwindling sick leave.
4. For members who are at high risk (according to the CDC) of serious infection, We request employers make arrangements for those members to work remotely and be excused from large gatherings to avoid possible transmission among staff and community members.

It is my expectation that all 509 members - no matter their employer or type of work - be afforded the flexible policies outlined above.

Further, we are requesting your agency's continuity of operations plan (COOP) and your contingency plan for if and when an employee or an individual in your care is exposed to COVID-19 or found to test positive for the infection.

Where necessary, we will be working with the state and our members to intervene and convey to private sector employers like you, the importance of these policies.

Sincerely,

Orlando Pena
President, Private Sector Division, SEIU 509

PETER MACKINNON
President

ISRAEL PIERRE
Treasurer

KARA GOODIER
Recording Secretary