



KEEPING YOU SAFE & INFORMED

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE TO EMPLOYEES - 5-15-2020

This week, the Governor announced the easing of certain COVID-19 mitigation restrictions statewide. Also, new Testlowa sites opened this week in Davenport, Ottumwa, and Storm Lake. With increased testing, the opening of businesses, and a continued focus on social distancing, we are beginning to see glimpses of the path back toward normalcy.

What does this mean for the Iowa DOT? The top priority of the executive leadership team remains the safety of our employees and customers. The path back toward normalcy must be safely and carefully navigated to ensure the ongoing health and welfare of our employees and those we serve. We know many of you are curious about what to expect in the near term. Because this is a fluid situation, we don't have all of the answers yet, but please allow me to offer a few perspectives below.

For those teleworking, when will we reoccupy our facilities? We have not set a date for when we will begin reoccupying our facilities, but once a date is identified, we will use a phased approach, with managers/supervisors returning first. We will be working with them to create plans for phasing staff back to our facilities and ensuring work areas are clean and basic personal protective equipment or PPE is available.

When we do reoccupy our facilities, life at work is going to look different than it has in the past. To ensure everyone's safety, we will be asked to social distance when possible and wear masks in common areas or when social distancing is not possible. In addition, for the first time in our agency's history, we will offer the option of permanent telework for eligible positions. As these plans become more solidified, we will continue to communicate with you.

Will there be layoffs? At this time, I've not had any discussions or heard mention of layoffs. The state needs all hands on-deck right now to help get our society back to normal.

Are there concerns about the budget? The Legislature announced they will reconvene on June 3rd. A top priority will be addressing state agency budgets for Fiscal Year 21. At this time, we do not know what our operating budget will look like for the next fiscal year, but we do expect it will be different than what we presented to the Legislature last February. While you may see changes to things like travel and other discretionary items, we feel the department is well positioned to address changes to our upcoming budget.

Are we supposed to still quarantine if we travel out of state? At this time, the current guidance on out-of-state travel is still in effect. We were told this would probably change sometime in June.

It has been a month since I last communicated about our response to COVID-19, and frankly, that's too long. Yes, it is true that we have been very busy helping to stand up the Testlowa program (in literally 3 weeks), and I couldn't be more proud of the dedicated DOT employees all across the agency who have

stepped in to assist. It is also true that we are all in this fight against COVID-19 together, and I believe it is important to keep the communication flowing. I apologize for not getting this note out sooner, and I'm looking forward to seeing everyone soon when we can finally meet face to face. Until then, keep innovating and keep up the great work.

Scott