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# Memorandum

**To:** City of Paterson Employees

**From:** Kathleen M. Long - Business Administrator

**Date:** March 09, 2020

**Re:** **Update on Paterson's response to COVID-19**

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On behalf of the Mayor and City Council, I'd like to take this opportunity to share some information on the City's preparedness surrounding the COVID-19 virus, or coronavirus as it's commonly known.

As Governor Murphy announced yesterday, there is a presumptive positive COVID-19 patient being treated at St. Joe's Hospital. This individual is not a resident of Paterson and is therefore not under the jurisdiction of the City of Paterson's Division of Health.

At the same time, we want to reiterate that the City of Paterson is prepared for future cases.

First, the initial line of involvement is the City of Paterson's Division of Health. Its Communicable Disease Strike Team (a rapid response team), when activated due to a presumptive case, is able to perform two functions:

1. In conjunction with a medical provider, the Strike Team authorizes appropriate testing with the State of New Jersey's Department of Health, and
2. In conjunction with the State Department of Health, the Strike Team investigates potential cases of residents of Paterson by contacting all those who may have come into contact with the person under investigation. The Strike Team will then monitor symptoms of these contacts and implement appropriate public health measures.

Additionally, other City departments have been meeting to prepare and implement appropriate protocols:

- Fire/EMS and police are following all CDC procedures and protocols, including asking more detailed questions on 911 calls to try to respond appropriately to potential cases.
- Public Works/Facilities is cleaning and sanitizing public buildings – from handrails to doorknobs, counters to elevators, and all other spaces where the public and employees regularly touch. As you read this morning, we are also suspending use of the TimeTrak devices to limit potential exposure.

- In the event that it becomes necessary, the Administration is preparing a staffing plan that will safely provide City services while minimizing risks to City employees. This will be finalized in consultation with union representatives and the NJ Civil Service Commission and will include potential telecommuting and modified public hours.
- Oshin Castillo, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services, is serving as the main point of communication with other government agencies, including Paterson Public Schools, the County of Passaic, and our local Office of Emergency Management. She is also taking extra precautions in all City Senior Service Programs, including heavy cleaning of Riverside Vets.
- Della McCall-Fischer, Chief of Staff, is serving as the main point of communication for the City, managing our social media channels and PSAs on this topic. She is also going to be the main contact coordinating with the Housing Authority on efforts in their buildings.

In closing, we want to assure you that the Administration is prepared and there is no reason for employees or Patersonians at large to panic. As the CDC suggests, keep washing your hands. Don't touch your face. Stay a few feet away from people when you speak with them. And if you're feeling sick, please stay home.

With increased testing over the next few days, cases in New Jersey will likely increase. We will keep you informed as the process above is implemented in Paterson and ask that you join us in reassuring the residents of Paterson that we are prepared for what may come.