

Dear Staff,

I'm writing with a quick follow-up (well, as quick as my emails get) to my letter from last week.

COVID-19- An Update

I'm sorry to report that I have been advised this week of **a number of instances of less than 2 metres physical distancing at our work sites**. To say I am disappointed and frustrated is an understatement. There are two things that are **important to me above all others in the workplace: a respectful workplace and safety**. These are two items I will not compromise on; this lack of adherence to our protocols needs to end immediately. There should be absolutely no reason for breaking our protocols in this regard. This cannot happen again; the health of our staff is too important, and we are an essential services provider. We need to keep ourselves, our families, and our operations healthy.

Last week, I noted that it's clear that we are going to have to learn to live with COVID-19 for some time, and the importance of staying vigilant; **we all have a shared responsibility when it comes to COVID-19** and we all play a critical part in preventing any spread.

Providing we all adhere to all of our protocols, I remain confident in our practices and our health and safety measures. Returning all staff to the workplace, once the Province began entering Phase 3, was important to me; connection to our workplace and each other is something that I do feel can be done well virtually, but can be done best in person, and the longer people are away, the harder it is to reconnect. That said, I do recognize that we are heading into the time of year in which colds and flus are prevalent, and that many staff have children who have gone back to school. I have also noted that the primary focus has been and will continue to be, keeping our staff safe and healthy, and ensuring the continuity of our essential services.

To that end, we've been reviewing the continued minimal requirement to attend to the physical work site, (for employees that can work remotely). Effective next week we are temporarily relaxing the requirement in the COVID-19 Remote Work Policy to work from their regular worksite at least once per week, for those staff who can perform their work remotely without impacting operations, **and have approval in advance from their supervisor/manager and Director**. This is a precautionary measure, in anticipation of the Fall and Winter ahead, to minimize the number of staff attending worksites, to allow for additional physical distancing for staff that must report to sites to provide essential services. Our intent is to ensure staff remain healthy and operational needs can always be met. We anticipate this relaxation of the above mentioned requirement to be in place for a few months and I will send out a notification to all staff when the COVID-19 Remote Work Policy returns to being in full effect. Please note, staff should expect to be present for all operational requirements as required and requested by their management teams, as well as Board and Committee meetings, etc. Staff are also expected to have adequate dependent care in place while working remotely.

Please also know that staff continue to be welcomed to work from the office; I anticipate many of us will still be here regularly!

It is also important to note that more than half of our workforce are required to report to work each and every day, as working from home is not operationally feasible. For these staff members I would like to recognize their contributions, and your commitment to ensuring our essential services and operations are always in place, for our organization and for the region.

Provincial Election

Many of you will have seen the news released this past Monday, that British Columbians will be heading to the polls for a provincial election on October 24th. I encourage all our staff to exercise their right to vote. As employees of the MVRD, a political body and corporate entity operating under provincial legislation, it is critical that we maintain impartiality in relation to our MV duties and responsibilities when any of us engages in political activities. The resources of Metro Vancouver cannot be used in such a way as to create an impression that our organization favours one political party or candidate over another. To avoid any perceptions of a conflict of interest, MV staff must avoid introducing partisan politics into the workplace, and must not use or authorize the use of MV facilities, property or assets for political activities. We also must refrain from anything that could be perceived as using our position as MV employees to lend weight to one political party or another, nor divulge any confidential information. Please note, MV staff are free to enjoy broad political freedoms and discussion during their personal time, however it is important that political activity does not impair your ability to perform your duties in a politically impartial manner. Likewise, during your personal time, please note that if you are identified as a MV employee on any of your social media channels, please be aware that your actions might be publicly visible. Actions that could be used by others as an expression of your endorsement of a candidate/party/position include:

- Liking or following a party or candidate page/account
- Sharing or re-tweeting posts from a party or candidate
- Sharing positive/negative news articles about politics on your timeline
- Commenting on others' posts with partisan discussion
- Sharing pictures of yourself campaigning or engaging in political activity
- Changing your profile picture to support a particular party

Thanks everyone. Please contact your exempt supervisor or Human Resources if you have any questions about this.

In Closing,

Thanks to all of you that sent me salad recipes and song suggestions after my email last week! I've been making a mess in the kitchen ever since; there were some really great recipes. Also the songs – they ran from classical to pop to rock to soul – loved them all. And for those of you that asked what are my preferred musical genres – I'm sorry, I'm one of those people that says I like them all, which I know is frustrating, (sorry!) but it's the truth. It's like picking favourites – I can't do it. I've been head bobbing along to all your song suggestions, over a good cup of coffee. (Luckily coffee is still on the 'okay' list for my health kick.)

Until next time, I hope you all remain well, and take care of yourselves, each other and your loved ones.

Together we make our region strong.

Jerry

Jerry W. Dobrovolsky, P.Eng., MBA
Commissioner/Chief Administrative Officer

