



From the Desk of the Director: Additional COVID-19 Guidance

Dear colleagues,

As we get ready to celebrate Thanksgiving, I want to take a moment to wish you and your families a happy and healthy holiday season. This season will certainly look and feel much different as we take the necessary precautions to keep ourselves, our loved ones and our colleagues healthy and safe.

Over the next three weeks, it is imperative that we limit social gatherings to only those individuals who live in our home. This means that everyone should stay home for Thanksgiving with those who live with you. Traveling out of state or even heading over to a family member's home in Rhode Island simply is not prudent right now. Similarly, no in-person workplace parties or celebrations can occur this holiday season.

Many of us are fatigued by our experiences over the last several months, but now is not the time to let down our guard. Given the increase in case numbers and hospitalizations across Rhode Island, it is crucial that we not only recommit to wearing masks, maintaining physical distance and handwashing, but also limit our in-person interactions to those in our household.

Finally, I want to remind everyone that teleworking remains an option. In March, we made teleworking available to more Executive Branch employees than ever before. We waived the teleworking restriction on employees with six or fewer months of State service and deployed the newest version of Microsoft 365 so that employees can collaborate virtually and have access to their files from home.

If you believe you are a good candidate to telework, please approach your supervisor to have a discussion. If you teleworked earlier in this crisis and have your supervisor's approval to do so now, we encourage you to do so.

State government will remain open, as it has throughout this pandemic, to continue meeting the needs of Rhode Islanders during their time of need. I remain so grateful to everyone for always stepping up to help others navigate these uncertain times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B Smiley".

Brett Smiley
Director
R.I. Department of Administration