



National Association of Government Employees

AFFILIATED WITH THE SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION

May 5, 2020

Lt. Governor Karen Polito
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts State House, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Lt. Governor Polito,

First, I would like to thank the Baker Administration for all of their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect the NAGE members and the citizens of Massachusetts who have kept the Commonwealth running throughout this crisis. We were pleased to learn of your appointment to Chair of the Reopening Advisory Board to study how to safely reopen the Commonwealth and state offices.

As the largest representative of the Commonwealth's work force, and as advocates for workplace health and safety, NAGE would like to continue working with you to establish safeguards to ensure a safe reopening for state offices. The safeguards implemented thus far are tailored to address the essential work and duties of each agency in order to provide a safe work environment while ensuring that services to the citizens are still provided. NAGE would like the opportunity to discuss with you the proposed protections that will ensure a safe work environment upon the reopening of state offices.

Throughout this crisis, NAGE members have continued to work on the front lines; proudly serving at state hospitals, state labs, DOC and RMV to name just a few. In front line and direct care agencies, testing for COVID-19, PPE, sanitization, protective barriers, and social distancing measures such as reconfiguring office space, staggered hours and temperature taking are some of the proposed measures that we would like to build on for front line workers going forward.

As Governor Baker recently indicated, 18,000 state employees are currently telecommuting, and it has been a success. NAGE also represents the largest group of state employees telecommuting during the pandemic while continuing to provide critical services to folks in need such as Mass Health, welfare benefits, child support. Additionally, NAGE has worked with the administration to have NAGE members from multiple agencies assist with the increased demand for unemployment assistance for citizens who have lost their jobs. They are telecommuting for longer hours and weekends to meet this demand. NAGE agrees that telecommuting has been a success, and we propose that all NAGE members currently telecommuting be allowed to continue to do so indefinitely as this will promote continued social distancing, minimize exposure and work towards the prevention of spreading COVID-19.

Furthermore, we would like to ensure that all state employees that are currently working in state offices, or will be returning to state offices, be tested for COVID-19 before they return. It is critical that

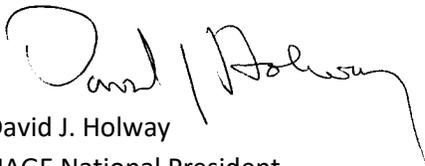


testing of all employees be completed before returning them to work in state offices to ensure that the workplace is healthy and safe for all.

Lastly, NAGE has surveyed our members in the various branches of state government, asking them to rate the importance of proposed safeguards that NAGE believes should be implemented in order to ensure a safe reopening of state offices. We have attached the list of proposed safeguards we believe should be implemented, along with the survey results, for your review.

We look forward to your response and meeting with you soon to continue our work with the administration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David J. Holway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the last name.

David J. Holway
NAGE National President

CC: Governor Charles Baker