

TO: All EOE Employees

CC: Velda McRae-Yates, EOE HR Director

FROM: Jim Peyser, Secretary

DATE: November 17, 2020

EOE Colleagues,

This year has brought unprecedented challenges to our personal and professional lives. I am so appreciative of your rapid adjustment to remote work and to doing so with persistence and good humor. Whether standing up an emergency childcare system in a matter of days for essential workers, developing thorough guidance and mobilizing critical resources for safely reopening early education programs, schools and colleges, or meeting the operational challenges posed by rapidly changing budget, human resources and IT needs, EOE's team members have distinguished themselves as dedicated public servants during this unique period.

All of you have stepped up and showed self-reliance, initiative, and flexibility in adjusting to the new normal, while maintaining focus on getting the job done for the children and families we serve, which has often meant taking on new responsibilities in the wake of this unexpected and unprecedented crisis.

As you know, over the past seven months nearly half of the Executive Branch workforce shifted to telework, accelerating technology enhancements that were already underway and ushering in new approaches to many long-standing work practices. In August, I wrote to inform you that existing telework schedules would remain in place until the end of the calendar year, as we plan for a return to the workplace that incorporates lessons learned over the past several months, including more regular telework. That planning is well underway and involves representatives from each agency, and that work will continue into early 2021.

Today, I am writing to update you that unless otherwise directed by their managers, all staff currently teleworking for part or all of their work schedule will continue to do so until at least the beginning of March, while we continue work on our long-term plan. We expect to share a more detailed approach for returning to work in early 2021.

Thank you for what you do every day to support the Commonwealth's children, students and educators.