DLI Meet and Confer Minutes

Date: July 22, 2020

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Teams Meeting

Attendees: MAPE representatives: Cyndi Benjamin, chair (OSHA), Deborah Heisick (ADR), Frances Li (ADR), Nell Nere (ADR), Dave Skovholt (Labor Standards), Dan Engelhart (MAPE Business Agent), Kathy Frank (VRU-St. Cloud)

DLI management: Commissioner Nancy Leppink, Assistant Commissioner Heather McGannon, Assistant Commissioner Nicole Blissenbach, HR Director Laurie Jandro, HR Consultant Sandy Arvin, HR Consultant Mary Babaya

Unable to attend: Deputy Commissioner Roslyn Robertson

**I.** **Introductions:** Introductions of staff who have not met

**II.** **Budget:** Discussion was given to the State budget and the 5% budget reduction suggested by MMB. Commissioner Leppink stated that no final decisions have been made and that MMB will be the final decision maker. She stated that the general fund has a shortfall due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The department has a limited number of programs operating out of the general fund and any reductions will be limited to the general fund. If asked by MMB to make a reduction it would have to come out of Labor Standards and Workforce development. The agency has been asked to advise MMB how the agency would apply a 5% reduction, and Commissioner Leppink stated that her priority is to preserve staff and is looking at options to reduce the budget without reducing staff.

MMB has asked agencies to place a hold on achievement awards.

Commissioner Leppink responded to a question regarding Federal Funds and stated that there is no change in Federal Funds at this time. She also responded to a question regarding tuition reimbursement and stated that tuition reimbursement is placed on hold.

**III. Safety Procedures:**

A. Several Covid-19 safety concerns were addressed. There is an announcement regarding face masks and the mandatory wearing of them in public places including offices. All staff is to adhere to the guidelines in this announcement.

Discussion was given to the exams being taken at the 443 building. Guidelines include the use of the visitor entry, restrooms, testing rooms, maintaining personal space for staff and self. They also include following the protocol in place including health screening, wearing face masks, using hand sanitizers, washing hands and using cleaning sanitizers. It was stated that the rooms including restrooms are being cleaned before and after use with the high-touch sanitizing methods. If staff want to do additional cleaning/sanitizing, they may do so by following the sanitizing guidelines provided by CCLD. Off-site exams are also going well with the same standards being followed. The reception and security staff were included in discussions developing the visitor guidelines.

Testers/Visitors are being informed of the safety requirements prior to testing. Masks may be provided if needed and health screening will be performed. Anyone with symptoms is asked to reschedule the test. Discussion was also given to how this safety information is provided to people whose first language is not English. The safety questions can be read out loud and Language Line may also be utilized. This information may be provided prior to testing.

A question was raised about staff being trained on how to do proper sanitizing. Cleaning crews will continue to do high-touch cleaning. Gloves and cleaning materials are being provided and individual training will be done in the future. Restrooms are cleaned using high-touch methods and cleaning materials and spray bottles are in the restrooms if an individual is more comfortable doing their own cleaning. Cleaning and sanitizing greater MN offices was brought up and these offices will be provided with the same cleaning/sanitizing materials as the 443 office. Additionally, the issue of the restrooms in Greater MN offices (Bemidji, Duluth, Mankato, Rochester and St. Cloud) are public restrooms will also be addressed by management staff. Several of the Greater MN offices are used by citizens with higher risks and management will be addressing that concern. Heather will be following up on supplies and stated that the department is paying for high-touch cleaning.

B. At this time, it is not recommended that employees be tested unless they have been exposed. Exposure, according to the MN Health Department is 15 minutes of exposure within 6 feet of symptomatic persons or a person who has tested positive. If tested positive, employees are to quarantine and isolate themselves.

**VI. Other Business/Questions:**

1. Question was raised about retirement incentives. The response: This is not part of the conversation to date.
2. The return to work plan is in preparation of when employees go back to work. To prepare, not to execute. It was stated that the safest place for employees is at home.
3. Cleaning is in the contracts for out-state facilities for testing. Cleaning supplies are available for employees to use if they wish to also clean these facilities.
4. All staff wear masks. Universal wearing of masks is key to not dialing back. See the Executive Order for articulation of the mask standards. Masks are not PPE.
5. At this time, nothing is in place for staffing in the event that schools do not re-open in the Fall. In that event, the Governor and MMB will be looking at the impacts on our staff and department.
6. Employee health concern process. When it is a medical concern, H.R. should be the first line of contact. Open conversation with supervisors when it’s a non-medical issue and include H.R. if there is a need. H.R. will look at individual situations and talk through the available options.
7. Be vigilant. Be concerned. Make the workplace safe.