

Division of Forestry COVID-19 Answered Questions as of July 23, 2020

#	Topic	Question	Answer
1	Border patrol	Motor homes from California are coming through Tok. What are the border regulations? This could be an infection pathway in Tok.	Border Patrol issue. Travelers should be filling out the mandatory quarantine declaration page and heading to their quarantine location, maybe wherever they park their RV?
2	Burn ban	Will burn bans be initiated this summer?	<p>At this point we are not considering a burn ban although it has been discussed as an option. Coordination with all agencies involved would take place through AWFCG if deemed necessary.</p> <p>As of 6/1/2020, the Kenai Peninsula (excluding Kodiak Island) is under a small and large scale burn permit suspension due to red flag warnings indicating the potential for high wildfire danger and/or the limited availability of fire fighting resources</p> <p>Other areas are open to permitted burning, although municipalities who issue burn permits may impose their own local burning restrictions.</p>
3	Business plans	Is DOF a "business" for submitting plans and protocols?	Handbook will serve as our DOF protocol. Maintain a centralized file for all plans and protocols, and make them available as requested.
4	Cleaning supplies	Does DOF have a stock of sanitizing products, gloves, etc.?	Areas are encouraged to try and buy your own locally, or online. Warehouse will have some supplies for the fire season, but please buy your own as much as you can. Be resourceful. If you can't get them, talk to RFs. Procurement is working on a DOF order.
5	Coding	If we're charging to a COVID code, should people do a CTR?	No CTR required for COVID-19.
6	Coding	If someone's COR is a 50/50 split, which LDP should be charged for leave or work hours? Does another LDP need to be set up instead?	No additional LDPs will be set up at this time. Employee should choose most applicable LDP.
7	Coding	For those using the Fire Activity LDP, do they need to fill out a CTR since it relates to a Function code? Due to prior audit findings, DOF said we would submit CTRs	A CTR is required if you are going to charge to LDP 3722. Employee must be under a fire assignment (not necessarily assigned to an incident) in order to charge to the Fire Activity component. It may be a rare occurrence, however, for someone to be specifically working on COVID-19 related functions while

#	Topic	Question	Answer
		(as opposed to OF-288s) for time worked on a Function code but not actually assigned to an incident.	under a fire assignment. The Safety Officer or an IC may be clearly assigned COVID-19 mitigation functions.
8	Coding	I've been asked about how to handle recording time for L-48 resources who have been tested upon arrival and are quarantining while they wait for the test results. Will they continue in travel status until they arrive on station where they are ordered? How many hours can be charged on their days in quarantine?	Employees will be on travel status until they report to their assignment, and can get paid for 8 hours when they are waiting for their test results in a hotel.
9	Coding	What about for Alaskans returning from L48 assignments, waiting for test results? What should they do if they can't telework?	Employees should telework if they can while they quarantine. If they cannot telework: (FFCRA) FAQ : EPSL provides up to 10 days (75/80 hours for a full-time employee) of paid leave for eligible employees due to a need for leave because the employee is unable to work remotely (telework). As the State of Alaska (SOA) has an established COVID-19 leave policy in place, EPSL leave is considered the same as SOA COVID-19 leave. EPSL/SOA COVID-19 leave may be taken if you are subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 (i.e. travel self quarantine).
10	Coding	We now have at least one situation where an EFF has had an exposure and is being quarantined. As Emergency Responders, EFF (and regular employees on the fire side of DOF), only qualify for COVID Leave if they meet 3 of the qualifying reasons: 1) subject to Fed, State, or local quarantine or isolation order, 2) employee is experiencing symptoms and 3) employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine (the last one only eligible for 10 working days). Does the process outlined in the COVID Handbook qualify as a State (or local) quarantine or isolation order for our fire employees who have a confirmed exposure or positive test? Does Health Mandate 014 apply? If HSS has been in contact and said to quarantine/isolate, I'm assuming that would qualify the employee under 1).	Leave Usage During COVID-19 Outbreak that was sent out with the Employee Verification for Paid Leave form did not contain any reference to emergency responders, so all staff should refer to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) FAQ for the most up-to-date eligibility information. You may apply for paid leave under the following circumstances. (First Responders limited to use a, b, or c) 1. Use Event leave code CSLF for the need to self-quarantine, for yourself only, due to: a. Being subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 (i.e. travel self-quarantine) b. Testing positive for COVID-19 (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy) c. You are experiencing symptoms of COV-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy)

#	Topic	Question	Answer
11	Coding	If a L48 resource tests positive at some point (could be on arrival, during their assignment, or before returning home), how will charges for testing, lodging, per diem, and any other charges be paid and coded?	Charges would go to the fire number or prepo that they're on.
12	COOP	What should happen if there is a complete shutdown of an office due to multiple illnesses?	Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs) have been developed by all offices and sections by April 15, and are available on the MS Teams COVID+ Channel. Department of Homeland Security's Template for COOPs .
13	COOP	Regarding office closures, will there be a notification process for employees that work at those offices and for other offices?	This will be part of each office's COOP. You can sign up for notifications here: Office Closure Information and Links . Phone or Email: Receive notifications by phone or email when you sign-up or manage your GovDelivery subscription (select OFFICE CLOSURE list after login). Web/Online: Check Alaska.gov for alert notifications and updates. Facebook: On your home computer and with a person profile, sign up for the SOA Office Closure alerts on Facebook and/or Twitter . Hotline: Check the State of Alaska Notification Hotline at 1-877-326-5551 (Please note that this telephone link is provided for smart phones and will likely generate an error on your desktop computer.) Nixle Alerts: Simply text any zip code to 888777 and receive real-time alerts and advisories directly from your local police department and other local agencies. More Nixle information .
14	Demob in Alaska	Is there statewide protocol for demobilization of resources back to an area that have been on fire assignment in Alaska? Or is this something that is area specific? What are we going to do with returning AK personnel back to their home unit? Do we hold them and test them on the fire or in town prior to transport home? If they are coming from an area with better medical facilities and returning to a small community does it matter?	There are no testing mandates for intrastate (within Alaska) travel, and each area is already screening daily (or should be). We will add to the Handbook that areas should continue doing screening as usual, including of recently demobilized employees returning to their home area, and there is no additional requirement for testing or screening. Unless people have symptoms or have had a confirmed exposure, there is no reason for testing if they are traveling between communities within Alaska. For people coming back into their homes and villages from a fire, Lezelda has drafted a list of things to do to protect themselves, their families and communities. These will be in the next version of the Handbook. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep personal tracking/travel record. Example on page, 30 Fire Medic Plan guidebook.

#	Topic	Question	Answer
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Identify at-risk family members and develop a home risk exposure plan. 3. During travel status, wear your mask, wash/sanitize your hands frequently and social distance as much as possible in congregate areas. 4. Avoid social gatherings until you can safely be tested or quarantine until possible transmission window has passed upon return. 5. As much as possible, leave fire gear at the station or in your work vehicle, or make sure to wash immediately and keep separate from family laundry/gear. Disinfect all gear. 6. Plan for yourself and family in case you need to self-quarantine. Examples may include 14 days of money, food, hotel, etc. 7. If sick, you will not be allowed to use forestry facilities, so plan accordingly. 8. Recommended to change clothes and shower upon return home to protect your family. 9. Follow return-to-work matrix if you get sick, are a confirmed exposure or have tested positive. <p>Upon return or during quarantine, update your direct supervisor regularly on status, needs, etc. so we can track your progress. If teleworking: update your supervisor frequently.</p>
15	Demob to Alaska	When DOF employees return to Alaska from the L48 on fire assignments, are they required to get tested and/or quarantine when they return, or are they considered “essential workers” and do not have to get tested?	DOF staff must be tested when they return from L48 assignments, but they may not have automatic priority for expedited COVID testing. DHSS will work with DOF for employees on a case-by-case basis for prioritized testing for those who are needed to return to work immediately, either in Alaska or on other fires in the L48. DOF continues to work with DHSS on this issue. If possible, employees should work from home until they receive the results of their tests.
16	Demob to L48	What do we do with Lower 48 resources? Do we treat them with the same policies as Alaska resources? I feel it is our responsibility for due diligence to not send anyone home that may be sick.	L48 resources will have guidelines from their own home states on what needs to be done before they arrive home, and after they arrive home, in terms of testing and screening. If someone is symptomatic, or has a confirmed exposure, they should be tested here in Alaska. (See return-to-work flowcharts.)
17	Deployment to L48	If an employee show signs and symptoms when on assignment in L48, what is State responsibility vs. host unit vs. employee?	Norm McDonald will send a memo to all DOF by the likely Conversion Date of July 10 th with information for employees interested in traveling to the Lower 48 for fire assignments. The memo will include:

#	Topic	Question	Answer
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who would pay for a hotel? Host agency or the State of AK? Not all agencies and states have the same plan as AK. 2. Should an employee need medical attention, what would be covered by employee insurance or workman's comp? Who would be responsible? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Links for employees to find information to help them decide whether they would like to take a fire assignment, or to choose among assignments. What are the risks in the community, state? 2. What happens if an employee gets COVID on assignment? What will be provided for them on assignment with federal or state employers? 3. What will be required for testing and quarantine when employees return to Alaska, and whether it makes more sense to rest in place in the Lower 48 before taking another assignment. <p>This memo will be posted on the DOF COVID website for easy access, and will be updated as necessary as more information is collected.</p>
18	Disinfecting	What do we charge for time spent cleaning helicopters? COVID? Or normal duties?	Charge it toward normal duties. Part of the newly established daily decontamination process.
19	Disinfecting	I had an individual who was potentially interested in decontaminating the Tok office. The individual asked if they would be liable or held accountable if an exact protocol was not followed and someone became ill after the decontamination was completed. The individual has declined to do the work but I thought I'd pose the question of liability.	Per Chris Brooks (4/21): If a vendor providing services in a state building/office is provided formal notice of building/office COVID-19 protocols and deviates from the protocols, a determination would need to be made (given the specific circumstances of the protocol violation) at the division level regarding retention of vendor services or whether to seek contract termination.
20	Disinfecting	How will we operate in our facilities safely? How will we deep-clean if an office is contaminated?	See the CDC guide for Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities for Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus. Also, see the CDC guide for Household Cleaning for suspected or confirmed Coronavirus disease . For decontaminating, see the CDC guide for Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility .
21	Disinfecting	How are we physically going to operate in an engine or in a helicopter? How will we clean aircraft and engines after each use?	The Chief of Fire has provided a letter of intent for the wildland fire program. See specific Area Mitigation Plans on the DOF COVID webpage for working in engines and helicopters. Cleaning will be done according to mitigation plans, or if the equipment is leased, as specified in the rental agreement.
22	EFF	How will we bring EFF on and keep separation? How will we use crews if they are coming from a village, and then going back to a village?	Interagency discussion ongoing w/ FIRE

#	Topic	Question	Answer
23	EFF	My biggest concern is bringing EFF on and keeping separation. Looking at 14 day rotations with engine crews so they don't lose their quals. How to deal with this?	EFF will follow the same guidelines as DOF firefighters. Social distancing, wash hands, wear a mask, etc. Qualifications have been extended for a year through NWCG.
24	EFF	In the Region and Areas are concerned about the EFF paperwork. We could use some assistance but working on a plan for that.	Work with Beth and Joel and admin staff to see if there are PDF options and digital signature options for villages, etc. We will consult with Admin about crew packet BMPs. So far, crew members keep the pen, then Admin lets the papers sit in a box for 24 hours. We will add this to BMPs online and in handbook. We should make sure to be segregating office supplies, etc.
25	EFF	Should we be adding the emergency contact form into the EFF hire packet? Should each hiring office be compiling that information onto the spreadsheet for tracking purposes?	This information is collected when EFFs are hired. The emergency firefighter contact form is online on the DOF COVID web page .
26	EFF	Does the COVID-19 Leave policy apply in any situation with EFF? Normally, EFF are not paid unless they are working (the exception is for Crew EFF). This could come up in several situations: an EFF's Home Unit is not where they reside year round and therefore they need to travel. Does DOF have any responsibility for an EFF who has to self-quarantine whether it is COVID leave, lodging or meals - whether it is prior to initial hire or after their initial hire and they may be on assignment or returning from/between assignments? If COVID leave is not an option and an EFF is exposed to the virus or becomes ill due to a work situation, is worker's comp an option for them?	If EFF meet the criteria under a, b, or c, below (from FFCRA FAQs), they are eligible for COVID leave. The EFF would need to complete the verification form and potentially provide documentation from a health care provider that they need to quarantine if they use reason c. EPSL/SOA COVID-19 leave may be taken for the following qualifying reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Being subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 (i.e. travel self-quarantine) e. Testing positive for COVID-19 (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy) f. You are experiencing symptoms of COV-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy)
27	EFF	What are we going to do about shelters for sick EFFs? Do we pay them when staying away from their families?	If an EFF gets sick on an incident, they may be eligible for subsistence.
28	EFF	On EFF, how will we use crews if they are coming from a village, and then going back to a village?	For using crews from a village: EFF from villages will be taken to a testing site for COVID-19, then promptly taken to mobilization location for quarantine. Once they receive two negative test results, EFF will be mobilized to the incident location using agency transportation. DOF will track physical contacts and make

#	Topic	Question	Answer
			<p>sure that proper PPE are provided. If anyone tests positive, they will remain in quarantine.</p> <p>For sending EFFs back to a village: Mandate 18 states that intrastate travel between communities located off the road system or the marine highway system is permitted, but subject to local travel restrictions. However,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local communities may enact travel restrictions, but cannot require automatic quarantine or measures that prevent travel for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critical Personal Needs 2. The conduct of Essential Services/Critical Infrastructure <p>DOF will adhere to whatever mandates and policies are in place at the time of the travel.</p>
29	EFF	Can an EFF have a telework agreement?	Supervisors may work with any employee, including EFF, to create a telework agreement, if there are duties that can be performed remotely. Telework agreements must be renewed, effective May 1, with chain of command management team member’s approval.
30	Essential employees	Which employees are considered essential?	See Gov mandate 10 for essential employees: Governor’s COVID-19 Health Mandates . Since DOF is a first responder agency, all DOF employees are considered essential.
31	Essential employees	Why are we being directed to remain open to the public?	<p>See Attachment A of Gov Mandate 010, specifically:</p> <p>iv. “First Responders,” which includes emergency management personnel, emergency dispatchers, court personnel, and law enforcement personnel.</p> <p>v. “Essential Governmental Functions,” which includes all services needed to ensure the continuing operation of government agencies and provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.</p>
32	Facilities	Are we required to keep public restrooms open to the general public or can some restrictions be placed on their use? Can porta potties be used as an alternative restroom for the public? At least one office has had issues with homeless individuals using their restrooms. Also, can offices restrict facility restroom use by	Only the entrance lobbies of all DOF offices should be open to the public, and the public should be restricted to one access point. The public can be limited to the lobby by placing a snap-rope across the hallway, and a sign explaining that they may not proceed beyond it.

#	Topic	Question	Answer
		resources traveling through, again, possibly through the use of porta potties?	
33	Hazard Pay	Are people going to be getting hazard pay for responding?	This is not currently covered in the Alaska Incident Business Management Handbook (AIBMH) and bargaining unit contracts. See AIBMH language below: HAZARD PAY. EFF are not entitled to Hazard pay. Hazard pay is addressed in GGU Article 21.05 B., LTC Article 13.06 D., and SU Article 24.5 A. To provide clarification about Forestry’s operations, two types of activities are considered when working under a helicopter. Those two activities include 1) hover hook-ups, and 2) loading or unloading people or equipment when the helicopter rotors are in motion. See State Forester memo of August 17, 2007 (Appendix C) for more information. Bargaining unit members who are required to work under dangerous conditions as determined by their bargaining unit contract shall receive hazard pay in four (4) hour increments so worked.
34	Hazard Pay	What has been determined about hazard pay for all unions?	Awaiting official word from unions and administration.
35	Leader’s intent	I would like “leader’s intent” from MTM, daily updates as the situation is fluid, and a realistic action plan should any staff including crewmembers of organized crews become infected with the virus.	The Chief of Fire has provided a letter of intent for the wildland fire program. DOF Handbook has been published on the DOF COVID webpage , and updated information, flyers, and posters are distributed weekly. Employees are expected to follow their chain of command for most issues. Supervisors elevate statewide issues to Management Team, answers to critical issues communicated through newsletter.
36	Leave	Confirm that EFML <u>does not</u> apply to emergency responders ?	Employees who work in health care or emergency responder positions, as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor or identified by their agency, are NOT eligible for EFML. It has been determined by our Director and Commissioner that all DOF personnel with the exception of Forest Management, Planning, Cooperative Forestry, & Inventory fall under the first responder position status.
37	Leave	Are there limitations on the COVID-19 Leave when the EPSL Leave cap is reached? Days, hours, criteria? How may any limitations apply to emergency responders versus non-emergency responders?	EPSL provides <u>up to 10 days</u> (75/80 hours for a full-time employee) of paid leave for eligible employees due to a need for leave because the employee is unable to work remotely (telework). It is only after exhausting the 10 working days of EPSL that you are allowed to use the COVID19 Admin Leave for a repeat incident. First Responder positions must meet one of the criteria under sections d) and e) or if they are under a quarantine order under a). Refer to #4 on FFCRA

#	Topic	Question	Answer
			<p>COVID-19 policy, a leave eligible employee may be eligible for additional SOA COVID-19 leave if the leave is taken due to the following reasons: under the State’s COVID-19 policy, a leave-eligible employee may be eligible for additional SOACOVID-19 leave if the leave is taken due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) You are subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 (i.e. travel self-quarantine); b) You tested positive for COVID-19 (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy); c) You are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy). <p>Individuals are encouraged to seek guidance and work directly with their Supervisor and DNR Human Resources regarding individual conditions or circumstances.</p>
38	Leave	The Payroll Update: Leave Usage During COVID-19 Outbreak that was sent out with the Employee Verification for Paid Leave form did not contain any reference to emergency responders so if the FFCRA FAQ was not read people could be claiming leave who were not eligible. Could a request be made to include language on guidance documents (especially if they link to other documents) if there are exceptions to the information being presented?	<p>Request has been forwarded to payroll to include language or guidance for first responders.</p> <p>Documents are created by Dept. of Personnel & Labor and it is unlikely that exceptions for first responders will be sent in a separate format. COVID-19 leave policy is being reviewed every 14 days.</p>
39	Leave	If an employee is on an incident performing their duties and comes in contact with someone that has a confirmed case of the virus, who pays for the testing the employee who has had an association with the sick individual? If they become sick on a fire will OWCP (workers comp) cover the cost of the illness?	On an incident, whoever is responsible for that incident (federal or state) would pay for the COVID test. Employees should use COVID leave and file for OWCP at the same time. Employees should work with their agency’s administrative office to ensure that all financial and medical processes are complied with.
40	Masks	The masks that are being sent out - are they for all staff or just for techs? If for everyone, are masks being sent to the Region Offices and Central Office?	DOF has sent 2 masks out to every DOF employee, statewide.
41	Masks	Are we providing masks to the EFFs?	DOF will provide masks for EFF as well as permanent employees. Employees need to request masks through their supervisors. The warehouse is working to

#	Topic	Question	Answer
			<p>stock up on masks, and DOF is getting masks from volunteer groups and mask vendors. If possible, EFFs should bring their own masks. Firefighters MUST bring masks when deployed to an incident, as well as hand sanitizer and cleaning wipes.</p> <p>N-95 masks are being reserved for Fire Medics and miscellaneous employees with a current EMT, ETT or other relative medical certification and designation where DOF expects them to perform medical duties on the job.</p>
42	Masks	<p>What are DOF's expectations for wearing face coverings in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in a public place such as a grocery store, pharmacy, etc.; • at an incident briefing or interacting with the public; • in a vehicle with others; and • in the office when a 6' social distance isn't possible; for example, walking down the hall, getting something off the printer, getting coffee, etc.? 	<p>DOF is a first responder agency, and as firefighters and support personnel, it's our responsibility as public servants to protect the public. Most of that is protecting life and property from fire, but we also have an inherent duty to protect the public from spreading the virus from ourselves.</p> <p>DOF will follow CDC requirements regarding face coverings: When our employees are in a public setting or having face-to-face interactions with the public, whether in the office or the field, they are to be wearing face coverings.</p> <p>When in the workplace, the following should be adhered to by all DOF personnel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Face coverings should be worn at times when social distancing cannot be met. Two face masks per employee are available and are expected to be used. 2. Wearing a face covering may be difficult during some activities, such as driving long distances. DOF will treat this as a respectful workplace situation. If an employee is not comfortable with others not wearing a face covering, they may ask everyone to cover their faces. <p>When DOF staff are in the workplace, they need to have a face covering on their person and be ready to use it in any situation where they cannot accommodate social distancing requirements of remaining at least 6' from others.</p>
43	Mob Centers	How will mob centers work, if there will be possible contamination from a quarantine center.	DOF is negotiating with UAF for mob centers separated from quarantine center and will let you know the outcome.
44	PIO	How will we handle extra public information duties?	Tim Mowry will handle external PIO (Public Information Office) duties, Sarah Saarloos will manage internal communication. Those are the POCs (points of contact) if Area staff have requests. The Multi-Agency Committee (MAC) is

#	Topic	Question	Answer
			discussing activating a virtual Joint Information Center (JIC) to assist with external communication for the uniqueness of the 2020 season. The intent is to provide service while limiting exposure.
45	Quarantine	If a military reservist has already quarantined from international travel in the Lower 48, does he need to quarantine when he gets to Alaska?	See Gov Health Mandate 18 – International and Interstate Travel – Order for Self-Quarantine: Governor’s COVID-19 Health Mandates We may need to request exceptions.
46	Quarantine	Do we know where to go to utilize this resource for our first responders: Health Mandate 014-Non-Congregate Sheltering Order The State of Alaska is prepared to implement a temporary quarantine and isolation program utilizing non-congregate shelter solutions including hotels, college and university dormitories, and properly modified non-traditional structures to house three specific populations: 1. First responders and healthcare workers who need to quarantine safely without exposing their families. 2. Homeless families, with at least one member who tested positive for COVID-19, who live in congregate shelters and will require isolation. 3. Homeless individuals who require quarantine or isolation.	We have agreements with University of Alaska Fairbanks and Anchorage for setting up our traditional mob centers. We are negotiating with UAF and UAA about setting up temporary quarantine shelters. Intent is to use the mob centers as quarantine facilities.
47	Screening	What are we doing about emergency hire contractors? If we hire a dozer or boat on the spot due to IA needs, what type of testing process do we have in place other than completely isolating them? Or just use them for the shift or to until a vendor shows up, and then cut them loose? Do we have on call at scene testing available and set up for this?	If possible to screen contractors and emergency hires, do so, but it might not be possible to screen anyone during an IA response. DOF staff should do the best they can to enforce Division and Area protocols and mitigations, such as asking all employees (contractors and emergency hires included) to wear face coverings when practical, keep a 6-foot distance from each other outside of the module, wash hands, clean surfaces, sanitize shared equipment, and screen daily. DOF does not have the authority to require contractors to follow these guidelines, but we can request it if there is time and opportunity.
48	Screening	Who is screening when someone is hired?	Areas should screen employees when they physically show up to work. When EFFs are taking a new assignment, they should be screened at that office.
49	Telework	Question on the Telecommuting Policy -it mentioned in Update #2 that with supervisor approval can purchase telework supplies. The SOA telecommuting	Thank you for pointing out this inconsistency, KT. We have removed the incorrect statement from Update #2 and reposted it correctly on the website.

#	Topic	Question	Answer
		policy indicates that individuals do not get reimbursed.	<p>Per SOA teleworking policy, Section M: The telecommute location will require adequate workspace, light, telephone service, power and temperature control. The employee will provide telecommute worksite furniture and equipment and should maintain a clean and safe workspace. <u>The State will not pay operating costs, maintenance, system upgrades, or other incidental costs (e.g., utilities, telephone, or Internet access)</u> associated with the use of an employee’s telecommuting site.</p> <p>We have deleted the incorrect direction (strike-outs, below) from Update #2: COVID-19 allowable expenses: ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office supplies required to complete telework job duties, such as printer ink, paper, etc. Purchases should be assessed for relevance first and seek prior approval for one’s supervisor before putting expenditure on Pcard. </p>
50	Telework	During a FAWG meeting it was mentioned that we needed to ask about data usage during teleworking. Several who are teleworking are on unlimited data plans, however, others are more limited and may be charged for overages. One solution is a hot spot added to the individual's work cell. Some individuals do not have a work cell. The DOA telework policy indicates that wifi data plans are covered by individuals’ own plan.	<p>The telework agreement you sign makes it clear that you have to be prepared to set up your own office and provide your own data plan and supplies.</p> <p>Per SOA teleworking policy, Section M: The telecommute location will require adequate workspace, light, telephone service, power and temperature control. The employee will provide telecommute worksite furniture and equipment and should maintain a clean and safe workspace. <u>The State will not pay operating costs, maintenance, system upgrades, or other incidental costs (e.g., utilities, telephone, or Internet access)</u> associated with the use of an employee’s telecommuting site.</p>
51	Telework	During normal telework days, if the employee wanted to, with supervisor consent, work from home, they would be responsible for data usage. That is covered in the current agreement. Under the current situation, if an employee is "told" to telework, who covers the data usage? Not everyone has an unlimited plan, using VPN also takes data, a pocket wifi may solve the issue. Is there a plan for long term telework data use plan?	<p>EPSL provides <u>up to 10 days</u> (75/80 hours for a full-time employee) of paid leave for eligible employees due to a need for leave because the employee is unable to work remotely (telework). It is only after exhausting the 10 working days of EPSL that you are allowed to use the COVID19 Admin Leave for a repeat incident. First Responder positions must meet one of the criteria under sections d) and e) or if they are under a quarantine order under a). Refer to #4 on FFCRA</p> <p>COVID-19 policy, a leave eligible employee may be eligible for additional SOA COVID-19 leave if the leave is taken due to the following reasons: under the</p>

#	Topic	Question	Answer
			<p>State’s COVID-19 policy, a leave-eligible employee may be eligible for additional SOACOVID-19 leave if the leave is taken due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) You are subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 (i.e. travel self-quarantine); b) You tested positive for COVID-19 (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy); c) You are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (Per SOA COVID-19 leave policy). <p>Individuals are encouraged to seek guidance and work directly with their Supervisor and DNR Human Resources regarding individual conditions or circumstances.</p>
52	Telework	What type of webcams/microphones can we encourage our employees to purchase when their laptops and desktops don’t have cameras and microphones?	Webcams with mics can be purchased from Amazon, Best Buy, Walmart, Office Depot, and Staples ranging from \$40-\$60 each. Popular models include USB Plug & Play and can be used for either PC, laptop, or Mac.
53	Telework	How to use MS Teams with non-state employees, such as BLM?	Make a Team, then invite them as “guests” to your Team. Talk with Sarah Saarloos for helpful tips.
54	Telework	Is it permissible to telecommute from a location away from the permanent duty station?	<p>See Current Employee’s “Coronavirus (COVID-19) FAQ for many answers to employees’ questions. Specific to telecommuting, refer to these two documents which address telecommuting: Telecommuting Policy (PDF) and Telecommute FAQ.</p> <p>The Division of Forestry allows for teleworking when approved by the employee’s supervisor at the location identified on the Telecommuting Work Agreement form.</p> <p>The telecommute address should be within commuting distance from the main workplace address and may not be farther than a two-hour callback timeframe from the main workplace address. Any exceptions to this standard require Director approval.</p>
55	Telework	If a person CAN accomplish their essential functions at home, should they stay at home to protect employees who must be in the office?	Beginning May 1, 2020, telecommuting work agreements may be authorized; however, they must be approved by the employee’s Management Team member in his/her chain of command.
56	Telework	Should we encourage everyone to prepare a “personal COOP” for themselves, personally, in case:	All DOF offices have developed a COOP, and they are posted on the MS Teams COVID+ channel. Employees may prepare an informal personal COOP

#	Topic	Question	Answer
		<p>1) they need to work at home to protect themselves and others,</p> <p>2) they get sick and need to recover at home, or</p> <p>3) if a person in their office is sick and the office must be shut down.</p>	<p>(Continuity of Operations Plan) with a plan for teleworking at home that is complementary with their office COOP.</p> <p>Even if your job can't be done entirely from home, you should be prepared to do what you can from home. Download necessary programs on your laptop and be ready to bring it home. Get access to apps, PPE, and other resources you need. Identify what resources and work PPE you need at home.</p> <p>Beginning May 1, 2020, telecommuting work agreements may be authorized; however, they must be approved by the employee's Management Team member in his/her chain of command.</p>
57	Telework	Identify our most at-risk employees due to age, compromised immunity, vulnerable family members, etc.	<p>CDC link to:</p> <p>People Who Need to Take Extra Precautions</p>
58	Terminology	What's the difference between "recommended" and "required?"	<p><u>Recommended</u>: Advised or suggested course of action.</p> <p><u>Required</u>: Deemed essential and/or instructed or expected course of action by an official authority. (Such as a Director, Commissioner, Governor, or President)</p>
59	Testing	If someone is home sick currently, and refuses to go to the doctor, can we make them take a test before they come back to the office?	Try Teledoc with the employee. DOF can require people to have a doctor's note before they return to work.
60	Testing	How will we test our firefighters, with or without symptoms?	<p>DOF and AFS have coordinated with HSS to provide tests and the administration of a contract for the testing of incoming resources for COVID-19. See DOF's memo for out-of-state resources. We are committed to minimizing the threat that COVID-19 poses to our firefighters, our support personnel and our Alaskan communities.</p> <p>Area offices are to identify and establish local resources for testing and question facilities about their services and billing procedures. These details have been provided in the Area Mitigation Plans, available on the DOF COVID webpage.</p>
61	Testing	Is testing required for intrastate travel?	<p>No. According to Mandate 18:</p> <p>II. Intrastate Travel Between Communities Located On The Road System or The Marine Highway System is permitted for all purposes. Note: travelers may travel between the Road System and Marine Highway System communities via any normal means of transportation, including vehicle, boat, ferry, aircraft, and commercial air carrier.</p>

#	Topic	Question	Answer
			<p>III. Intrastate Travel Between Communities Located Off The Road System or The Marine Highway System Is Permitted, but subject to local travel restrictions.</p> <p>a. Local communities may enact travel restrictions, but cannot require automatic quarantine or measures that prevent travel for:</p> <p>i. Critical Personal Needs</p> <p>ii. The conduct of Essential Services/Critical Infrastructure</p> <p>That said, we want to keep working with villages to keep them informed on what we are doing—for example, housing pilots from L48, etc.</p>
62	Tracking	What should we be keeping track of for COVID expenses?	Personnel time and also extra expenditures for materials. Document all of this for later reimbursement.
63	Transport	Is there any Forestry-wide guidance on transporting injured/ill employees to the hospital or is each Area supposed to come up with their own plan as far as who does the transporting/accompanying and who would take care of worker's comp paperwork? Is anyone contacting hospitals/clinics to see what level of injury they will allow in the doors for firefighters or is the responsibility of each Area to check out? This could apply to IA situations or extended attack/IMTs.	<p>If a sick employee is not able to transport themselves home for quarantine or to a health care facility, a trained EMT will transport them if available.</p> <p>See Appendix A. of Handbook for more information.</p> <p>PPE kits (masks, gloves, eye protection) will be provided to drivers of DOF vehicles, in case they are needed for transportation of a sick person.</p>
64	Transport	What group is coordinating with local government IMTs on their capabilities to receive COVID victims from fire Areas, Zones, or Incidents?	Areas should coordinate with local governments to determine what facilities are available, and list them in their Area COVID-19 Mitigation Plan.
65	Travel	Is travel allowed within the State of Alaska for our DOF employees, including those not working on fire?	<p>Travel restrictions and exemptions are included in Mandates 10 and 18. For the purposes of travel within the State of Alaska, the Division of Forestry has two functioning groups of employees: Wildland Firefighting and Forest Management. Mandate 10 addresses issues associated with travelers from outside of Alaska and does not restrict intrastate travel. Mandate 010 further controls the ingress to Alaska from outside localities.</p> <p>Mandate 018 provides that “intrastate travel is permitted under the following conditions and guidance:</p>
66	Travel	Aerial surveys for forest health: Should we still be doing them?	
67	Travel	Should federal coop programs still be doing our regular fieldwork?	
68	Travel	Does our already-approved in-state travel waiver for essential and mission critical travel still apply (i.e. are we still doing overnight fieldwork)? If so, should we camp?	

#	Topic	Question	Answer
69	Travel	<p>Best practices are being created for camp, travel, and aviation ops for the fire program. The Forest Inventory and Analysis program has the same risks to be mitigated, however we are not first responders. Will we consider the acceptable level of risk to be the same between the fire program and resource field work? Will the travel restrictions into remote communities (ie McGrath) be the same between fire personnel and resource personnel? The state directive considers all DOF employees to be "essential," but remote communities draw a distinction between "first responders" and other "essential" personnel.</p>	<p><u>Intrastate Travel Between Communities Located On The Road System or The Marine Highway System is permitted for all purposes.</u> Note: travelers may travel between the Road System and Marine Highway System communities via any normal means of transportation, including vehicle, boat, ferry, aircraft, and commercial air carrier.</p> <p><u>Intrastate Travel Between Communities Located Off The Road System or The Marine Highway System Is Permitted, but subject to local travel restrictions.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local communities may enact travel restrictions, but cannot require automatic quarantine or measures that prevent travel for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critical Personal Needs 2. The conduct of Essential Services/Critical Infrastructure <p>The <u>Alaska Essential Services and Critical Workforce Infrastructure Order</u> (formerly "Attachment A" to Mandate 012) states "Functioning critical infrastructure is imperative during the response to the COVID-19 emergency for both public health and safety, as well as community well-being." Per this attachment, support of essential services and critical infrastructure are exempt from the travel mandate.</p> <p>Relative to the wildland firefighting functions of the DOF, we are considered an essential government function, which includes all services needed to ensure the continuing operation of government agencies including providing for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.</p> <p>Although all of our DOF employees are exempt from the prohibitions for travel between communities within the state of Alaska, we are still required to have a plan or protocols for avoiding spread of COVID-19 pursuant to Health Mandates 010 and 012, as well as complying with social distancing requirements, adhering to CDC recommendations when and where applicable, and mitigating risks when unable to comply with the mandates or requirements.</p> <p>The DOF COVID-19 Response Team has developed a Best Practices Handbook that will serve as the primary DOF plan for avoiding the spread of COVID-19. See the <u>DOF COVID web page</u> for the most current version.</p>

#	Topic	Question	Answer
70	Travel	Is it okay to visit private properties, residential yards, and community parks and greenbelts for fieldwork if physical distancing can be maintained from landowners and others?	Yes, as long as we are compliant with current governmental mandates and CDC recommendations plus DOF and interagency BMPs (best management practices) as they are established.
71	Travel	Can staff still work with a field partner, and if so what are the best practices?	