**Return to Office Policies and Procedures**

**Introduction and Goals**

During the pandemic triggered by COVID-19, LASROC’s goal is to continue to provide high quality and responsive services to our clients while simultaneously keeping all staff safe and do our part to limit the impact and spread of COVID-19.

To further this goal, the vast majority of LASROC staff will continue to work from home until we receive additional information from NYS that social distancing precautions can be lessened. This will likely occur when cases have not spiked after re-opening of NYS, the cases do not spike in the fall, and/or a vaccine has been developed. We acknowledge that as the courts open and case activities increase some staff will need to go into the office. Entrance to the office will be scheduled in a way that minimizes contact with others and adheres to best social distancing practices.

We expect that it is unlikely that social distancing precautions will be eliminated before the end of the year; however, as we progress closer to a new normal we will gradually increase the numbers of people allowed in the office and building at any one time.

All staff is strongly encouraged to work from home for the foreseeable future. These policies and procedures are intended to protect those employees that absolutely must enter the office.

**New York State Mandated Four Key Components**

NYS has mandated that every employer develop a plan that addresses four components: face covering; hand washing; social distancing, and sanitizing and cleaning of the office. As such the following protocols are mandated:

1. **Face Covering:**
   - **For Staff:** All staff must wear a face covering that covers their nose and mouth at all times. Cloth masks will be provided to all staff.
   - **For Visitors:** All persons entering LASROC, including clients, vendors, and visitors will be required to wear a face covering that covers their nose and mouth at all times. If they do not have one, LASROC will provide a disposable mask. People who refuse to wear a mask will not be served & will be asked to leave the building.
2. **Hand Washing:** All staff will be given hand sanitizer for their office and a travel-sized hand sanitizer to be used when away from their desk. Additionally, a hand sanitizer dispenser will be available just outside the first-floor elevator and on all floors at each LASROC doorway. All bathrooms and coffee areas will have soap and sanitizer. Staff should use the sanitizer and wash their hands frequently; after contact with others, when coming into and out of their offices or the building, conference areas, and bathrooms. When handwashing, follow CDC guidelines of 20 seconds of washing with soap.

3. **Social Distancing:**

   - The number of people in the office will be reduced to no more than 25% of the workforce at any time. Staff will be permitted to come to the office based on a schedule and cannot come into the office on a day that is not their assigned day. The schedule will be circulated once it is complete.

   - The waiting area will be marked off so that chairs are each 6 ft. away from each other.

   - Children’s Play Area will be closed & all toys will be placed in storage.

   - To the greatest extent possible we will interact with clients virtually by phone or video. If we need to meet a client in person, an appointment will be scheduled through the office calendar system. Adequate time must be allotted for thorough cleaning and sanitizing in between meetings. These appointments will occur in the large conference rooms on the first floor. Staff should not meet clients in staff offices unless the office is large enough to allow at least 6 feet of space between staff and the client.

   - We will not use the lunchroom or refrigerator until further notice; staff should bring their lunches with appropriate packing to keep them cold and eat in their offices. Coffee will be available but staff is required to sanitize the coffeepot by wiping it and the counter down with disinfectant wipes or soap after each use and bring their own cups.

   - Bathrooms should be used one person at a time unless 6 feet of distance can be maintained.

   - Plexiglas guards will be installed in front of and between receptionists; there will be no more than two receptionists at a time once we reopen to the public.

   - The main entrance door to LASROC will be left open from 8:45 to 5 everyday, once reception returns to work to eliminate the need to touch the door handles.

4. **Sanitizing & Office Cleaning:** The offices will be professionally cleaned and sanitized every day after 5 pm. At least 4 times per day, LASROC staff will wipe down door handles, surfaces, pens, etc. All conference areas will be wiped down after every use by
the people who used them. Cleaning crews will arrive at LASROC daily after 5 PM; no staff should be at LASROC after 5 PM so that the crew has full access to all areas and can clean and sanitize for the next morning.

Staff and Visitor Screening

To ensure we do not inadvertently spread COVID-19 when we return to work we will screen all employees and volunteers daily. Symptomatic employees will be sent home on sick leave. We will conduct in-office contact tracing to determine if others were exposed.

Any employee who is experiencing symptoms, in particular fever and other related symptoms, will be sent home. To return to work they will need to be symptom-free and fever-free for 3 days without the use of medication to relieve symptoms, or cleared by their doctor. If a person is suffering symptoms they will be asked to be tested and report the results to HR so that we can determine if they are positive and if others have been exposed. We will advise others who are potentially exposed so that they may get tested for the virus while taking precautions to maintain employee confidentiality to the greatest extent possible.

STAFF may qualify for some relief under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and the Emergency Paid FMLA that provides paid additional sick leave and paid FMLA time related to the COVID-19 virus. Additional details can be found in the attached flyer.

Employees are asked to record their symptoms on the DOH website for COVID-19 https://www.roccovid.org/ in support of Monroe County’s efforts to keep tabs on COVID-19 in the Greater Rochester region so that the county can accurately track the spread of the disease and employees can check their symptoms.

For staff to come to the office, they MUST report to their supervisor that they have self-screened and are not experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 and that they have not had contact in the last 14 days with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, under investigation for or experiencing other respiratory illness, or if anyone in the home is under voluntary quarantine.

For the latest updates and links to helpful information, visit the Monroe County Department of Health website. https://www2.monroecounty.gov/health-COVID-19

Although known symptoms are evolving, symptoms we know of may include the following:

- Symptoms that may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus:
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- At least two of the following:
  - Fever
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

All walk-in visitors to LASROC including clients will be screened by LASROC reception and if they are experiencing any of these symptoms they will be asked to reschedule the appointment. If they are experiencing a legal emergency a video appointment will be scheduled.

Screening Questions include:

- Do you feel sick? Are you experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath?
- Have you had contact in the last 14 days with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, under investigation for or experiencing other respiratory illness, or if anyone in the home is under voluntary quarantine.

Before scheduling a client to come to the office you MUST conduct the above screening over the phone. If they are symptomatic they should not be given an appointment and another arrangement must be made, either rescheduling the appointment; or if it’s a legal emergency conducting the visit via FaceTime or Zoom or another telephone application.

**Home Visits:** All home visits will be suspended unless prior permission is obtained from a supervisor and will be permitted only if the residents of the home can pass the above mentioned screening test via phone call.

**Travel:** All business related travel is suspended until further notice.

Please see the attached notice regarding the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)* and *Emergency Paid Family Medical Leave Act (EPFMLA)*
Remote Work/Work from Home

Remote work or telework is permissible with prior approval of the Unit Director and CEO. This includes working remotely from home or another location. In the event of a national, state or local emergency or disaster you may be required to work from home or remotely. If the office is closed due to an emergency all staff must follow the safety and security protocol established by the management team in response to such emergency. If required to work remotely due to the said emergency or extraordinary circumstance, there shall be no access to the building facility without prior permission from a member of the Management Team.

All staff will cooperate with the LASROC policies regarding cyber security, confidentiality, document destruction and time keeping. Staff will participate as required in video staff meetings and will advise the Management Team and IT if they need additional equipment in order to be fully functional in a remote setting. LASROC will do its best to provide such equipment and supplies.

This policy amendment was approved by the Management Team effective March 16, 2020.
Coronavirus: Guidelines for meeting with clients and safety Protocols

As new coronavirus cases are detected in New York, and now the first one in Monroe County we have developed these temporary guidelines for client meetings and office interaction. While we do not want anyone to panic, we have to use these safety precautions because it does seem that the virus can spread quickly. We want to be sure that everyone stays as safe and protected as possible.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

These procedures are based on what we know now and are subject to change as we know more.

- LASROC will remain open and operating unless the situation escalates. As noted below there is opportunity for remote work from home. It is important however to ensure some basic tactics to lower the risk of exposure.

- Please ask your clients not to come in to the office if they are ill. Warn them that they may be sent home if they appear ill. Offer to meet over the telephone to the extent possible. Or video chat.

- For those who call please advise anyone who is coming in the same; do not come into the office is you are ill with flu-like or respiratory illnesses

- If a client arrives at the office with signs of respiratory illness (coughing, sneezing, etc.), ask them to go home and reschedule. If you feel that you cannot reschedule because the client is facing a legal emergency, then be particularly careful about the following procedures to limit the spread of any illness.

- There are face masks available for clients or applicants who are or appear to be sick, please be sure to ask a client to use the mask.

- Hold client meetings in well ventilated spaces: conference rooms or rooms with windows that open.

- Try to maintain 6 feet of space between yourself and your clients.

- Avoid shaking hands with or hugging clients or colleagues.

- We will distribute disinfecting spray and/or wipes. Please disinfect any surfaces that your client touched following the meeting.

- Similarly, please stay home if you are sick! Employees who arrive at work with signs of respiratory illness will be asked to go home. If you suspect that you or a household
member may have been exposed to coronavirus, please consult with your healthcare provider immediately and inform your supervisor.

- If a family member has been sick; or you suspect that you may be exposed but are not sure; we will make arrangements for you to work remotely. Please use good judgement.

- If you have been exposed then we ask you to stay home and self-quarantine for 2 weeks.

- Given the current Federal edict, if you travel out of the country to Europe you may not get back in so I would advise against it! If however you do, you must let the

- For the moment LAS business trips and conferences are still scheduled but this may change If you chose not to go let us know and we will arrange to cancel the trip. If you do travel use safe travel precautions, bring wipes with you, wipe down airplane seats, arms and tray tables. Use your hand sanitizer and avoid locations where there are high outbreaks.

**OFFICE CLEANING**

Our cleaning company will be cleaning and sanitizing all common areas on a daily basis. Please use wipes or other disinfectant products in your individual offices. We will also have to arrange to periodically clean off surfaces; chairs, pens in the lobby area and children’s waiting room.

**REMOTE WORK/WORK FROM HOME**

If you are sick you MUST stay home. We are at the beginning of our sick time cycle so use your sick time. We will evaluate the situation as it progresses and individual cases if you are ill longer than expected. **I do not want anyone working because they are afraid to use their sick time.**

If you have been exposed and are quarantined at home you will not be charged with any time off because you will be working from home. We all have access to our work through Office 365. If you do not know how to access please see Dave Erb and he will explain. During this time we will need to be flexible and we will all need to pitch in. Attorneys who are in home quarantine will NOT be able to go to Court. We may have to shift work around for people; do different tasks and cover for each other. This is a work in progress and we will be meeting on 3/27 in the all Attorney meeting to more finely develop this protocol.

Work from home applies to both exempt and non-exempt staff; including reception and intake. For non-exempt staff: legal assistants, secretaries, reception and intake if you are not ill but exposed and quarantined we will have you work from home. We will have you work on something that you can do from home; it might not be your regular job but it will be something. This only applies if you are not sick; if you are sick you should not be working.
RESPONSE PLAN

We will continue to monitor the situation in this community and determine the best course of action is there is an all-out outbreak in the community. This may include restricting the number of people working at any one time; partial shutdown or widespread work from home. It is hard to say without knowing the situation as it develops in the future. As always if the Courts are closed we will close.

We are continually monitoring the situation and will provide updates as needed, should anything change, or we initiate our response plan.

There are fact sheets attached to this document to help understand more about the virus.

Pre- March 16th Policy