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***Correspondence Memorandum***

**Date:** June 1, 2021

**To:** Employee Trust Funds Board  
Teachers Retirement Board  
Wisconsin Retirement Board

**From:** Pam Henning, Assistant Deputy Secretary  
Office of the Secretary

**Subject:** COVID-19 Pandemic Update

**This memo is for informational purposes only. No Board action is required.**

Since March 17, 2020, almost all Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) staff have been working from home (WFH) in response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. About 20-25 staff continue reporting to ETF's physical offices daily, providing essential business functions such as mail services, scanning and indexing retirement and other benefit related documents, preparing and printing retirement estimate information for members, and ensuring checks to members and vendors are distributed timely.

ETF's physical offices at the Hill Farms State Office Building (HFSOB) currently remain closed to our members. ETF's daily operations and services continue with remote staff efficiently providing customer service, education, and application or transaction processing. All retirement appointments are being conducted virtually or over the phone. Since December, we are offering one weekly evening group appointment that has been well received by our members unable to book daytime appointments.

We continue to track daily work status of all ETF staff via the Morning Report from supervisors. The daily Morning Report allows us to monitor staffing levels, track illnesses, and implement changes to onsite protocols if COVID-19-related exposure occurs.

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EXC	6.16.21	3A
BUD	6.16.21	3A
JM	6.17.21	4D

## **New CDC and State Guidance**

As you're aware, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new guidance in May relaxing requirements for face coverings and social distancing for fully vaccinated individuals while still requiring unvaccinated persons to wear a mask and continue social distancing. Effective June 2, Public Health Madison & Dane County issued similar guidance on mask requirements. As a result, Wisconsin state government implemented the same guidance effective June 1 lifting mask mandates for vaccinated individuals in any state facility. All unvaccinated persons will be required to wear a mask in all state office buildings and while visiting ETF for services.

The Department of Administration (DOA) opened all state facilities to the public effective June 1, removing all capacity limitations onsite. However, DOA continues to encourage agencies to provide telecommuting opportunities and flexible work schedules where feasible and based upon agency business needs, with the expectation to have changes in place for full services to the public by July 6, 2021.

## **ETF Transition Plans**

ETF's transition to providing more onsite operations and services to our members will gradually increase from July 6 through the end of the summer. Beginning July 6, ETF's front desk and quick service functions will open to our members onsite. Plexiglass has been installed to provide comfort and protection for our staff and customers. On July 12, group counseling sessions will resume onsite in our 8<sup>th</sup> floor conference room. Safety precautions as well as social distancing will be in place. By July 19, 1-on-1 individual counseling sessions in our private counseling rooms onsite will begin. These rooms also have plexiglass installed for member and staff comfort and safety.

By September 7, all onsite member and operational services will resume with virtual options available. ETF staff will begin working hybrid work schedules allowing for flexible work schedules based upon each business unit's requirements.

In addition, ETF has begun discussions with DOA to reduce its floor space within ETF's designated space in the Hill Farms State Office Building. This will result in consolidating functions and offices/cubes for staff within two floors instead of three and reducing leasing costs ongoing.

I will be available at the Board meeting to answer questions.