



## Emergency Office Closure Procedure

**CAUSE: COVID-19 Pandemic**  
**OFFICIAL OFFICE CLOSURE EFFECTIVE DATE: March 19, 2020**

When extraordinary or emergency circumstances such as the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) crisis occurs, First Alaskans Institute (FAI) may, at its discretion or by governmental action, close the office to ensure the safety of employees and the organization. In these instances, FAI may choose to allow some or all FAI employees to carry on their job duties (either within their job description, across initiatives, or as assigned) while working remotely to continue to advance the mission and vision of the organization. FAI may also choose, at its ongoing discretion, to place employees on administrative leave, leave without pay, suspend or terminate employment, and/or any other options available (i.e. legislation to address COVID19 that creates better options for employees and/or the organization) to ensure its stability.

As of March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, all FAI employees have been approved to work remotely from their homes for two weeks. As this is a new and quickly evolving situation, FAI will continue to monitor the news surrounding COVID-19 and will reassess the feasibility of employees working remotely in two weeks.

In the meantime, for the sake of clarity, below are our outlined expectations of FAI employees approved for remote working arrangements during COVID-19:

- Employees must be available via all reasonable means of communication (phone, text, email, online, apps, social media platforms, video conferencing, , work formats, and forums) as needed during these exigent circumstances during normal business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm until this emergency closure is removed. Salaried employees, as always, are expected to be reasonably reachable at all times, especially in cases of emergency, urgent, or otherwise essential work duties.
  - Consistent, clear communication is key for our success – employees are expected to stay in regular communication with their supervisors and fellow team members to ensure work progress and strong team connection.
  - Employees should check in, through the supervisor’s preferred method, at the beginning of every workday with their supervisors by 8:00am, when the employee takes their lunch, and at the close of the business day.
    - This increased contact is necessary due to the unique remote work environment we are now in due to a pandemic – checking in this way is both for work and to ensure employee well-being during a stressful and anxious time for our whole community.
    - Once things become more normal in our new remote working environment, FAI at its discretion may modify this to better reflect the changed circumstances and needs to the organization and employees.

To the extent possible, FAI staff meetings (including initiative check-ins) should take place via video conference to ensure ongoing connection and strong teamwork with each other – during this time of “flattening the curve” FAI strongly discourages in-person meetings, except in extreme circumstances pre-approved by the employee’s supervisor.

- Timekeeping of hours worked for employee timesheets will continue as in normal operations, on the honor system – all employees should be honest and in close communication with their supervisors to accurately document actual daily working time associated with FAI Business, then noted on their bi-weekly timesheet. Employees are expected to maintain regular business hours, and non-exempt employees may not work overtime without advance written approval from their supervisor.
  - Personal leave: Employees must utilize the normal process for approval of time off, using the supervisor’s preferred approval method in advance of taking leave. Once the employee has received approval from their supervisor, employees will follow normal protocol to place on the President/CEO’s calendar.
  - The health and wellbeing of employees is important to FAI. In potential cases of COVID19-related illness, staff are strongly encouraged to immediately seek medical guidance and attention. During the time of “flattening the curve,” with prior approval from the President/CEO, if they choose to seek medical attention get tested for COVID19, or test positive for COVID19 and must take time off, their leave from work will be accrued to FAI Administrative Leave.
  - FAI is awaiting further federal guidance regarding the Families First Coronavirus Act, to determine whether any employees required to take leave or requesting leave may be entitled to paid leave under that new law.
- Expectations of employees’ social media and extracurricular activities during business hours still apply remotely; activity should be in alignment with the employee’s role and direct job duties. No partisan-based activity during normal business hours except during clearly dedicated non-work time (lunch, or on pre-approved personal leave.)
  - *This cannot be emphasized enough:* it is critical to not engage in partisan work as an FAI employee, especially in relationship to increased activity online in order to accomplish normal day to day work. Employees are representing FAI while engaging online during business hours and must act accordingly.
  - This is inclusive of all FAI sites as well as on employee’s personal sites and social media that they may check or use during the workday as aligned with employee’s role and direct job duties.
  - To clarify: If it’s being done – no matter the platform - during paid work time, it must conform to these requirements.

Working remotely is a privilege granted to some or all employees by FAI during extraordinary or emergency circumstances, such as the COVID19 pandemic. Ongoing remote work is not guaranteed, may be position-dependent based on the circumstances of the emergency and/or of the organization, and is at FAI’s discretion at all times.

Regarding any potential future emergency or extraordinary circumstance - if FAI is not aware or has not had an opportunity to respond to it - employees should check with their supervisor in each instance where they believe such a circumstance exists to ascertain if working from home may be an option. If, in this situation, an employee elects not to work on a given day, they should notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated absence. In cases in which an emergency closure is not declared, and the employee still elects not to work, the employees must use personal leave for the resulting absence, or if the circumstances or FAI determines, leave without pay.

As with all procedures, FAI may choose to amend, modify, change, or remove this Emergency Office Closure Procedure at any time.