

Executive Order Extends Licensure Recertification Deadlines for Peace Officers, Firefighters, and Private Detectives

On Tuesday Governor Walz issued [Executive Order 20-25](#). The order acknowledges that peace officers, emergency services providers, and security professionals are on the front lines of the COVID-19 response effort. In order to continue their work, they need to maintain an active license in their field. Many of the entities providing continuing education and testing services needed for license recertification are closed or operating with limited services.

As a result, the Governor has authorized the POST Board to defer continuing education requirements for all active peace officers until January 1, 2021. The order also authorizes the MN Board of Firefighter Training and Education to extend expiration dates to January 1, 2021. Finally, the MN Board of Private Detectives and Protective Agent Services is authorized to temporarily suspend the expiration of licenses until 60 days after the statewide peacetime emergency is ended.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of all Executive Orders issued by the Governor.

DPS Issues Executive Order Enforcement Guidance

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) has issued a letter of guidance to local law enforcement related to last week's Executive Order 20-20, the stay at home order. DPS suggests that law enforcement agencies seek to educate instead of taking enforcement action. The EO includes seven reasons a person may leave their home. These include relocation to ensure safety, health and Safety activities, outdoor activities, necessary supplies and services, essential interstate travel, care of others and displacement. To view the letter, click [here](#).

MPCA Stormwater Regulations

The MN Pollution Control Agency released the guidance below related to regulated entities and compliance with environmental laws. Metro Cities will continue to monitor agency guidance and would encourage you to make us aware of any issues you are having related to compliance. With the onset of the coronavirus (COVID 19) and the Governor's declaration of a state of peacetime emergency in Minnesota, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is aware that regulated entities may be impacted from a reduced workforce necessary to maintain normal operations at some facilities. All regulated entities remain obligated to take all available actions necessary to ensure compliance with environmental laws, regulations and permit requirements to protect the health and safety of the citizens of Minnesota and the environment. However, in the instance where regulated entities will have an unavoidable noncompliance situation, directly due to impact from the coronavirus, the MPCA has established an email box to accept requests for the Commissioner of the MPCA to consider providing regulatory flexibility, where possible, to assist entities in alternative approaches to maintaining compliance, such as extending reporting deadlines, extensions of operator certifications and other forms of regulatory relief.

Regulated entities should email MPCA.COVID19REGFLEX@state.mn.us with specific information related to a request for regulatory relief. This email box will be monitored daily and the MPCA will work diligently to expeditiously review and respond to incoming requests from regulated entities.

MPCA approval is required prior to implementing alternative measures. The email should at a minimum include the following:

- Requests should come from an individual party (company/county/individual) and identify the party requesting the relief by name and applicable permit number;
- Requests should include a phone number(s) of the individual to contact regarding the Request;
- Request should state what specific statute/rule/permit condition the individual party is looking for relief from;
- Request should include the reasoning/rationale for the request (1 paragraph summary on why the peacetime emergency makes the relief sought necessary and what actions the requestor took prior to the request to meet the requirement);
- Request should include bulleted points of what measures will be taken to mitigate/minimize the potential environmental impacts (if any); and
- Request should specify the specific time period that the request is for including the rationale.

Where alternative compliance options are authorized by the MPCA, regulated entities must maintain records adequate to document implementation of authorized alternative compliance options, and activities related to the noncompliance.

The MPCA will work as quick as possible with an individual party on a solution in response to the request. Requests can be amended by sending another e-mail if something has been approved for a specific time period and that time period needs to be extended or if a change to approved compliance options is needed. Again, the reason for the extension should be included. If the MPCA receives multiple requests for regulatory relief from a specific requirement and the MPCA determines it is appropriate across a specific sector, the MPCA may grant the specific sector relief for that requirement. Any questions regarding this guidance should be submitted to the email box for a response.

Minnesota Housing, Met Council Funding Application Timelines Feedback Sought

Application timelines for state and regional resources are being reviewed by the relevant agencies. Cities are encouraged to provide feedback if they are considering submitting funding applications and want to weigh in on the timelines of various funding cycles.

Minnesota Housing is seeking feedback on the closing date for its Consolidated Request for Proposals (Super RFP) which consolidates and coordinates multiple housing resources into one application process, including deferred loans, Housing Tax Credits, and amortizing first mortgages. The currently scheduled [multifamily RFP dates](#) are:

- Thursday, April 2: Consolidated RFP published in the Multifamily Customer Portal, including Intent to Apply and application materials
- Thursday, May 14 by noon: Intent to Apply due - required for all Multifamily applications submitted in the Consolidated RFP
- Thursday, June 4 by noon: Multifamily application deadline

The agency been contacted by potential applicants looking for additional time to submit applications. If your city has comments, please send an email to all three members of Minnesota Housing leadership: Commissioner [Jennifer Ho](#), Assistant Commissioner [Kasey Kier](#), and

Assistant Commissioner [James Lehnhoff](#). Please copy Metro Cities staff, charlie@metrocitiesmn.org, on your message.

The Metropolitan Council is reviewing its Livable Communities program application schedule. The Council's Fund Distribution Plan laid out the 2020 schedule. Click here to see the [2020 Notice of Funding Availability](#), including funding amounts and deadlines. If your city is considering submitting an application or planning to submit an application for any of the program funds, you

may contact the Council with your comments. Feedback is being sought for interest in maintaining the current application schedule or changing the schedule to allow greater city flexibility in submitting applications. City officials can email the LCA staff person who manages the program they are planning to apply to. [Marcus Martin](#) manages [TBRA](#), [Hannah Gary](#) manages [LCDA](#), and [Stephen Klimek](#) manages [TOD](#). [Tara Beard](#) is the manager of the Livable Communities Program. Please copy Metro Cities staff, charlie@metrocitiesmn.org, on your message.

DEED Posts COVID Guide for Small Businesses

A navigable page listing state and federal resources for small businesses is now available on DEED's website. The [Guide for Minnesota Small Businesses Who Need Help](#) lists different programs tailored to various small business needs and circumstances. Feel free to share these resources with small businesses, local chambers of commerce, community development agencies and nonprofits in your community.

These include:

- SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) – DEED encourages all small businesses to apply. It is a low interest, long term Economic Injury Disaster Loans for up to \$2 million. The SBA EIDL can be used to maintain payroll, provide paid sick leave, meet increased costs, make rent or mortgage payments, as well as repay unmet expenses and obligations. Available through www.sba.gov/disaster.
- SBA Paycheck Protection Program - a new federal \$350 billion loan program at SBA for small businesses, self-employed people, and gig workers to help them from going under due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If employers maintain payroll, the loans would be forgiven.
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program - a new Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program that covers those who do not qualify for regular Unemployment Insurance benefits, such as independent contractors and self-employed people. The program was authorized but must be created by the states, so Minnesota must build out this program before it can be implemented. More information will be available soon, however, it could be several weeks before payments begin.
- Minnesota Small Business Emergency Loan Program - these loans are for \$2,500 to \$35,000 and at a 0% interest rate. There is a total of \$30 million available for this program. The loans are made through an approved lender – you can find [FAQs, application materials and lenders](#) on the DEED website.
- Unemployment Insurance Shared Work Program - offers an alternative to layoffs for employers facing a temporary downturn in business. Administered by DEED's Unemployment Insurance Division, the program allows employers to divide available hours of work among a group of employees instead of implementing a full layoff. These employees may then receive partial unemployment insurance benefits while working reduced hours. The purpose of Shared Work is to avoid a layoff, not to subsidize wages. Learn more about the [Shared Work Program](#) on DEED's Unemployment Insurance Division's website.

Contact Charlie Vander Aarde at charlie@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4001 with any questions.

Metro Cities COVID-19 Resources for City Officials

See our [COVID-19 Resources page](#) for the latest information on the pandemic. The page is designed to give city officials and staff the most current guidance as decisions are made at the state and federal level. Some useful resources include:

- A running list of all Executive Orders issued by the Governor
- Information on how the Stay at Home order impacts cities and their employees
- Details on recent Federal stimulus legislation
- Contact information for your state senator(s) or representative(s)

The page is updated daily. Metro Cities is here to answer questions you might have about COVID-19 and its impact on city business.

Call for State Funding for Public Safety and Health Employees Infected with COVID-19

Cities are being asked to contact their legislative delegation regarding the inadequacy of the workers' compensation system to deal with the unique challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The amount of stress put on the system during this public health crisis will have long-term financial and administrative impacts that will threaten its future stability. If the state relies on the workers' compensation system in efforts to provide public safety and health employees relief, the eventual costs will be borne by property taxpayers.

[HF 4515/SF 4425](#) expands the workers' compensation system and while it was not included in the latest COVID-19 relief package passed by the legislature it has been introduced and could be acted on whenever the legislature reconvenes. Governor Walz has suggested he is open to an executive order that would accomplish the same thing as this legislation. Cities are urged to reach out to their legislators as well as the Governor's office in opposition to such a move.

Setting up a state fund to handle these costs will hopefully prevent dramatic increases in public safety costs for cities. The unprecedented nature of the current situation is central to the argument for establishing a dedicated fund to cover these COVID-19 related costs.

Metro Cities is monitoring this issue and will provide further updates regarding legislative activity and process, and other information as it is available. Please feel free to contact Patricia Nauman at 651-215-4002 or email patricia@metrocitiesmn.org with any questions.

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