April 1, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

Monday, March 30, 2020, the Panola College Board of Trustees held a regular Board meeting in order to conduct business and receive an update on our COVID-19 preparedness and altered operation efforts. The attached resolution (19-20.1) was adopted providing delegation of authority and accountability expectations during the COVID-19 emergency situation.

The Board was most complimentary and supportive of the College’s preparedness efforts. Each Board member wanted our employees and students to know that they are proud of your work, commitment, and focus during this uncertain time. They wanted me to express their sincere thanks and gratitude!

The Board understands that these are unprecedented times and that Panola College has five strategic objectives:

- To protect the health and safety of our students and employees
- To begin completing the spring 2020 semester through online, hybrid, and alternate classwork, depending on the type of course
- To keep students on track for completion
- To enable the majority of the College employees to work remotely, while continuing to provide necessary services, with the remainder of our employees working on site
- To retain full-time and part-time employees, reduce turnover, increase morale, help employees focus on work, and facilitate future return to normal operations

Keeping those objectives as the anchor, I want to explain the College’s plans about payroll and compensation during this period of altered operations. **First, the College is committed to payroll being processed on the regular distribution schedule.** All of our payroll is processed electronically directly to employees’ bank accounts, which allows for on-time delivery. **Second, compensation during this altered operations period is intended to provide employees with their normal base compensation as described below.** However, in order for that to occur, employees MUST be Available for Work.
The definition of **Available for Work** is as follows:

1. **Working onsite** – These employees will include select areas such as police, maintenance, lab support, etc. These areas will be specifically requested by members of the Executive Council and approved by the President.

2. **Working remotely** – Employees must be responsive to calls, texts, and instant messages within one hour of contact; review and respond to emails; work with supervisor for assignments and project completion and accountability, and available for regular check-ins with Supervisors. See Attachments: *Working Remotely and Leading a Remote Team*

3. **Availability to respond** – Employees must be able to arrive onsite within two hours of being contacted to report.

Based on the understanding that all employees will meet the requirements of the Available for Work expectation, please note the following details regarding compensation based on employee classification. *(At this time, all compensation decisions are through the spring 2020 semester only):*

**FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES**

**Full-time exempt** – Employees will be paid their regular monthly salary if they are available for work. If not available for work, employees must use personal or vacation leave time. Sick leave can be used under the sick leave provisions indicated in the current procedure.

**Full time non-exempt staff** – Employees will be paid a minimum of 40 hours if they are available for work. No internet access may make someone 'not available for work' unless remote work has been preauthorized by the supervisor and internet access is not essential. Employees must be responsive to any emails, texts, and assignments. If not available for work, employees must use personal or vacation leave time. Sick leave can be used under the sick leave provisions indicated in the current procedure.

Overtime will be paid when worked and must be authorized by the supervisor. Overtime will be restricted to those departments that have an absolute need to work. These employees will receive specific direction from their supervisor informing them that overtime work is approved.

**PART-TIME FACULTY**

**Adjunct faculty paid by the course** – These employees will continue to be paid for current courses being taught. Per normal practices, courses that do not make will not be paid.

**Part-time faculty paid via timesheet (non-credit courses)** – These employees will submit a timesheet for processing pay as the work is performed.
PART-TIME STAFF

The following compensation provisions apply to part-time staff, including work study, through this spring semester.

Part-time staff (non-work study) – These employees will be paid their average amount of hours worked from the previous four (4) pay periods (2/7, 2/21, 3/6, 3/20) and are available for work.

Part-time Work Study – Residence Assistants and College Store employees will be paid a minimum of 15 hours per week for anyone who was paid for the pay cycle from February 23 through March 7 (pay date March 20) and is available for work.

Part-time staff, including work study, will not receive 15 hours pay for spring break week.

Human Resources will be communicating the details for entering and submitting time. For non-exempt employees, continue to enter normal work hours or appropriate leave time (personal, vacation, or sick) for this week.

We are working towards phasing the rest of the employees to working remotely by the end of this week. As employees are identified who can begin working remotely, they will be released to do so after receiving any required equipment such as laptop or personal hot spot. Attached are guides for employees who are new to working remotely and for leaders who will now be leading a remote team.

I know we are all wondering when will we go back to normal? That is unknown. We will continue to reassess daily but I don’t suspect there will be significant changes in our decisions over the next several weeks. From an instructional standpoint, we want to complete this spring semester on time, and we should be on track to do that through online, hybrid, and alternate classwork. Moving forward, intersessions and summer sessions will be taught online.

In closing, I appreciate the Board’s support. That support is a direct reflection of their love for Panola College and their appreciation and trust in you. I am proud of the work that each of you are doing now and what you will continue to do during this COVID-19 altered operation period. We don’t have all of the answers. We may not be 100% right on our answers but we are making decisions with compassion and concern for our employees and our students. We will adjust and change course as the circumstances change.

Stay well!

Sincerely,

Greg Powell

Attachments