

## **IDPH Guidance for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19;** **Illinois General Assembly Returning to Session**

### **Mission and Purpose:**

This document provides guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to the members of the General Assembly and legislative staff in response to the rapid spread of COVID-19 in Illinois. These recommendations will ensure the public health and safety of legislators, legislative staff and other support personnel.

### **Travel and Stay in Springfield:**

- Members who either share a residence or a hotel room in Springfield, use individual hotel rooms in order to continue the practice of safe social distancing.
- Public transportation and ridesharing should be used for essential travel only. When possible, drive yourself.

### **Upon entry to the Illinois State Capitol:**

- IDPH recommends that the Secretary of State (“SOS”) should have the Capitol Police screen all those entering the capitol for a temperature of 100F degrees or greater and/or other symptoms.
- SOS should have a robust sanitizing practice in the Capitol multiple times a day, with special attention to door handles, elevator buttons, and other frequently touched surfaces.
- SOS should maintain limiting the number of people into the State Capitol (only state employees directly supporting session, which means excluding lobbyist and the public).
- If a member is feeling ill, they should NOT travel to Springfield for session. While in Springfield if a legislator becomes ill or symptomatic, they should call their doctor, a nurse hotline, any telehealth hotline set up specifically for COVID-19 or an urgent care center. If they are experiencing symptoms, they should return home and follow the guidelines provided by their physician.
- If a member has a serious underlying medical condition they should NOT travel to Springfield for session.
- IDPH advises that members 65 years of age or older should consider NOT traveling to Springfield for session.
- The common areas that include the Rotunda, and the House and Senate galleries should remain closed to the public.
- Signs should be displayed around the state capitol reminding staff and legislators to wash their hands and practice social distancing (i.e. coughing or sneezing into elbow, and using hand sanitizer)

### **In- Person Floor Debates and Voting:**

- IDPH recommends only requiring necessary staff in the chamber. Those would include the following: Chair, parliamentarian, clerk, member presenting the bill and one appointee from each caucus to ask questions, essential doormen and sergeant at arms, and essential staff support for substantive items.

- Only necessary members should be on the floor and voting, per the leader's agreement in advance and only enough to meet the minimum quorum requirements. Members should be arranged so they are six feet away from the next member. This may require having members occupy the gallery space.

**In- Person Committee Hearings and Voting:**

- IDPH recommends all meetings, such as committee pre-meetings, caucuses, and negotiation sessions for bills, should be conducted via phone or video conferencing system in advance.
- If committees are held, bills should be agreed upon prior to committee, to avoid unnecessary debate.
- Only necessary staff should be present.
- Consider only the minimum number of legislators necessary to establish a quorum (i.e. Chairman, Vice Chairman, Minority Spokesperson and limited designated members).
- If debate must take place, agree to vote the bill on a partisan roll call so that Chair and Minority Spokesperson of each committee can perform the business of their caucus.
- Only two larger committee rooms should be used so that members can be arranged six feet away from the next member.
- Only legislators should be there, witnesses who want to testify must do so by providing written testimony that can be read into the record (rather than in person).
- Members of the public can still engage with the democratic process by live streaming, engaging with their legislator by means of communication that include emails, telephone, and by filing an electronic witness slip.
- Capitol staff should stay in their workspaces as much as possible or continue to work remotely if possible. If Capitol staff need to report to work, staff's workspaces should be six feet away from each other.

**Upon adjournment:**

- IDPH recommends social distancing and isolation for at least seven days post legislative session.