



# Department of Transportation

Division of Operations

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Via EMAIL

March 19, 2020

**To: Region Engineers, Area Engineers, Construction and Maintenance Engineer, Director of Planning and Engineering, Bid Letting Office, Contractors, Executive Director of SD AGC, and FHWA Division Office**

**From: Craig Smith, Director of Operations**

**RE: COVID-19 Corona Virus and Potential Project Impacts**

All,

The Department is working with the Governor's Office and State Department of Health to slow the spread of COVID-19. These strategies have included working remotely when possible as per the Governor's Executive Order, educating all staff on the importance of proper hygiene practices, frequent cleaning of surfaces and implementing social distancing. As the start of construction season is upon us, it will be critical that contractors and the Department work closely to assure project schedules can be maintained while being socially responsible to limit further spread of the virus.

At this time the Department intends to move forward with all projects scheduled for letting and construction in 2020. Due to the Governor's Executive Order to work remotely, the bid letting originally scheduled for March 18, 2020 has been moved to March 25, 2020. These projects will be considered for award at the March 26, 2020 Transportation Commission Meeting. Further project letting dates will be reviewed and maybe adjusted as conditions warrant.

It is expected that construction projects will move forward as scheduled. Despite a few projects being shut down the week of March 16, 2020, there is no intent of a further shut down of projects. Prior to beginning any project work in 2020 there should be discussion between the contractor and DOT's project engineer on steps that will be taken in response to COVID-19. Things to consider are ways to eliminate face to face meetings, regular cleaning of common work areas, such as field labs, or other social distances practices to implement on the project. Communication and adherence to the agreed upon strategies will be critical.

Knowing this has a global impact and is continually changing, it is very difficult to predict all situations and potential impacts to projects. Section 8.7 in the Standard Specification allows for the extension of contract time when the contractor could not have foreseen or prevented the delay. If delays are experienced related to documented COVID-19 impacts, timely communication to the Department and documentation will be key to approval of a time extension.

As we all know the conditions change quickly, the Department will continue to monitor the CDC recommendations and coordinate with the State's Department of Health. Our primary goal is to keep both the contractor's and Department's employees healthy and safe and be socially responsible to slow the spread of the virus.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Craig Smith, PE Director of Operations

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