

Electronic Testimonial Submission

No Reply - Cook County Health <WP-Notifications@cookcountyhealth.org>

Tue 6/16/2020 12:16 PM

To: Santana, Debbie <dsantana@cookcountyhhs.org>

Type of Message

Message

Message

Please include for Public Comment for Committee meeting on 6/19/2020.

Good morning Board Members and thank you for your time. As an employee of Cook County Health, the last several months have been challenging, both physically and emotionally. It has certainly served as a reminder of the importance of the work this organization provides to the community. I am proud that we were prepared to protect employees and take care of patients, much better than other many other hospitals.

What's surprising now is the sudden change. That early concern for the safety of employees and care for patients has been replaced with a single-minded effort to get everyone "back to work." Respectfully, we have been working. Hard. Everyone of my co-workers has given maximum effort toward responding to COVID-19. Nurses, Medical Assistants, and Health Advocates have work tirelessly, often outside of their regular areas, and at great personal risk. Office staff learned new technologies and setup offices in their homes to make sure work continued. COVID complicated our work in so many ways and required immediate response. Work weeks have stretched-- 50, 60 hours are regular and normal now. And, we are happy to do it as our contribution toward the mission.

Why then are you so focused on making us return to the office before it's safe, and without regard to whether our work is getting done? Distancing is impossible because offices and work spaces are very close. With four to an elevator, filling even a single floor will take over an hour. Many leaders are already blatantly ignoring universal masking requirements and scheduling in-person team meetings. It's hurtful to us employees that you do not find the work that we did over last 3 month valuable--that it's more important to you that we show up rather than allowing us to demonstrate that we can be both productive AND safe.

We all recognize that some work requires you to show up and be present. That work needs to be done, and that should be how and whether we decide fill the halls. This meeting demonstrates that this Board doesn't feel like in-person gatherings are necessary to get work done. And, I hope you agree that getting people "back to work," just to say you did it, is an unnecessary risk.

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