

**RESOLUTION NO. 736 -2020, PERMITTING CERTAIN JOB DUTIES TO BE PERFORMED REMOTELY DURING DECLARED EMERGENCIES**

**WHEREAS**, since March 7, 2020, New York State has been in a declared emergency due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, due to the manner in which the novel coronavirus spreads, many workplaces have been functioning remotely to reduce the chance of infection; and

**WHEREAS**, many County departments are bringing staff into the workplace more regularly in recent weeks, as the County's infection rates have remained low; and

**WHEREAS**, while infection rates are currently low in New York State, school districts in Suffolk County are implementing a hybrid in-person and remote learning schedule for students in order to reduce the possibility of infection while returning for the 2020 school year. This is creating a childcare crisis in many households where parents are being asked to return to their job sites on days children remain in the home; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to childcare concerns, many employees and their families are struggling to ensure that their senior family members are well-cared for while mitigating their elder loved ones' virus exposure to the greatest extent possible; and

**WHEREAS**, certain job functions of many County employees can be completed while working remotely, without interfering with any essential job functions or responsibilities, while still effectively providing services to taxpayers, and without hampering the overall functions of the employee's Division and/or Department. It is beneficial to the County to maintain remote working to reduce the instances of viral spread in the workplace, which could hamper the effectiveness of County government during a critical period; and

**WHEREAS**, fully remote, staggered remote and in-person work schedules have successfully contained the spread of the virus and may significantly reduce the number of COVID-19 cases in a given area; and

**WHEREAS**, a uniform policy for remote work when possible during declared emergencies would allow employees to continue to perform critical functions during times of uncertainty without increasing strain on the workforce; and

**WHEREAS**, to ease the many burdens on County employees during declared emergencies, any County employee whose job function(s) can be completed without physically being present, without interfering with any essential job functions or responsibilities, while still effectively providing services to taxpayers, and without hampering the overall functions of the employee's Division and/or Department should be permitted to work remotely during declared emergencies; now, therefore be it

**1st RESOLVED**, that it shall be the policy of Suffolk County that all County employees whose essential job function(s) can be completed without physically being present at the office or other work place, without interfering with any essential job functions or

responsibilities, while still effectively providing services to taxpayers, and without hampering the overall functions of the employee's Division and/or Department, shall be allowed to operate remotely during any emergency declared for the County of Suffolk by the President of the United States, the Governor of the State of New York, or the County Executive; and be it further

**2nd**           **RESOLVED**, that the determination whether County employees can perform their essential job functions without physically being present at the office or other work place, without interfering with any essential job functions or responsibilities, while still effectively providing services to taxpayers, and without hampering the overall functions of the employee's Division and/or Department shall be at the determination of the County employee's appointing authority, with any and all disputes regarding such decisions to be resolved through the processes and procedures of the applicable current bargaining agreement; and be it further

**3rd**           **RESOLVED**, this Resolution shall take effect immediately; and be it further

**4th**           **RESOLVED**, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(26) and (33) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW insofar as these actions constitute routine or continuing administration and management not including new programs or major reordering of priorities that may affect the environment, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: October 6, 2020

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone  
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: October 19, 2020