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July 19, 2021

Ms. Sarah Hirakami  
Director of Collective Bargaining & Employee Relations  
University of Hawaii System  
2440 Campus Road  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Dear Ms. Hirakami:

**RE: Consultation – University of Hawaii Transition to On-Campus Operations and Activities**

We have reviewed the information in your June 17, 2021 response letter regarding the above-mentioned consultation. Upon receipt of additional feedback, please see the following questions/comments below:

1. While we appreciate your responses regarding the COVID-19 Voluntary Telework Policy, we still believe the University's decision to rescind this policy and no longer allow employees to telework is premature. Despite our community being in a better place than we were several months ago, this pandemic is not over. We have not and probably will not attain the level of 'herd immunity' health officials had envisioned, the more transmissible Delta variant has spread and is in all four counties, and cases are on the rise as some now believe we will see a pandemic of the unvaccinated.

As we've communicated previously, we again ask that the University –

- a. allow departments and programs to independently assess the viability of continuing telework and to determine their own plans, such as continued telework or modified telework, within the system-wide intent to open for reasonable in-person services.
  - b. consider exceptions or requests (personal hardship, health related, etc.) from employees for continued telework accommodations.
2. Based on your responses to several of our questions (numbers 1, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 13) it appears that certain operational issues are contingent on 'finalizing' the current UH COVID-19 Guidelines. Late last week, we received a copy of the revised UH COVID-19 Guidelines (Interim) dated July 15, 2021. We will be sharing it with employees for their comment/feedback and will provide a response as part of the consultation process.
  3. Last week, UH employees were notified that the University's vaccine mandate will not be enforced for students to physically attend class this fall as previously announced. What impact does this have on the current revised UH COVID-19 Guidelines (Interim) dated July

15, 2021? What, if any, precautions or protocols were added to the guidelines as a result of this change?

4. It is our understanding that some UH employees are working in temporary locations. Are all office spaces set up to accommodate the return of all employees? What alternatives or options are available if a department or program is not able to comply with physical distancing guidelines or requirements in an office?
5. What process is in place to ensure departments and programs are in compliance with the Re-Opening and COVID-19 Guidelines?

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Please contact me at 543-0078 or [jkuwabara@hgea.org](mailto:jkuwabara@hgea.org) if there are any questions.

Sincerely,



Joy Kuwabara  
Field Services Consultant

cc: Jan Gouveia, VPA