Dear BBG Staff,

The emergency task force, representing leaders from each of the Garden’s teams is meeting daily to assess, develop and implement emergency protocols for the public, staff, and volunteers. This is an unprecedented situation for most organizations. We are guided in this work by City and State mandates and recommendations, which are obviously evolving quickly.

**Your safety and well-being, and the health and integrity of the collections, are our highest priority.**

As of today, the Garden is closed to the public and will remain so until further notice.

* The Garden will move to an emergency staff-only mode by tomorrow.
  + Please speak to your supervisor about whether you will need come to work.
* BBG’s minimal onsite team will be comprised of a deeply stream-lined team of security, horticulture, custodial, maintenance, select senior staff and administrative staff as needed for core BBG functions.

**Our best sense is that we should anticipate BBG remaining closed through April 20; this may evolve.**

This is an internal projection we are sharing with staff teams only so you can work with your supervisors to consider scenarios – what workstream is realistic, what projects change or need to be put on hold, what communications will be helpful to BBG audiences and partners, and what creative strategies could unfold that help BBG in the months ahead.

**We understand that many of you have questions regarding pay, work arrangements, and work priorities during this time.**

As BBG suspends its normal programs and operations, we are facing a deep shift in our typical business model. We will endeavor to give your near-term clarity even as we are currently reviewing deeper impacts and options with the Board and City.

**PAYROLL**

All full-time staff will be paid normally through March 31, 2020. During this two- week period, staff with remote work capabilities should work from home. Please speak to your supervisor to establish approaches to your work and adapted priorities.

* Staff do not need to use accrued time during this period. HR will work with staff who have activated use of accrued time, recently or due to prior plans, to ensure that timecards are in alignment with BBG’s updated approach during this two-week period through March 31.

After March 31, 2020, employees will be paid by using their accrued time off. We will access emergency banks (applicable to union staff only), then personal, then vacation and finally sick time banks. Employees will be permitted to borrow five days against their future **sick**-time accrual (or carry a negative balance of 5 days)

* + After March 31, work is to be performed ONLY by emergency personnel as defined by on site work OR at the request of your supervisor, for example, if you have a specific skill set. Again, please speak to your supervisor regarding your schedule during this time.
* Part-time staff will be paid for the rest of the week (week ending 3/20/2020, paycheck date 3/27/2020) based on the hours they would have been scheduled. The Garden will also pay out any remaining sick time that these employees have, in their sick bank, on the 4/10/2020 paycheck. HR will work with supervisors to communicate this to part-time staff.

Guidance from authorities will determine our next steps. We are anticipating that closure of BBG will last through April 20, 2020. As that date nears, we will assess whether we can re-open to the public or whether we will need to extend the closure. Your supervisor will be in touch to communicate next steps at that time.

**WORK ARRANGEMENTS**

* Any staff member who is not required to be on site for emergency purposes should remain at home until further notice.
* Supervisors will be in touch with required emergency personnel about their schedules.
  + - Union employees will be compensated as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the Emergency Time Policy.
* Supervisors will be in touch with all other staff about a shared framework for working in until March 31.
* HR will speak to supervisors around how timecards should look for these next two weeks.

**We know that any clarity we can offer in this uncertain time is immensely helpful.**

We are regularly in touch with other NYC cultural organizations, the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Board of Trustees, to bring together the best approaches we can at this time. Understandably, we may not get this entirely right out of the gate. We deeply appreciate your patience and the steps that each of you are taking, creatively and thoughtfully, to respond together as best we can.

This will take a strong collective response from all of us. BBG has remained remarkably resilient and will always have a great deal to offer the community even as we re-envision how the season and year unfolds.

We appreciate all the staff’s cooperation and flexibility during this time. We all look forward to when we can welcome everyone back to the Garden.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

1. All staff should remain home unless instructed otherwise by their supervisors
2. Part-time staff will be paid according to their normally scheduled shift until Friday March 20
3. Full time staff will be paid in normal fashion until March 31.
4. After March 31, staff will be based from their banks of accrued time off.

**We will remain in regular contact about staffing and payment policies**