COVID-19 has drastically interrupted public workplace policy and practices throughout the United States and internationally. As we transition to a “new normal” in the public sector, human resources (HR) managers are now, more than ever, central to the critical functioning of public agencies. Given that public administrators are being tasked to construct policy under pressing and unprecedented circumstances, the long term impact on the public sector workplace is uncertain. What we do know is HR managers will be compelled to implement guidelines, policies, and practices that protect and safeguard their employees and communities while still maintaining the essential functions of government.

Some of the pressing human resource management (HRM) issues range from large percentages of essential employees being infected with COVID-19 such as the NYPD\[1\] to healthcare workers who continue to put themselves in danger without the protective equipment and protocols.\[2\] Questions arise when public agencies are not prepared to adjust HRM policies and practices during these kinds of emergency situations. These questions could lead to management/staff conflicts and a number of adverse HR actions. For example, a 60-year-old anesthesiologist in Texas was suspended without pay after insisting on wearing a surgical mask in the hallway to protect himself and patients from infection.

This symposium explores existing HRM policies and practices in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, challenges that emerged, and the path forward post-COVID-19. Submissions are welcome that explore HRM and COVID-19 through empirical and theoretical lenses. In considering the relationship between HRM and the COVID-19 crisis, this symposium seeks studies that focus on units of analysis such as HRM systems, employment and HR structures, and the management-employee relationship and how it has been affected by this crisis. Manuscripts should address the following as well as other related topics:

- How well were existing HRM systems in the public sector prepared to address this unprecedented crisis?
- How are HR managers trained in crisis management? Is this an unexamined area of HRM in the public sector? How do we get ready for the next big crisis?
- How do flexible work-life policies, including sick leave, paid leave, telework, and remote working options impact employees during the COVID-19 crisis (e.g. performance, satisfaction, and motivation)? Did agencies with existing flexible policies fare better than those without these policies in place, pre-pandemic?
• What are the ethical concerns surrounding reporting and whistleblowing amidst a crisis?
• How do major disruptions to existing employment practices expose systemic equity concerns in the workplace?
• What are the unintended consequences of global pandemics on unions, bargaining rights, and other employee protections (e.g. sexual harassment, worker compensation, retirement and disability benefits)?
• Do employees and managers bear a higher emotional labor burden during a crisis?
• How does COVID-19 impact staffing during a crisis and long term (e.g. hiring, retention, positions and classifications, furloughs, retirements)?

**SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DUE DATES:**
- Abstract due by: July 1, 2020
- Full paper due by: December 15, 2020

**QUESTIONS/ POINT OF CONTACT:**
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