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Susanne R. Young, Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO:	**Elected Officials, Appointing Authorities, and Extended Cabinet**
FROM:	**Susanne Young, Secretary of Administration**
DATE:	**January 5, 2021**
RE:	**Virtual Legislative Session**

Susanne R. Young
Digitally signed by Susanne R. Young
Date: 2021.01.05 15:09:26 -05'00'

Dear Elected Officials, Appointing Authorities, and Extended Cabinet:

Thank you for all the hard work, persistence and dedication in 2020 that went into battling the pandemic, keeping Vermonters safe and reopening the economy as quickly and successfully as possible.

As we enter a new phase of the response - distribution of vaccine - there is hope and light ahead. It will take as much discipline, however, to finish this job as it took to get to this point. Masks, physical distancing, limited social gatherings, and frequent washing of hands will be the norm for at least the next few months.

The Administration respects and appreciates the decision of leadership in the Legislature to meet again virtually at least until March. The formal start of the 2021-2022 biennium is Wednesday, January 6 when the legislators will take their oaths of office.

The purpose of this memo is to remind the Executive Branch that Governor Scott's Executive Order and addenda are still in effect and all those who can telework should continue to do so. This once again includes completing our important work and interactions, both formal and informal, with the legislature virtually until further notice. Please ensure staff in your agency or department who have legislative responsibilities are so advised.

While it would be more satisfying to connect in person, we have learned over the past months that even the smallest meetings and best intentions have resulted in infections being spread or close contacts being quarantined while they await results. The even more contagious strain of the virus that has arrived in our region makes it especially important to continue to act to protect ourselves and others while we work to vaccinate Vermonters.

This is the week each year when we look forward to the celebration, ceremony and grandeur that comes with a formal inauguration, inaugural speech and greeting legislators, newly and re-elected members, in

person. Although oaths will be administered and a speech given this year, those events will not be anything like past years.

On January 7, statewide officers will be sworn-in during a brief outdoors ceremony while physically distanced. Office holders will be limited to one guest each. Public attendance is not encouraged and only the invited guest of an officeholder should attend as we respect the hard decision made to forego a larger event in the interest of the health and safety of all.

Governor Scott will deliver his Inaugural Address to Vermonters at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, January 7, 2021. The address will be broadcast statewide from a remote location and will be carried live by Vermont's major media networks.

The Administration wishes all of you a happy and healthy new year.

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