COVID-19 Diagnosis/Symptoms Protocols for Employees and Supervisors (January 4, 2021)

If an employee has tested positive or been diagnosed with COVID-19, exhibits any Coronavirus Symptoms (other than symptoms related to a pre-existing medical diagnosis unrelated to COVID-19), is awaiting COVID-19 test results, or has been confirmed as a "close contact" exposure, the following steps should be taken by the employee and their supervisor.

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Employee Steps

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, but do NOT have a positive test or diagnosis:

- If at work, go home immediately and avoid coming into close contact with anyone*.
- Contact your supervisor as soon as possible to notify them. If you are able to work remotely you will be allowed to do so.
- A University Return to Work Coordinator will contact you to help determine next steps regarding returning to work.
- Contact your health care provider for diagnosis, treatment and/or testing, as necessary.
- If you are awaiting test results, notify your supervisor and remain at home until approved to return to work.
- Stay home (except to seek medical care).
- Follow CDC guidance – **"What to Do If I'm Sick"**.
- Follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation**" protocols.
- If, at any time following the reporting of symptoms you undergo a test for COVID-19 and you test positive, notify your supervisor of this development.
- Do not return to campus until approval is received. See "**Completion of Self-Quarantine/ Isolation**".

If you receive a positive test result or are diagnosed with COVID-19 (regardless whether you have symptoms), you should:

- If at work, go home immediately and avoid coming into close contact with anyone*.
- Contact your supervisor as soon as possible to notify them.
- A University Return to Work Coordinator will contact you to help determine next steps regarding returning to work.
- Consult your health care provider.
- Stay home (except to seek medical care).
- Follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation**" protocols.
- Do not return to campus until approval is received. See "**Completion of Self-Quarantine/Isolation**".
- If contacted, cooperate with contact tracers (facilitated through Public Health Officials) to provide information regarding others with whom you have had close contact.

If you have been identified as a "close contact" exposure (or believe you have been in close contact with an infected person):

The Centers for Disease Control and prevention defines close contact as someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

- If at work, go home immediately and avoid coming into close contact with anyone*.
- Contact your supervisor by phone or email as soon as possible to notify them. If you are able to work remotely you will be allowed to do so.
- If you believe you have been in close contact with an infected person, a University Return to Work Coordinator will contact you to help determine next steps regarding returning to work.

If you have been identified as a "contact of a close contact" exposure:

A "contact of a close contact" is defined as someone who has been in contact with someone who was identified as a close contact to a person with COVID-19. In these instances, you do not need to self-quarantine unless you develop symptoms or the person identified as a close contact develops COVID-19. For situations where there may be concerns about returning to work onsite, your supervisor may allow you to telework (if appropriate) or utilize personal leave.

****UNC System COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave provides permanent, leave-eligible employees up to 160 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL). EPSL is paid at 100% if the employee is unable to work, including unable to telework, because the employee: is subject to quarantine order or has been advised to self-quarantine by a health care provider or public health official; has had exposure with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and is awaiting a diagnosis (the employee may or may not be demonstrating symptoms).***

Supervisor Steps

If the employee has COVID-19 symptoms and/or is awaiting test results, but does not have a positive test or a diagnosis:

- If the employee is at work when you are notified, make sure the employee is separated from others and immediately sent home. If remote work is available and the employee requests to work remotely, the employee should be allowed to continue to work.

- If the employee is at home, advise them to stay at home and follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation"** protocols. Inform employee that they will need to be approved before they can return to campus based upon **"Completion of Self-Quarantine/Isolation"** guidance.

- Complete the COVID-19 EXPOSURE SUPERVISOR REPORTING FORM and inform employee that a University Return to Work Coordinator will be contacting them. Notify the appropriate Division Head (or designee) and provide information regarding when the employee was last on campus. It is expected that this notification will occur on the same day. Human Resources will follow up with the employee to coordinate appropriate leave guidance for the self/quarantine/isolation period.

- If the employee later notifies you that they have undergone a test for COVID-19 and received a positive result, advise them to remain at home and follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation**" guidelines. Notify the appropriate Division Head (or designee) of the confirmed positive test and follow the below guidelines for positive diagnosis.

If the employee has been identified as a "close contact" exposure (or they believe they have been in close contact with an infected person):

The Centers for Disease Control and prevention defines close contact as someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

- If the employee is at work when you are notified, make sure the employee is separated from others and immediately sent home. If remote work is available and the employee requests to work remotely, the employee should be allowed to continue to work.

- If the employee is at home, advise the employee to stay home until further guidance regarding returning to work has been provided to them.

- Complete the COVID-19 EXPOSURE SUPERVISOR REPORTING FORM and inform employee that a University Return to Work Coordinator will be contacting them to confirm whether a "close contact" situation exists and to help determine next steps regarding returning to work.

- Notify the appropriate Division Head (or designee) and provide information regarding when the employee was last on campus. It is expected that this notification will occur on the same day. The Division Head (or designee) should notify Human Resources as soon as practicable. Human Resources will follow up with the employee to coordinate appropriate leave guidance for the self/quarantine/isolation period.

- The University Return to Work Coordinator will contact the appropriate Division Head (or designee) after speaking with the employee. The Division Head (or designee) will then follow-up with the supervisor to determine next steps regarding the employee's return to work.

If the employee has been identified as a "contact of a close contact" exposure:

A "contact of a close contact" is defined as someone who has been in contact with someone who was identified as a close contact to a person with COVID-19. In these instances, the employee does not need to self-quarantine unless they develop symptoms or the person identified as a close contact develops COVID-19. For situations where there may be concerns about returning to work onsite, your supervisor may allow you to telework (if appropriate) or utilize personal leave.

If the employee has tested positive or been diagnosed with COVID-19, the supervisor should:

- If the employee is at work when you are notified, make sure the employee is separated from others and immediately sent home. If remote work is available and the employee requests to work remotely, the employee should be allowed to continue to work.

- Complete the COVID-19 EXPOSURE SUPERVISOR REPORTING FORM and inform employee that a University Return to Work Coordinator will be contacting them. If the employee is at home, advise the employee to stay home and follow the employee protocols above for their situation; also, find out when the employee was last at work.

- Notify the appropriate Division Head (or designee) and provide information regarding when the employee was last on campus. It is expected that this notification will occur on the same day as confirmation of the positive test result.

- The Division Head (or delegate) should notify Human Resources as soon as practicable to report all situations where an employee has tested positive or been diagnosed with COVID-19. Human Resources will follow up with the employee to coordinate appropriate leave guidance for the self-quarantine/isolation period.

- Notify Facilities Management to clean/disinfect the employee's work area [Note: CDC guidance advises that cleaning/disinfecting should not begin for 24 hours from employee's presence; if the infected individual has not been present for 7 days or more, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary besides increased routine cleaning and disinfecting of all high-touch surfaces already in place.]

- Close off areas used by the infected employee, including common areas.

- With approval of the appropriate Division Head, it may be appropriate to advise co-workers of a potential exposure (but do not identify the employee by name) and that contact tracers (facilitated through Public Health Officials) will work with the individual who tested positive to identify close contacts and notify them if they need to self-quarantine. Further advise that they do not need to take any specific action unless notified, but they should continue to monitor their health for the presence of any "Coronavirus Symptoms" and follow the "Prevention" and "Workplace Prevention" practices.

- In unique situations when it is clear that certain co-workers have been potentially exposed as a result of close contact for a prolonged period of time with the affected employee, the supervisor (with approval of the appropriate Division Head) may send those co-workers home to follow the "Self-Quarantine/Isolation" protocols.

- Inform any employees who have been sent home that they will need to be approved before they can return to campus as detailed in "**Completion of Self-Quarantine/Isolation**". The appropriate division head and Human Resources must be notified prior to approving an employee to return from COVID-19 Self-Quarantine/Isolation.

- If you or any of your employees have questions, you may direct them to Trisha Ray at trisharay@email.wcu.edu or 828 227-2522.

Self-Quarantine/Isolation Protocols

Self-quarantine is a practice used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. It helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are ***sick*** with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected.

When to Self-Quarantine

- You are exhibiting one or more Coronavirus Symptoms
- Someone in your household is lab confirmed or suspected/presumed to have COVID-19
- You have been confirmed as a "close contact" with someone who has been lab confirmed or suspected/presumed to have COVID-19
- You have returned from international travel

When to Self-Isolate

- You are lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- You are suspected/presumed to have COVID-19 due to presence of Coronavirus Symptoms
- You are suspected/presumed to have COVID-19 due to "close contact" with someone who has been lab confirmed to have COVID-19

Self-Quarantine/Isolation Protocols

- **Stay home** and separate yourself from others in your home.
- Do not come to work; do not participate in any campus activities; and do not come to campus.
- **If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for test results, or have Coronavirus Symptoms,** CDC guidance for isolation recommends staying in a specific "sick room" or area and away from other people or animals, including pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Monitor any symptoms you might be experiencing and if they develop or worsen then call your healthcare provider BEFORE seeking in-person care.
- *Call 911 if you have a medical emergency. Notify the operator that you have, or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a cloth face covering before medical help arrives.*
- Postpone all non-essential medical appointments until you are out of self-quarantine/isolation.
- Stay away from public areas including grocery stores, malls, theaters and large public gathering spaces.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Postpone any travel. If you travel and become ill, you may not be able to return home.
- Employees should communicate with their supervisor often and, depending upon the circumstances, an employee may continue to work remotely if approved to do so.

Returning to Campus

See "**Completion of Self-Quarantine/Isolation"** for when the self-quarantine/isolation will end and what is required before the employee is allowed to return to work on campus.

Completion of Self-Quarantine/Isolation

If you have been self-quarantined or self-isolated, you must be approved to return to campus before resuming your normal work schedule.

Your request to return will be evaluated based upon which of these circumstances describes your situation:

1. **If you are under self-isolation because you have lab confirmed or suspected COVID-19 AND you have exhibited Coronavirus Symptoms:**
    - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms; and,
    - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
    - A release to return to work from a medical health care provider is required
2. **If you are under self-isolation because you have lab confirmed COVID-19 AND you have not exhibited Coronavirus Symptoms:**
    - 10 days have passed since the date of your first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test (assuming you have not subsequently developed symptoms since such positive test)
    - A release to return to work from a medical health care provider is required
3. **If you are under self-quarantine/isolation because of confirmed close contact exposure AND you have exhibited Coronavirus Symptoms:**
    - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms; and,
    - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
4. **If you are under self-quarantine because of confirmed close contact exposure to someone with lab-confirmed or diagnosed COVID-19 AND you have not exhibited Coronavirus Symptoms:**
    - At least 14 days of quarantine have been completed (from the date you had close contact), no symptoms have appeared, and you have had no further close contact with that individual or anyone else with COVID-19; or
    - At least 10 days of quarantine have been completed AND no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring; or
        - At least 7 days of quarantine have been completed AND no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring AND a diagnostic specimen tests negative within 48 hours of the planned quarantine discontinuation (no earlier than 5 days after last contact); However:
    - If you live with someone with COVID-19 and have not been able to avoid continuous close contact with them, at least 14 days have passed since the person with COVID-19 has completed self-isolation (see #1 or #2 above)
    - If you live with someone with COVID-19 and have avoided continued contact with that household member, but you have had close contact with another household member who has COVID-19, at least 10 days have passed since the last close contact with this additional household member
5. **If you are under self-quarantine/isolation because you have exhibited one or more Coronavirus Symptoms (regardless of whether you have been diagnosed with COVID-19):**
    - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms; and,
    - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Formal approval from the appropriate Division Head (or designee) is required before any WCU community member may return to campus after self-quarantine or self-isolation. Note that for items #1 and #2 above, a release to work from a medical health care provider is required. Noncompliance with the above requirements may result in disciplinary action.

What To Do If I'm Sick

If you have a fever, cough or any of the other Coronavirus Symptoms, you might have COVID-19. **Do not physically report to class or work; do not physically participate in any campus activities or come to campus.** (This does not apply if the presence of symptoms is due to a pre-existing medical condition or a medical diagnosis unrelated to COVID-19.)

Stay home except to get medical care

- Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- Take care of yourself. Get rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.
- Stay in touch with your doctor. Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs, or if you think it is an emergency.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Separate yourself from other people

- As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home. If possible, you should use a separate bathroom. If you need to be around other people or animals in or outside of the home, wear a cloth face covering.

Monitor your symptoms

- Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath but other symptoms may be present as well. Trouble breathing is a more serious symptom that means you should get medical attention.
- Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider.

When to Seek Emergency Medical Attention

- Look for emergency warning signs* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately
  - Trouble breathing
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
  - New confusion
  - Inability to wake or stay awake
  - Bluish lips or face

**This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.*

- Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

Call ahead before visiting your doctor

- Call ahead. Many medical visits for routine care are being postponed or done by phone or telemedicine.
- If you have a medical appointment that cannot be postponed, call your doctor's office, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.

Wear a cloth covering over your nose and mouth

- You should wear a cloth face covering, over your nose and mouth if you must be around other people or animals, including pets (even at home)
- You don't need to wear the cloth face covering if you are alone. If you can't put on a cloth face covering (because of trouble breathing, for example), cover your coughs and sneezes in some other way. Try to stay at least 6 feet away from other people. This will help protect the people around you.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw away used tissues in a lined trash can.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean your hands often
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid sharing personal household items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.
- Wash these items thoroughly after using them with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces everyday

- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in your "sick room" and bathroom; wear disposable gloves. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but you should clean your bedroom and bathroom, if possible.
- High-touch surfaces include phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.

Definitions

Asymptomatic: Without apparent symptoms. While the scientific understanding of COVID-19 and the virus that causes it is rapidly evolving, recent studies and empirical data suggest that certain persons infected with the novel coronavirus may not show apparent symptoms, and that these individuals may be able to transmit infection. The percentage of persons who are infected but never show symptoms of COVID-19 is currently unclear. Asymptomatic cases pose a challenge for public health efforts because these individuals will not know they are infected unless they are tested, and may unknowingly transmit infection.

Close Contact: The Centers for Disease Control and prevention defines close contact as someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. (This guidance is irrespective of whether either or both parties were wearing face coverings.)

Confirmed Case: A "confirmed case" is defined by meeting confirmatory laboratory evidence for COVID-19.

Contact of a "Close Contact": A "contact of a close contact" is defined as someone who has been in contact with someone who was identified as a close contact to a person with COVID-19. In these instances, the employee does not need to self-quarantine unless they develop symptoms or the person identified as a close contact develops COVID-19.

Diagnostic Testing: Diagnostic testing is used to confirm an illness, such as performing a COVID-19 test on someone with symptoms, to confirm if they are positive or negative for the virus.

Exposure: Being in a situation or setting where a person could be infected by transmissible virus. Potential exposure should be considered in the context of how it may have occurred, such as proximity, duration, closeness of contact, and other characteristics. Current and emerging evidence suggests that the virus which causes COVID-19 spreads very easily and sustainably between people.

Face Coverings: Face coverings are worn to prevent the spread of droplets from the wearer to others. Wearing a face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing and other public health practices, rather, an additional measure.

Isolation: The act of separating people infected with a contagious disease (with or without symptoms) from people who are not sick, completely eliminating movement within the community while contagious. People who are in isolation should stay home until it is safe for them to be around others and follow the advice or instructions of their health care provider and public health officials. Anyone sick or infected should ideally separate themselves from others in their residence by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and using a separate bathroom if available.

Presumptive Case: A "presumptive case" is a person without a positive diagnostic test who has COVID-19-like symptoms and close contact with a laboratory confirmed case.

Quarantine: The act of separating or restricting the movement of people who were exposed to contagious disease to determine if they are sick. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their health care provider and public health officials.

COVID Exposure Scenarios and Guidance

In an effort to follow CDC guidance while at the same time not putting employees out of work unnecessarily, the following scenarios are typical of the circumstances we have experienced since March 2020 where there has been confirmed or potential exposure to COVID-19.

SCENARIO	WHAT SHOULD I DO?	WHEN CAN I RETURN TO CAMPUS?
1. I have tested positive or am a presumptive positive case for COVID-19.	**Stay home (except to seek medical care); do not report to work onsite.** Contact your supervisor as soon as possible to notify them and follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation" protocols.** With supervisory approval, remote work may be allowable based upon the nature of the position.	At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms; and, At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared A release to return to work from a medical health care provider is required
2. I have been notified by a local public health department that I am a **"close contact"** to a positive case.	**Stay home; do not report to work onsite.** Contact your supervisor as soon as possible to notify them and follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation" protocols.** With supervisory approval, remote work may be allowable based upon the nature of the position.	At least 14 days of quarantine have been completed (from the date you had close contact), no symptoms have appeared, and you have had no further close contact with that individual or anyone else with COVID-19; or At least 10 days of quarantine have been completed **AND** no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring; or At least 7 days of quarantine have been no symptoms have been reported during **AND** a diagnostic specimen tests negative of the planned quarantine discontinuation 5 days after last contact);
3. I believe I have been in close contact with a positive case (within 6 feet distance for 15 minutes or longer cumulative during a 24-hour period) but have not been contacted by a local public health department.	**Stay home; do not report to work onsite.** Contact your supervisor as soon as possible to notify them and follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation" protocols.** With supervisory approval, remote work may be allowable based upon the nature of the position.	Your ability to return to work will be dependent upon whether you are considered to be a "close contact". A "University Return to Work Coordinator" will contact you to help determine next steps regarding returning to work.
4. I do not have any symptoms but someone in my household has tested positive for COVID-19.	**Stay home; do not report to work onsite.** You would be considered a household "close contact". Contact your supervisor as soon as possible to notify them and follow the "**Self-Quarantine/Isolation" protocols.**	If you live with someone with COVID-19 and have not been able to avoid continuous close contact with them, at least 14 days have passed since the person with COVID-19 has completed self-isolation.

	With supervisory approval, remote work may be allowable based upon the nature of the position.	
5. I do not have any symptoms but someone I recently spent time with (at work, home, etc.) is now exhibiting symptoms of, or is being tested for COVID-19.	Before reporting for onsite work notify your supervisor and wait to speak with a "University Return to Work Coordinator".	A "University Return to Work Coordinator" will contact you to help determine next steps regarding returning to work.
6. Someone I have been around (at work, home, etc.) was recently in contact with another person who has either tested positive for COVID-19 or is now exhibiting symptoms. The person I spent time with is not exhibiting symptoms and neither am I.	You may report to work onsite. You should engage in physical distancing, carefully monitor your health, and remove yourself from the worksite and notify your supervisor if you develop any symptoms.	Onsite work is allowed although physical distancing and close health monitoring should be followed.