City of Newport News
HUMAN RESOURCES
COVID-19 FAQs-#10

Please note the guidance provided in this or any previous edition of FAQs is subject to change based on the most up-to-date information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and/or Virginia Department of Health. Items with an * indicate FAQs that were covered in a previous edition and are worth repeating.

COVID-19 and Travel Plans

Q: If I travel for vacation, do I have to quarantine upon return?

A: *The most up to date guidance from the CDC states: "Because travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick." However, we are in the middle of summer, and we understand many employees have made vacation plans, so we are utilizing the resources we have available to make the best decisions for employees and citizens.*

Please remind those with travel plans that include out of state or international travel that because things are changing so rapidly, <u>if they choose to travel, a quarantine upon return is not out of the question.</u> Employees should check in with their management team a couple of days prior to return to discuss the most up-to-date information and quarantine recommendations. Management employees are encouraged to contact the <u>medical services division</u> with additional questions.

Q: Are there specific hotspots for travel that require quarantine?

A: *Currently, with very few exceptions, the world is a hotspot. Travel to and from your destination provides additional risk. Below are some resources we've found especially helpful to keep track of policies and travel restrictions in each state. We recommend employees check state sites for spikes and quarantine recommendations. For example, NY has a quarantine in effect for anyone traveling from a "hotspot" state. There are 16 states impacted based on the number of positive COVID cases. This <u>site</u> provides information that may be helpful for you as you travel including mask, social distancing and other requirements. Other state specific resources can also be found <u>here.</u>*

Q: What if, based on my travel destination, I have to quarantine?

A: *For those who are returning and require quarantine, please notify the medical services division. Eligible employees may be able to telework for all or a portion of time if telework is an option for their position. If it is not an option, management employees are encouraged to contact the <u>medical services division</u> with additional questions. Depending on the circumstances as outlined by the <u>FFCRA,</u> PML, PHE/EPSL may be an option.*

COVID-19 EMPLOYEE DAILY SCREENING AND EXPOSURE SCENARIOS

Q: How do I know if I have been "exposed" to COVID-19 for daily screening purposes?

A: *To be considered exposed to COVID-19, you have to have had close contact with someone with COVID-19. The highest risk contact includes:*

- *Living in the same house as a person diagnosed with COVID-19*
- *Caring for a person diagnosed with COVID-19*
- *Being within 6 feet of a person diagnosed with COVID-19 for 10 minutes or more, or*
- *Being in direct contact with secretions from a person diagnosed with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.).*
- *Being exposed to a clinically compatible case in a region with widespread community transmission*
- *Being exposed to a person with symptomatic COVID-19 during period from 48 hours before symptoms onset until meets criteria for discontinuing home isolation.*

Q: Can I be in the same room with someone who has COVID-19 and not get it?

A: *Being indoors, such as a classroom or hospital waiting room, with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 and remaining more than 6 feet away, does not put you at a higher risk of getting sick. Additionally, briefly walking by or briefly being in the same room as a person diagnosed with COVID-19 does not necessarily put you at a higher risk of getting sick. In addition, wearing a face mask is proven to decrease your chances of contracting COVID-19 by up to 80%! Forbes study*

Q: What steps can I take to protect myself and my family from becoming infected with COVID-19?

A: *Staying home, telecommuting, and self-isolation is the best defense for limiting the spread of COVID-19. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) advises healthy individuals to wear mouth and nose face coverings — when they go to a public area, such as the grocery store or a pharmacy. The City of Newport News has advised all employees to wear masks while entering and exiting city facilities, in common areas and during any public gatherings.*

Q: What measures are taken when a COVID positive individual may have exposed employees or a work area?

A: *When made aware of a potential COVID exposure, department leadership is advised to notify all potentially exposed employees, sanitize compromised areas in accordance with the City's established sanitation guidelines, and remind all employees of the City's temperature, screening protocols, and safety measures. Adhering to these guidelines will continue to keep employees as safe and healthy as possible. The City is equally committed to maintaining the confidentiality of employee PHI and protecting the health and wellbeing of all employees.*

Q: If I have coronavirus, what can the City tell others about my condition?

A: *All medical information about an employee is confidential. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act provides protections concerning disclosure of medical information. In accordance with this Act and for the safety of the workplace, an employer may disclose this information to individuals charged with protecting the health or safety of the public as necessary to prevent or minimize the threat of imminent exposure.*

Q: If I test positive for COVID-19, how soon can I return to work?

A: *If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, he/she may return to work after 14 days from the date of the positive test results **and** showing no symptoms including a fever.*

Q: What happens if COVID-19 cases begin to spike in Virginia or our area?

A: *The number of reported COVID-19 cases is closely monitored by the Virginia Department of Health and reported daily to the Governor's Office and to local government officials. It is anticipated and understood that there may be a rise in exposures and verified cases of COVID-19. The Governor's decisions have taken these factors into account and work closely with the State's medical providers to ensure that citizens will have the necessary resources to ensure any care or treatment needed will be provided.*

COVID-19 EMPLOYEE DAILY SCREENING AND FACE MASK PROTOCOL

Q: What do I do if I have a chronic condition that causes higher than normal temperature or other COVID-19 related symptoms?

A: *Employees who have conditions that frequently cause their temperature to run higher than normal or present other COVID-19 related symptoms should self-monitor prior to going to work. Should a fever or other symptoms be present, the recommendation is to telework for the day if applicable. Should this not be an option, the employee should self-monitor until their temperature drops to below 100 degrees, symptoms disappear and then the employee report to work and get screened.*

REMINDER of the DAY:

If you are sick, or have ANY COVID-19 related symptoms, stay home. If you become sick or develop any COVID-19 related symptoms, notify your supervisor and go home.

Q: What do I do if someone is symptomatic or temp 100 degrees or higher?

A: *Any information on an employee who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or 100 degree temp or higher should be sent to medical services. After the information is sent to medical services, it should be shredded or deleted. Please do not keep a log or checklist.*

Q: If I am exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual while social distancing, (such as being present in a building with a known COVID-19 positive individual, but not being anywhere near them or their workspace) is that an exposure situation?

A: *No, if an employee is exposed to a known COVID-19 positive person, but maintained the appropriate social distancing guidelines per CDC recommendation, this would not "count" as exposure to prevent an employee from working the next day. The chances are, the employee would have a greater risk of exposure in their outside day-to-day activities.*

Q: <u>I have concerns that a co-worker may be sick, and is continuing to come to work. What can I do?</u>

A: *We want every employee to feel safe in their work environment. Wearing PPE, Social Distancing and the City's commitment to cleaning and sanitizing protocol is what we are doing every single day to keep the City running.   At any time you feel uncomfortable, please report your concerns to your immediate supervisor. Trust that the right decisions will be made. Should your concerns remain unresolved, contact the Department of Human Resources.*

For further information, please refer to the <u>Cleaning and disinfecting</u> guidance issued by the CDC.