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Absenteeism & Accommodations

During the local COVID19 crisis, employees and students could be absent because they are sick; are caregivers for sick family members; are caregivers for children if schools or day care centers are closed; have at-risk people at home, such as immunocompromised family members; or are afraid to come to work because of fear of possible exposure.

All employees are encouraged to report their concerns and use paid sick leave, as needed. No department of Seattle Colleges will take any adverse actions or otherwise retaliate against a worker or student for exercising health safety rights, and employees are encouraged to raise any and all health & safety concerns to the attention of the district H&S team by emailing healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu.

Employees/students who are at higher-risk to severe illness from contracting COVID19 should have accommodations work in areas that do not present them with direct public interaction or frontline work. Employees and student are not required to seek these accommodations directly through their supervisor or instructor. **Supervisors and instructor** are to advertise the means for individuals to confidentially self-report that they are at higher-risk and seek accommodations process, by emailing:

- **Employees**: hr.district@seattlecolleges.edu
- **Students**:
    - North Seattle College | DS@seattlecolleges.edu
    - Seattle Central College | ARC.central@seattlecolleges.edu
    - South Seattle College | Disability.South@seattlecolleges.edu

Plan for Absenteeism

All programs that have on-campus face-to-face activity are to plan for and make reasonable accommodations for COVID-related absences with particular attention paid to special subgroup considerations for individuals at increased risk of infection due to situational, cultural, or socio-economic factors. This includes:

- Increasing student/employee awareness of the accommodations process for individuals at increased risk of experiencing severe reaction to COVID19 infection or those who have a disability or medical condition that does not allow them to get vaccinated.
- Promptly respond to and accommodate a worker/student who has been directed to isolate or quarantine.

- Direct any student or employee to immediately notify H&S if they notify you of a confirmed or suspected COVID illness or potential exposure event; Also notifying H&S about any notification you receive. Do not disseminate information about another person's person health information to anyone but authorized representatives (the H&S team). Any necessary response, notifications, and communications will be directly managed by trained contact tracers (who work closely with King County Public Health) and the campus leadership and public information team.
  Contact the H&S team by emailing healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu (note: this is NOT health&safety@seattlecolleges.edu – you won't get a reply).

- Instructors need to ensure that class policies on absenteeism are flexible and consistent with isolation requirements (when someone is ill) and quarantine requirements (when someone has been exposed) for controlling the spread of infection and make all students aware of these policies. Also, to maintaining flexible policies that permit individuals to stay home to care for a sick family member. Be aware that more students may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

- Promote awareness of the **emergency signs for COVID19**. Everyone should know to call 9-1-1 or get to the hospital right away, if you have one or more of these symptoms:
  - trouble breathing
  - constant pain or pressure in your chest
  - bluish lips or face or
  - sudden confusion

- Promote awareness of **COVID-like symptoms**. Any person who experience these symptoms should promptly isolate and get tested for COVID19. Here is a link for free testing center locations throughout King County (language services are also available here):
  https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/COVID19/testing.aspx

Isolation Requirements

"**Isolation**" is the separation of sick-people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. People who experience COVID-like symptoms (regardless of whether or not they have been vaccinated or think they have been infected with COVID19) should get tested and isolate, based the following campus isolation requirements.

Isolation means - do not come to campus, stay home and:

- Monitor your symptoms. If you have an emergency warning signs (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately.
- Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible. Do not have visitors.
- Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Avoid contact with other members of the household and pets.
- Wear a well-fitting mask when you need to be around other people in the household.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- Take steps to improve ventilation at home, if possible.

Any person that experiences COVID19-like symptoms must **isolate for minimum 5 days and wear a KN95 mask** for an **additional 5 days after exiting isolation**.

Calculating isolation duration: The date that symptoms develop is considered day 0 (zero). The first full day after symptoms develop is **day 1 of isolation**. Before exiting isolation and returning to campus (on day 6), symptoms must be improved and fever resolved. If by day 6, the fever has not resolved, **stay home until 24 hours have passed after the fever goes away**. If the individual remains ill after 10 days of isolation they will need to consult with a healthcare professional in order to continue to be excused for a COVID19 related absence.

COVID19 like symptoms:

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath (difficulty breathing)

- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell

- Sore (or scratchy) throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

People with any of the above listed symptoms may be infected with COVID-19 and should get tested. **Report any positive result to** healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu. District contact-tracers will confidentially support the individual in notifying those who may have been exposed. All disclosed information will be kept confidential according ADA/FERPA standards. Weekly campus-case counts that are reported to H&S are posted here: https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/coming-campus/covid-19-information-updates.

Any person who experiences COVID19-like symptoms or tests positive for COVID19 **within 48 hours after being on-campus**, should immediately notify campus contact-tracers by emailing healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu – provide your name and phone number and await their phone call.

Situation	Steps to take	When can you return to campus?
You have symptoms or tested positive for COVID19? *click here for symptoms of COVID19.	**Isolate for 5 days** after your symptoms began. If you have no symptoms, isolate for 5 days from when positive test was sampled. • Do this no matter what your vaccination status may be. • Do this no matter what your COVID19 test results may be. *click here for why you should get tested. *click here for what it means to isolate *click here for COVID19 emergency warning signs	**If symptoms are still present** on day 5, do not exit isolation until symptoms have improved and you have not had a fever for 24 hours. • Taking medicine to reduce a fever does not count as being fever free. • Taking medicine to alleviate symptoms does not count as improved symptoms. **If you have no symptoms** on day 5, you may return to campus and must **wear a KN95 mask** on campus for 5 additional days.

What about Allergies, Common-cold, and Flu?

Any person experiencing COVID19-like symptoms should immediately isolate and take a rapid antigen test, as soon as possible. Report all positive cases to healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu. They must **continue to isolate for the minimum duration required in the district isolation standards**. Do this regardless of whether or not you test positive or negative for COVID19.

Why then, should someone get tested for COVID19?

This is because infected people can be contagious up to 48 hours before they develop symptoms. If you test positive – you need to notify those you may have exposed, so that we can stop the spread of infection – as soon as it is detected. Report all positive test results to healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu so that contact-tracers can immediately respond and assist in confidentially notifying those who might have been exposed. All disclosed information will be kept confidential according ADA/FERPA standards.

Why then, must a person continue to isolate – even when they test negative for COVID19?

There is a possibility that the negative test result could be a false negative. This is a known and expected failure in the test sampling systems that a certain, small, percentage of test results will have error.

Additionally, many communicable diseases (which we also do not want to be spread throughout our campus community) – like the common cold and flu – have similar symptoms to COVID19. All persons should isolate when they are sick, in order to stop the spread of infectious disease to our vulnerable populations.

But I have allergies, every year, this time of year! (or another ailment/situation that explains my symptoms)

Very few exemptions to the district isolation requirements may apply. If a person has already isolated for the full duration required by current isolation standard, tested negative for COVID19 (sampled no sooner that day 6 of isolation), and continues to experience

- **two or more COVID19 like symptoms**, they need to consult with and follow guidance provided by a licensed healthcare professional.
- **no more than one COVID19 like symptom**, they should contact healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu to confidentially discuss the situation and establish a safe campus return date.

What about if I have already been infected with COVID19 or am fully-vaccinated?

Most people who have had previous infection (within the past 3 months) to the virus that causes COVID19 are less likely to develop COVID19 from a proceeding exposure. This is a similar pattern for fully-vaccinated individuals. However, in a small number of instances reinfection may be possible. This depends on several factors including individualize characteristics that vary from person to person. For this reason, **any person that experiences COVID19-like symptoms must isolate** for the full duration described in the isolation requirement of the infection control program.

Additionally, many communicable diseases (which we also do not want to be spread throughout our campus community) – like the common cold and flu – have similar symptoms to COVID19. All persons should isolate when they are sick, in order to stop the spread of infectious disease to our vulnerable populations.

Quarantine Requirements

"**Potential-exposure**" is having had intimate contact, direct-contact, or sustained close-contact (closer than 6 feet for 15-minutes or more) with an individual infected with COVID19 while the infected person was symptomatic or within 48-hour prior to their developing symptoms. This includes receiving a text-based notification from Washington State Department of Health (via WA Notify) or contact-tracer

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notifications either from King County Public Health, district health and safety, or other healthcare or public health official.

Potential-exposure <u>does not include</u> having contact with someone else who has had a potential exposure – unless that person develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID19 within 48 hours of contact with them. Therefore, any person who experiences COVID19-like symptoms or tests positive for COVID19 within 48 hours after being on-campus, should immediately notify campus contact-tracers by emailing healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu – provide your name and phone number and await their phone call.

Any person who has a **known or potential-exposure must**:

- Notify healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu before returning to campus
- Get tested no sooner than 5-7 days after the potential-exposure event.
- Immediately, update healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu if/when symptoms develop or a positive test result is discovered.
- **Quarantine until 5 days have passed** since the potential-exposure event and **wear a KN95 mask** for an additional 5 days after exiting quarantine. The date of exposure is considered day 0. Day 1 is the first full day after your last contact with a person who is infected with COVID19. Stay home and do not return to campus until on or after day 6.

Quarantine is when a healthy person isolates for the period that they might become contagious due to a known or potential-exposure event.

Quarantine means - do not come to campus, stay home and:

- Do not have visitors
- Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible.
- Notify healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu – at the beginning of quarantine – for guidance/monitoring and any event that symptoms develop or you test positive for COVID19
- For <u>14 days after a potential-exposure event</u>, self-monitor for any development of symptoms. If symptoms appear, notify healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu. Continue to stay home for the full duration required for isolation. This means that counting from day 0 (zero) re-starts on the date that symptoms develop, as outlined in isolation requirements section of the infection control program.

Unfortunately, there are situations that a person may not become aware that they have had a potential-exposure event until after the appropriate quarantine duration has passed. In such an event, they should still notify H&S when they do become aware, get tested, and continue to self-monitor until 14 days after the known or potential-exposure event.

If you live with someone infected with COVID19, you have a complicated situation. Contact **healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu** to discuss and determine the appropriate quarantine duration and declare a safe campus return date.

Please note, county contact-tracers or hospital officials might inform you of their policy on quarantine but you must notify healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu in order to establish a safe campus return date and verify that the policies do not conflict. If they do conflict, the more protective policy measure must be held effective. If you are confused and need support, contact healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu. All disclosed information will be kept confidential according ADA/FERPA standards.

What about if I have already been infected with COVID19 or am fully-vaccinated?

Only a few exemptions to quarantine requirements may apply. For example, those who have already experienced a confirmed COVID19 infection within the past 3 months are not required to quarantine – as long as they remain symptom free for 14 days after exposure and wear a KN95 mask for 10 days' post exposure. Additionally, those who are fully-vaccinated AND up-to-date with their booster vaccines may not be required to quarantine. Please note, there is complicated criteria for determining booster schedules and up-to-date vaccination status, which depends on dates of inoculation and brands administered. Therefore, any person who wishes to return to campus earlier than the standard quarantine requirements (described above), must contact healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu to confidentially discuss the situation and establish a safe campus return date. All disclosed information will be kept confidential according ADA/FERPA standards. Do not return to campus early without explicit permission granted from health & safety expressing that it is safe to do so.

Situation	Steps to take	When can you return to campus?
You have been exposed to someone infected with COVID19. *click here for the definition of exposure.	**Quarantine for 5 days** from the date of exposure. • Do this no matter what your vaccination status may be. • Take a rapid antigen test on day 5 (before exiting quarantine). If positive, continue to quarantine for an additional 5 days (total of 10 days from the date of exposure). *click here for what it means to quarantine	If you test negative or do not have symptoms, you can return to campus after five days from the exposure event. You must **wear a KN95 mask** on campus for 5 additional days. Notify healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu
• You are living with someone who has COVID19. • You are living with someone who has symptoms but unable to get tested for COVID19.	**Quarantine**. Do not come to campus until you have clearance from H&S.	Contact healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu for a situation specific evaluation and declaration of a safe campus return date.
• You live with someone who has been exposed (in quarantine) but they have no symptoms and have not yet been tested for COVID19 (or they tested negative). • You are living with someone who has symptoms but tested negative for COVID19.	You are **not required** to quarantine but if they develop symptoms, immediately go/stay home and contact healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu. If they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID19, follow instructions for the above situation of "living with someone who has COVID19."	Contact healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu for a situation specific evaluation and declaration of a safe campus return date.