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# Excused Absences

During the local COVID-19 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 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 and safety concerns to the attention of the district H&S team by emailing [healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu](mailto:healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu).

Employees/students who are at [higher-risk to severe illness](#) from contracting COVID-19 should continue to either work remotely or in areas that do not present them with direct public interaction (meaning within 6 feet of distance). 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 contacting:

- **Employees:** [hr.district@seattlecolleges.edu](mailto:hr.district@seattlecolleges.edu)
- **Students:**
  - North: [DS@seattlecolleges.edu](mailto:DS@seattlecolleges.edu)
  - Central: [DSS.Central@seattlecolleges.edu](mailto:DSS.Central@seattlecolleges.edu)
  - South: [Disability.South@seattlecolleges.edu](mailto:Disability.South@seattlecolleges.edu)

## Absentee Policies

Any parties responsible for bringing people to campus (e.g. instructors responsible for students or supervisors with workers who report directly to them) 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 COVID-19 infection or who have a medical condition that does not allow them to be vaccinated.
- Promptly respond to and accommodate a worker/student who has been directed to isolate or quarantine.

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- 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 personal 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 communication and leadership teams.
  - **Contact H&S by calling 206-934-5522 or 206-934-3210** (leave a message with your name and contact number and await a call-back).
  - Instructors need to ensure that class policies on absenteeism are flexible and consistent with considerations discussed below and that all students are 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 student and employee awareness of the **emergency signs for COVID-19**. Everyone should know to call a doctor or 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**. This includes: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, new loss of taste or smell, headache, fatigue, muscle or body aches, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea (at least 2 loose stools within 24 hours). Any person who experience these symptoms should promptly isolate and get tested for COVID-19. Here is a link for free testing center locations throughout King County (language services are also available here): <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/testing.aspx>
  - **Isolation** is what you do if you have COVID-19 symptoms, or have tested positive for COVID-19. Isolation means you stay home and away from others (including household members) for the recommended period of time to avoid spreading illness.

People who experience any of the above listed COVID-like symptoms must isolate (regardless of whether or not it is anticipated to be related to a COVID-19 infection and regardless of vaccination status). Stay home and isolate until at least 10 days have passed since the first day that symptoms appeared. If the individual still experiences fever on the 10<sup>th</sup> day, they should continue to isolate until 24 hours after fever resolves without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have improved.

If an individual has a negative COVID-19 test result, or only one "class B" symptom (lasting less than 24 hours), they may appeal for early release from isolation and seek permission for early campus return date by contacting H&S. **Early release from isolation requires written permission**

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**from trained professionals of the H&S team.** Instructors/Supervisors are not authorized to grant a safe early campus return date.

- **Quarantine:** People who have been directed by a healthcare provider, public health professional, or the H&S team to quarantine due to a potential exposure event must stay home and quarantine until 14 days have passed since the last date of contact with the individual infected with COVID-19.

If a member of one's household is diagnosed with COVID-19, do not come to campus, promptly notify the H&S team to establish a safe campus return date.

If a member of one's household is instructed to quarantine due to a potential exposure event, as long as that person does not develop COVID-like symptoms, the housemate who works or studies with Seattle Colleges may continue to arrive to campus; but if symptoms develop for the quarantined housemate, the employee or student should immediately contact H&S and seek directions on quarantine measures and dates.

There are, only, two exceptions (with specific criteria that must be met) that an individual may appeal for early release from quarantine and seek permission for early campus return date by contacting H&S. **Early release from quarantine requires written permission from trained professionals of the H&S team.** Instructors/Supervisors are not authorized to grant a safe early campus return date.

- Direct all individuals who feel or appear sick to go home. If symptoms appeared while on-campus, shutdown the spaces that the individual occupied and immediately contact H&S for further direction.

## You have completed this week's COVID-19 Health & Safety Training

In order to receive credit for training participation, you must submit your details here: [click here](#) to submit. You could also scan the QR-code below on a phone or tablet to access the form.



If you have questions about this or any other health & safety issues, please, email [healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu](mailto:healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu).