

Absenteeism

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.

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
- Students:
 - **North:** Josef.Mogharreban@seattlecolleges.edu
 - **Central:** Cebrina.Chavez@seattlecolleges.edu
 - **South:** Rose.Kolovrat@seattlecolleges.edu

Absentee Policies

Instructors, Supervisors, and Managers are to plan for and make reasonable accommodations for COVID- related absenteeism with particular attention paid to **special subgroup considerations** (see page 10 of the [Infection Control Program](#)) for individuals that may be at increased risk of infection due to situational, cultural, or socio-economic factors. This includes:

- Ensuring that absenteeism policies are flexible and consistent with considerations discussed below and that all individuals are aware of these policies
- Maintaining flexible policies that permit individuals to stay home to care for a sick family member. Be aware that more employees/students may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual
- Promoting awareness of [COVID-like symptoms](#) and the emergency signs for COVID-19
- Actively encouraging sick individuals to stay home – and those caring for sick at home
- Directing all individuals who feel or appear sick to go home
- Informing students/employees on [who-when-how should one get tested](#)

Advertising the means for individuals to confidentially [self-report that they are at higher-risk](#) for severe illness from contracting COVID-19 or to **confidentially** [self-report a positive test case](#) for COVID-19.

Symptomatic Individuals

King County has available free, open-access COVID-19 testing for all individuals (regardless of immigration status) who experience the following symptoms.

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

All individuals who experience the above symptoms should be instructed to stay home, do not come to campus, and get tested. To find a local testing site, go to:

- www.seattle.gov/covid19testing (in Seattle)

OR

- <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/care/~media/depts/health/communicable-diseases/documents/C19/community-health-center-testing-locations.ashx> (in King County)

Supervisors and instructors are to inform their employees and students of above listed testing resources and [procedures](#) if/when they are notified of a symptom-related absence.

All sick individuals, regardless of a COVID-19 diagnosis or testing, should stay home and not return to campus until **at least 10 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared – **AND, no sooner** than 72 hours (3 days) have passed since recovery (“recovery” is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms - e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

Symptomatic individuals that insist they are not sick (i.e. allergy sufferers) and wish to return to campus activity may opt for the recommended [Test-based strategy](#) outlined in the CDC’s Guidance for Disposition of Non-Hospitalized Patients with COVID-19. To be permitted to commence on-campus activity. These individuals would be required to wear a cloth face covering – at all times – while on campus and strictly maintain 6 feet of distance from all other individuals. Accommodations should be made for (and strongly encouraged) these individuals to conduct school and work activities by remote modalities.

Confirmed positive COVID-19 test case(s)

Any symptomatic individuals confirmed with a positive test for COVID-19, who were present on-campus within 48-hours that symptoms began are to notify the college – not by notifying their instructor/supervisor but – by emailing the following information to healthandsafety@seattlecolleges.edu. This notification will commence disinfection response activities and contact-tracing to notify any applicable students or coworkers of any identified potential-exposure. Identifying details about the confirmed patient will be kept confidential. To notify the campus, of a confirmed case report:

- 1) Name, phone number, email address
- 2) If you have been directed by a healthcare professional to self-isolate but have not been tested
- 3) Date when their symptoms first began
- 4) If you appeared on campus (which campus) within 48-hours before or while symptoms began

Persons with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions. At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test. If they develop symptoms, then they are to follow the isolation requirements described above for [symptomatic individuals](#).

It is noted that recommendations for discontinuing isolation in persons known to be infected with COVID-19 could, in some circumstances, appear to conflict with recommendations on when to discontinue quarantine for persons known to have been exposed to COVID-19. CDC recommends 14 days of quarantine after exposure based on the time it takes to develop illness if infected. Thus, it is possible that a person known to be infected could leave isolation earlier than a person who is quarantined because of the possibility they are infected.

This recommendation will prevent most, but cannot prevent all, instances of secondary spread. The risk of transmission after recovery is likely substantially less than that during illness; recovered persons will not be shedding large amounts of virus by this point, if they are shedding at all.

Potential Exposures

All individuals who experience a potential-exposure event should isolate from work, school, and other people and self-monitor for symptoms (under direction of a healthcare provider) for no less than 14 days from the last time of contact with the confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patient.

A “potential exposure” means being in household contact or having direct contact (being within less than 6 feet) with a confirmed or suspected patient of COVID-19. The timeframe for having contact includes the period of time of 48-hours before the patient became symptomatic and 3 days after symptoms resolve for that patient. A “suspected patient” is an individual awaiting COVID-19 test results and/or has been directed by a healthcare professional to self-isolate. If the test results for the suspected patient is found negative for COVID- 19, isolation precautions for the potential exposure to a suspected patient may be released.

Some students or employees may have “household contact” with a COVID-19 patient. Accommodations should be made for these individuals – and they should be strongly encouraged – to conduct work/school activities from home, isolate, and self-monitor for symptoms.

Definitions

“Direct-contact” means being within less than 6 feet of physical-distance from another person; also referred to as close-contact

“Frontline workers” are employees who work in direct-contact with individuals known or suspected to be infected with the novel coronavirus.

“Isolation” is the separation of sick-people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick

“Physical-distancing” means to maintain 6 feet of physical-distance from other people; also known as “social distancing”

“Potential-exposure” means to have been in direct contact with an individual diagnosed with COVID19 within the 48-hours before symptoms appeared or during their recovery period

“Quarantine” separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick

“Recovery-period” means 10 days after a sick individual first became ill or 3 days after symptoms resolve, whichever duration is longer