

Guidance for Learning an Employee has or may have COVID-19

As employees begin returning to the workplace under the [Governor’s Safe Start](#) reopening guidance, managers/supervisors and department leadership will need to be closely involved with ensuring a safe workplace, including supervisors monitoring daily self-attestations. The FAQs below outline Department of Political Science’s roles and responsibilities and how those roles coordinate with EH&S to address cases of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and the [COVID-19 Supervisor](#) tasked under the COVID-19 Prevention plan with developing and implementing a plan for our site.

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Note: The COVID-19 Supervisor does not change the manager/supervisor’s reporting responsibilities described below or other responsibilities for managing employees in the workplace. Links to central resources are referenced throughout this document. It is important to review the links regularly for changes in guidance and new developments.

<p>Symptoms of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Cough • Shortness of breath • Muscle aches • Sore throat • Respiratory symptoms: runny nose, sneezing • Repeated shaking with chills • Headache • Gastrointestinal symptoms: nausea, vomiting or diarrhea • Loss of taste or smell 	<p>Close Contact Definition: Being within approximately 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19 for about 15 minutes or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils).</p> <p>If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19, but you do not have symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay at home for 14 days after your last contact. Do not go to school or work. Avoid public places. • Contact the EH&S Employee Health Center. • Get tested for COVID-19 whether or not you experience symptoms. • During the 14 days, monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19. • If you develop symptoms, keep staying home and contact EH&S Employee Health.
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MANAGER/SUPERVISOR ROLE

What am I required to do if I observe an employee who is exhibiting possible COVID-19 symptoms OR an employee suspects they have COVID-19 but has not consulted with a healthcare provider?

1. Tell the employee what you or others have observed and that you are concerned about whether the employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms OR acknowledge the employee's own concerns. If these are new symptoms for the employee not explained by another condition, such as seasonal allergies, instruct the employee to:
 - a. Go home;
 - b. Follow the EH&S FAQ response to [What do I do if I feel sick?](#)
 - c. Contact their healthcare provider about getting tested; and
 - d. Contact the EH&S [Employee Health Center](#) if:
 - i. The employee is confirmed with COVID-19;
 - ii. The employee's healthcare provider instructs them to self-isolate because they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms
 - iii. The employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms

What am I required to do if I learn from an employee that their healthcare provider suspects or has confirmed COVID-19?

1. Instruct employee to go home or stay home.
2. Instruct employee to follow the EH&S FAQ response to [What do I do if I have confirmed or suspected COVID-19?](#)
3. Instruct employee to contact EH&S [Employee Health Center](#)
4. You are required to contact EH&S [Employee Health Center](#) to report the employee has suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

What am I required to do if I learn an employee has had close contact with someone who has tested positive and/or has symptoms of COVID-19?

Instruct employee to:

1. Go or stay home.
2. Follow the close contact protocols on page 1.

What do I do if an employee does not comply with my instructions in the scenarios above, for example, the employee does not go or stay home when they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or does not report they have suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to EH&S?

1. Handle failure to comply with required workplace safety protocols to go or stay home as an urgent performance management issue that must be addressed immediately.
 - a. Seek assistance from UW HR;
 - b. Counsel the employee about workplace expectations and document; and
 - c. Isolate the employee as you seek to resolve the issue.
2. Address an employee's failure to report suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to EH&S by correcting the situation.

- a. You are independently required to report information you have about an employee with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to EH&S [Employee Health Center](#); and
- b. Counsel the employee to provide the information EH&S requires to perform its public safety responsibilities.
- c. Consult with your HR consultant to follow up with corrective action as warranted by the facts.

What is the difference between the responsibilities of the manager/supervisor and the COVID-19 supervisor? Will I interact with the COVID-19 supervisor regarding employees I supervise?

As a manager/supervisor you fully retain your supervisory responsibilities, including the following:

1. Report suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to EH&S as described in this document including reports you receive from the COVID-19 supervisor, unless already reported by the COVID-19 supervisor;
2. Follow up to manage employees' behavioral or performance concerns in consultation with HR and consistent with the relevant employment program. The COVID-19 supervisor may contact you if an employee is not complying with the COVID-19 prevention plan.

The COVID-19 supervisor is generally responsible for developing and implementing the COVID-19 site-specific prevention plan. To ensure employees adhere to the plan, the COVID-19 supervisor may contact you for reasons including the following:

1. Coordinate regarding daily self-attestations;
2. Inform you that an employee has suspected or confirmed COVID-19. If the COVID-19 supervisor has already reported the employee information to EH&S, the supervisor is not required to do so.
3. Inform you that an employee is not following part of the COVID-19 prevention plan so that you can take steps to manage the employee's conduct.

What options are available for an employee who is required to be out of the workplace for reasons associated with COVID-19?

1. An employee who is not ill, but is required to be out of the workplace due to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 or is required to self-isolate due to close contact with a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be offered telework if remote work is available for their position.
2. If telework is not available, the type of leave an employee is entitled to will depend on the reason the employee must be out of the workplace and their employment program. See the leave entitlements below and consult with UW HR.

[Staff](#)

[Academic Personnel](#)

What am I required to do when an employee returns to work after: a) recovering from COVID-19; b) completing self-isolation due to suspected COVID-19; or c) completing self-isolation due to contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

1. Report an employee's positive test for COVID-19 to EH&S and share their name, if you or the employee have not previously reported this information to EH&S.

2. Instruct employee to notify their supervisor when they are able to return to the worksite.
3. Confirm that the employee's work requires that they return to the worksite, versus working remotely.
4. Ensure the employee has access to the daily self-attestation tool and will complete it as required of all employees before returning to work.
5. You cannot require the employee to provide medical documentation to return to work.

Note: If EH&S is aware of the case, EH&S will provide a memo to the employee and their supervisor indicating when they can return to work (generally 10 days after symptoms start or 72 hours after symptoms end, whichever is longer.)

Am I violating HIPAA by sharing that an employee tested positive for COVID-19?

No. The Americans with Disabilities Act and state law regarding confidentiality of employee health information (WAC 162-22-090) applies to workplaces and requires managers to keep employee medical information private. In a public health emergency, on a need to know basis, managers may share an employee's medical information with University officials involved with COVID-19 response, such as informing EH&S to allow them to perform their public health safety response responsibilities.

You must limit sharing positive COVID-19 testing information to the following:

1. EH&S to allow EH&S to conduct its public safety responsibilities.
2. Department Chair, Director/Administrator, and Manager/Supervisor only as necessary to allow them to coordinate with EH&S to identify close contacts, identify locations that require disinfection, and coordinate with EH&S to communicate with employees in the department.
3. Human Resources.
4. Others only on a need to know basis.

Note: Others may need to know of an employee's diagnosis without sharing their name or identity. For example, you may share with facilities personnel that an employee confirmed with COVID-19 (without sharing the employee's name or identity) spent time in a specific location to allow facilities to disinfect the location. Ensure that you do not share facts that identify the person even if you withhold the name.

DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATOR'S AND CHAIR'S ROLE

What is the role of the Department Administrator?

The Department Administrator has a variety of roles and responsibilities, taking into account the size and complexity of the department, including:

1. May have a need to know the identity of employees with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to carry out departmental leadership responsibilities.
2. Coordinates with EH&S in conducting its public safety duties and perform departmental leadership functions.
 - a. Reports employees with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to EH&S, if serving as supervisor.
 - b. Coordinates with EH&S regarding employees who have close contact with an employee with confirmed COVID-19.

- c. Coordinate with EH&S on communications.
3. Coordinates with EH&S to ensure facilities/building management and custodial staff decontaminate department areas, as needed.
4. Functions in the manager/supervisor's role, as needed, depending on the size, organizational structure, and the role of the employee with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

What is the role of the Department Chair?

1. Department Chair may have a need to know of employees with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to carry out leadership functions.
2. Ensures Department Administrator handles Department Administrator functions above.

EH&S ROLE

Who does EH&S contact when they receive a report of suspected or confirmed COVID-19?

EH&S follows the steps described in the FAQ response to [How does the UW respond when a member of the UW Community has COVID-19?](#)

1. EH&S contacts the employee with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to:
 - a. Obtain details from the employee about symptoms;
 - b. Identify locations visited at a UW work site;
 - c. Identify close contacts; and
 - d. Consult with the employee about the most efficient route for COVID-19 testing and facilitate testing, if appropriate for suspected COVID-19.
2. EH&S contacts individuals who have been in close contact with an employee with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to:
 - a. Provide a recommendation for and/or assistance with self-isolation; and
 - b. Provide assistance with seeking COVID-19 testing.

Who will EH&S notify if it receives a report of a Political Science employee with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and for what purposes:

- Department Chair, Department Administrator, Employee's Manager/Supervisor, Worksite Building Manager
- UW Human Resources
- UW Facilities for cleaning
- The employee with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, close contacts and their supervisors.

Each of the persons contacted above will assist EH&S in gathering the following relevant public safety information, including information the employee cannot provide if the employee is ill:

- Obtain details about employee symptoms;
- Determine when the employee was last at the work site;
- Identify locations visited on campus or other UW work sites;
- Identify close contacts the employee had at UW work sites if the employee cannot provide this information;

- Identify and follow up with individuals the employee had contact with who may need to self-isolate or seek COVID-19 testing; and
- Coordinate with the employee's work site or other areas where the employee has spent time to ensure enhanced disinfection.

Note: The identity of the employee with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 will be shared only on a need to know basis.

Who is responsible for disinfecting workspaces in which an employee with confirmed COVID-19 has spent time?

1. Custodial staff assigned to the work site are directly responsible for disinfecting the area. EH&S communicates in writing the scope of cleaning that is required to building coordinators who coordinate with the custodial staff personnel responsible for cleaning UW work sites;
2. EH&S in coordination with the department representative and custodial staff/building management is responsible for identifying areas that require restricted access during and immediately following enhanced cleaning:
 - a. EH&S communicates with the employee and department to identify locations where the employee with COVID-19 spent time; and
 - b. EH&S contacts the facilities representatives who oversees custodial staff to manage disinfection.

See the [EH&S disinfection protocol](#)

Questions about UW's response to COVID-19 can be directed to the EH&S Department at ehsdept@uw.edu or (206) 543-7262.