Return to Work Criteria for UT Toledo Employees, including Healthcare Providers (HCP) with Close Contact, Suspected or Confirmed, COVID-19

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PREFACE

- The information in this document reflects current available information as of the drafting date and will be updated as necessary and posted on the UT Toledo Human Resources webpage, “Working Through COVID-19” (https://www.utoledo.edu/depts/hr/Working-Through-COVID-19.html).

- Information in this document regarding testing, quarantine, isolation, and self-monitoring is intended as a supplement to public health authorities and the advice of each individual’s healthcare provider or emergency medical service provider. In the event of conflict, individuals should follow quarantine and isolation instructions of their local health department, and care instructions from their healthcare provider or emergency medical care personnel.

- Information in this document regarding exclusion from work is subject to applicable law and policies related to absences, sick-leave, or other time away from work. Refer to UT Toledo’s FMLA/leave page for information regarding requesting leave https://www.utoledo.edu/depts/hr/leaveofabsence.html.

- For information regarding ADA reasonable accommodations please go to https://www.utoledo.edu/depts/hr/eeo-aa/ADA-Accommodation-Request-Process.html.

I. Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

A. Symptom-based strategy for those with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19:

If your COVID-19 illness was mild or moderate, exclude from work/school until:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
- Improvement in other COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath). Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.
- HCP follow “Return to Work Practices and Work Restrictions” in Section IV below
- Follow “Self-monitoring and Self-isolation Recommendation” in Section V below

If your illness from COVID-19 was severe (e.g., you were admitted to the hospital with oxygen requirements) you may need to stay in isolation for a total of 20 days after your first symptoms appeared.

1 Symptoms can include but not limited to: 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

2 CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of at least 100.0°F [37.8°C].
B. Asymptomatic strategy for those with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19:

Exclude from work/school until:
- At least 10 days have passed since the date of the first positive viral COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming symptoms have not subsequently developed since the positive test
  - If symptoms develop, then the symptom-based strategy above should be followed
- HCP follow “Return to Work Practices and Work Restrictions” in Section IV below
- Follow “Self-monitoring and Self-isolation Recommendations” in Section V below

Note: because symptoms cannot be used to gauge where these individuals are in the course of their illness, it is possible that the duration of viral shedding could be longer or than 10 days after their first positive test, especially if they are severely immunocompromised it may be up to 20 days after onset of symptoms.

II. Close Contacts with Confirmed Cases - Persons identified through Contact Tracing as a Close Contact of a COVID-19 case:

HCP or those involved in the delivery of care to the patient:
- Exposed asymptomatic HCP that are **not known** to be infected should continue to work
- Monitor temperature and confirm absence of symptoms each day before starting work
- A Hospital provided facemask is required while at work for the 14 days after the exposure event (cloth face covering are not to be worn during this time)
  - If caring for a confirmed COVID-19 patient an N95 or PAPR needs to be worn when performing an aerosolizing procedure or when indicated in lieu of a facemask
- If even mild symptoms develop, cease working and immediately notify their supervisor prior to leaving work
- Call the COVID-19 testing line (419-383-4545) or another testing site and identify yourself as a COVID-19 exposure
  - **IF SYMPTOMATIC OR HAVE RECENTLY BEEN SYMPTOMATIC – DO NOT RETURN TO WORK WHILE AWAITING RESULTS**
  - If positive, follow symptom-based strategy in Section I above
- See below for Laboratory Confirmed and Vaccination exemption criteria

Persons not related to patient care activities (directly or indirectly)

Exclude from work/school until:
- At least 14-days after last exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case without onset of symptoms
- During this 14-day time period:
  - Always maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) from others
  - Self-monitor for symptoms
    - Check temperature twice a day
    - Watch for fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19
    - If symptoms develop,
      - Call the COVID-19 testing line (419-383-4545) or another testing site and identify yourself as a COVID-19 exposure then,
      - follow the symptom-based strategy in Section I above
  - Avoid contact with people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19

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3 A **health care provider** is anyone employed at any doctor’s office, hospital, health care center, clinic, medical school or post-secondary educational institution that currently offers clinicals at the stated areas, any facility that performs laboratory or medical testing, pharmacy, or any similar institution, employer, or entity.

4 Symptoms can include but not limited to, 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.

5 CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of at least 100.0 °F [37.8°C].
• See below for Laboratory Confirmed and Vaccine exemption criteria

Laboratory Confirmed COVID-19 exemption criteria:
• Persons that have recovered from laboratory confirmed COVID-19 in the last 90 days and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again unless they develop symptoms\(^6\)
  o If symptoms develop again within three months from the previous illness, COVID-19 testing is needed again if no other recognized cause is identified

COVID-19 Vaccination exemption criteria:
• Persons who are exposed to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet the following vaccination exemption criteria:
  1. Are fully vaccinated, meaning at least two weeks following receipt of the second dose in a two-dose series, or at least two weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine (when single-dose vaccines receive emergency use authorization in the US)
  2. Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure
• Persons who do not meet the above vaccine exemption criteria and do not meet the HCP\(^7\) category should continue to follow current guidance after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19
• Fully vaccinated persons who do not quarantine should still watch for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing, if indicated.

III. Suspected Cases

Persons that know or think they may have been potentially exposed or in Close Contact to a COVID-19 case:
• Follow guidance above Section II for Persons identified through Contact Tracing as a close contact of a COVID-19 case’’
• Close contact is defined as:
  o being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 mins or longer over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before symptom onset
  o being coughed or sneezed on by a COVID-19 confirmed person or exposed to respiratory droplets
  o providing care in home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
  o having direct physical contact with someone who is sick with COVID-19
  o sharing eating or drinking utensils with someone who is sick with COVID-19
• If you were not in “Close Contact” (as defined above) with a sick person with COVID-19, you are at low risk for infection
• For general questions call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634) from 9am-8pm daily
• Monitor your health for fever\(^8\), cough and shortness of breath during the 14 days after your potential exposure and call the COVID-19 testing line if you develop symptoms\(^6\)

NOTE: If you are being tested for COVID-19 and are symptomatic or have recently been symptomatic do not return to school or work until you have the results of your test, regardless if you are symptomatic or not. If results are positive, follow criteria on page one of this document.

IV. Return to Work Practices and Work Restrictions for HCPs:

\(^6\) Symptoms can include but not limited to, 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.

\(^7\) A health care provider is anyone employed at any doctor’s office, hospital, health care center, clinic, medical school or post-secondary educational institution that currently offers clinicals at the stated areas, any facility that performs laboratory or medical testing, pharmacy, or any similar institution, employer, or entity.

\(^8\) CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of at least 100.0 °F [37.8°C].
After returning to work, HCP\(^9\) should:

- Hospital provided facemask are always required for source control while in the healthcare facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or at baseline.
- If caring for a confirmed COVID-19 patient an N95 or PAPR needs to be worn when indicated in lieu of a facemask.
- Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until all symptoms are completely resolved or at baseline.
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles).
- Self-monitor for symptoms and seek re-evaluation from primary care physician if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen.

V. Self-monitoring and Self-isolation Recommendations:

- Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and quarantine or isolate in accordance with your local health department. Your healthcare provider or local health department may give you instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.
- Stay home, except to get medical care.
- Restrict activities outside your home.
- If condition worsens seek medical care and
  - Call 9-1-1 or call ahead to your healthcare provider or Emergency Department (ED) to notify them you are suspected to have COVID-19.
  - If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive or before arrival ED.
- Monitor temperature twice a day and remain alert for respiratory symptoms.\(^{10}\)
- Household members should stay in another room or be separated from the patient as much as possible.
- Household members should use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available.
- Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting and if consistent with safety and health (e.g. would not create a fall risk or trigger asthma). Consider portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan/filtration systems to help enhance air cleaning.
- If possible, wear a face mask when you are around other people or pets, and before you enter a healthcare provider’s office.
- Clean and disinfect “high-touch” surfaces and items every day: This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, and electronics.
- Perform hand hygiene frequently. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until dry. Soap and water are preferred if hands are visibly dirty.

References:

- [https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html#Administration](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html#Administration)

\(^9\) A health care provider is anyone employed at any doctor’s office, hospital, health care center, clinic, medical school or post-secondary educational institution that currently offers clinicals at the stated areas, any facility that performs laboratory or medical testing, pharmacy, or any similar institution, employer, or entity.

\(^{10}\) Symptoms can include but not limited to, 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.