

COVID-19 Sick or Exposed Employee Return to Work Policy (effective 4/30/2020)

Initial Procedures and Documentation for Return to Work for COVID-19+ or Exposed Employees

- A. Applies to ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES (regardless of employer) who perform CRITICAL FUNCTIONS at SUNY Poly's Albany and Utica campuses.
- B. New York State/New York State Department of Health requirements and guidelines for response to COVID-19 will be followed by all at SUNY Poly.
- C. All employees will remain home (or return home) if they feel sick.
 1. Notification of COVID-19 related symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell) must be reported to the employee's respective HR Office which, in turn, will notify SUNY Poly's HR Office at HR@sunypoly.edu or 518-956-7362 to ensure shared awareness and uniform deployment of the proper protocols for the campus community.
- D. Any employee who is COVID+ or suspected of having the COVID-19 illness, or who has had close contact (contact for 10 or more minutes within 6 feet) with a COVID-19 positive or suspected case, must **self-isolate or self-quarantine** for at least 14 days. The employee is excluded from the workplace during that time.
- E. The employee's Health Care Provider (HCP) or the Local Health Department (LHD) of residence will coordinate self-isolation or mandatory or precautionary quarantine with the employee. As part of this process:
 1. The employee must notify their HR Office and provide documentation.
 2. Tenant HR Offices must coordinate with SUNY Poly HR to ensure shared awareness and uniform deployment of the proper protocols for the campus community.

Exception to the above Return to Work Procedures for Special Circumstances for Essential Employees to Return in Fewer than 14 Days:

- A. The following procedures apply ONLY when an Essential Employee meets the criteria below and the Employer has determined it is Absolutely Necessary for the employee to Return to Work Early.
- B. Return to work may be allowed after an employee spends fewer than 14-days in isolation or quarantine at home, if the employee follows NYSDOH guidelines as coordinated and is allowed/approved by their HCP or the LHD.
- C. As early as possible in the coordination of the quarantine/isolation process, the employee should notify their HCP or the LHD that their Employer has designated them as an "Essential Employee."
 1. During the regular follow-up activities, the HCP or LHD will review the employee's symptoms in light of a possible early return to work (if applicable) so they can provide required information and confirm the employee meets the return to work criteria.
- D. The employee must obtain documentation from their HCP or the LHD that confirms the employee meets the NYSDOH guidance for return to work.
 2. If documentation is not provided, the employee may contact their HCP or the LHD that is coordinating isolation/quarantine and provide a HIPAA release (http://www.nycourts.gov/forms/Hipaa_fillable.pdf) so that the HCP/LHD may share the return to work confirmation specifics with their employer.
 3. The HR Office will confirm Return to Work approval with SUNY Poly's HR Office and ensure all requirements are followed by the employee, including:
 - a. If the **essential employee is COVID+ (tested) or COVID-suspected (not tested):**

- i. The employee must have maintained isolation for 7 days since symptoms first appeared or since testing was done, whichever is later.
 - ii. The employee must have had no fever (i.e., less than 100.4°F) for at least the previous 72 hours before returning to the workplace without fever-reducing medications.
 1. Other symptoms, if any, must be improving.
 - iii. The employee must wear a well secured face mask *at all times* and maintain social distancing requirements.
- b. If the **essential employee was exposed to a COVID+ or COVID-suspected person (close contact)**:
- i. The employee must have had no symptoms and at least 7 days must have passed since last contact.
 - ii. The employee must self-quarantine when not at work.*
 - iii. The employee's temperature must be monitored and symptoms checked upon arrival at work, and at least once every 12-hours while at work.
 - iv. The employee must monitor symptoms and take their temperature at least twice a day while at home and not return if they have a fever (e.g., if their temperature surpasses 100.4°F).
 - v. The employee must wear a well-secured face mask *at all times* and maintain social distancing requirements.

** This would be confirmed by their HCP or the LHD as part of the requirement for returning to work while the employee is still under quarantine.*

E. *In the absence of the employee's HCP or the LHD involvement, the employee will remain on a 14-day exclusion from the workplace, with no exceptions allowed.*

F. If an employee develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell) during the Return to Work period, the employee will, if at work, notify their supervisor and immediately leave work, isolate at home and contact their HCP or the LHD.

1. The employee must contact their HR Office regarding the development of symptoms.
2. Tenant HR Offices must coordinate with SUNY Poly HR to ensure shared awareness and uniform deployment of the proper protocols for the campus community.

Resources:

- Authorization for Release of Health Information Pursuant to HIPAA form:
http://www.nycourts.gov/forms/Hipaa_fillable.pdf
- NYSDOH Protocols for Essential Personnel to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection (March 31, 2020):
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/doh_covid19_essentialpersonnelreturntowork_rev2_033120.pdf
- CDC Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings (Interim Guidance):
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>
- Guidance on the Contacts of a Close or Proximate Contact of a Confirmed or Suspected Case of COVID-19:
<https://www.buffalo.edu/content/dam/www/coronavirus/Contacts%20of%20Contacts%20Guidance%20DOH.pdf>
- Employee Testing and Evaluation Protocols for COVID-19:
https://hcr.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/03/exec_covid19_employeeexposuretestingevaluation_031520.pdf