



**MASKS
REQUIRED**



Harris County
Education

Exposure Control and Response Plan 2020-2021



**Harris County
Department of
Education**

COVID-19 Exposure Control and Response Plan

Updated March 29, 2021

HCDE is implementing a COVID-19 Exposure Control and Response Plan to identify and mitigate situations in the workplace that may introduce, expose or spread COVID-19. The plan will be reviewed and updated as needed throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following safe workplace practices may be implemented at HCDE facilities as new employee protocols in efforts to reduce the likelihood of exposure and spread:

- Daily symptom assessment for all employees and visitors prior to entry to any HCDE facility (health questionnaire and temperature check)
- Reduction in number of employees reporting to HCDE facilities
- Staggered shifts and work hours for employees
- Telework arrangements, if appropriate for position
- Staggered and limited use of shared spaces (employee lounges)
- Routine and enhanced cleaning and disinfection throughout the workday
- Requirement to wear masks or face coverings on HCDE premises
- Signage reminding employees and visitors to wear masks, maintain healthy habits and social distancing
- One-way traffic flow for all buildings when going down narrow corridors or stairways
- Reduced elevator capacity
- Installation of barriers between workspaces where six feet of distance is not possible
- Installation of hand sanitizer stations in public areas and on all floors
- Social distancing standards of at least six feet
- Suspension of non-essential business travel
- Employee requirement to immediately report symptoms associated with COVID-19
- Employee requirement to immediately report if tested positive for COVID-19
- Employee requirement to report contact with any person who test positive for COVID-19 immediately after notification of that person receiving positive test confirmation

Notifications

Human Resources will be responsible for handling suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases. This includes protocol for ensuring the confidentiality of the employee as well as the notification process for informing others who may have been exposed to the employee. When necessary, Human Resources will inquire about staff travel, employee's status regarding COVID-19 testing or diagnosis, their interaction with others who may be COVID-19 positive, and whether or not they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Any HCDE employee who is diagnosed with COVID-19 or who has been exposed to COVID-19 by a close contact is required to report the information immediately to his/her supervisor and to Human Resources. Reporting should occur within 12 hours of learning of the diagnosis or exposure. If an employee is on HCDE premises at the time of learning of the diagnosis or exposure, the employee should immediately leave the facility without coming in contact with any other individual.

Any supervisor learning of an employee being diagnosed with COVID-19 or having exposure should immediately contact Human Resources.

Employees potentially exposed to an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 will be informed, as appropriate, and HCDE will take necessary steps which may include self-monitoring, remote working, deep cleaning/sanitization, etc.

Identification and Isolation of Employees Exhibiting Signs of Illness

Employees experiencing any symptoms of illness should stay home and contact their immediate supervisor for further direction. The following guidelines should be followed when an employee comes to work sick, becomes sick while at work, is diagnosed with COVID-19, has been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, or resides with someone diagnosed with COVID-19.

Exhibiting Symptoms - Comes to Work Sick or Reports Sick

- Employee will be screened prior to and/or upon coming to work.
- If employee exhibits symptoms or reports a COVID-19 diagnosis, the employee should not report to work or will be sent home immediately.
- Human Resources will be notified by the supervisor and/or screener.
- Surfaces in the employee's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected.
- An employee assigned to Head Start should not report back to work until:
 - I. At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - II. The employee has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and

- III. At least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.
- All other employees should not report back to work until:
 - I. At least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - II. The employee has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
 - III. At least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.
 - Employee may be allowed to telework for a maximum of five days if feeling well enough to work. If not feeling well enough to work or incapable of performing job responsibilities remotely, the employee may receive up to a maximum of five days of pay and thereafter should use leave in accordance with policy and procedure. HCDE will not pay for more than five days of absence/telework due to COVID-19 symptoms, diagnosis, or exposure (outside of work). Please refer to Telework and/or Pay During Period of Symptoms, Positive Diagnosis or Exposure for additional information.
 - An employee who exhibits symptoms should not report to work until the criteria for returning as listed above has been met and the Return to Work Certification form is submitted to Human Resources.
 - An employee may return to work earlier if a medical provider confirms the cause of an employee's fever or other symptoms is not COVID-19 related and releases the employee to return to work in writing based on an alternative diagnosis or the employee obtains an acute infection test at an approved testing location that comes back negative for COVID-19.

Exhibiting Symptoms - Becomes Sick At Work

- If employee exhibits symptoms or reports a COVID-19 diagnosis, the employee will be sent home immediately.
- Human Resources will be notified by the supervisor.
- Surfaces in the employee's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected.
- An employee assigned to Head Start should not report back to work until:
 - I. At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - II. The employee has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
 - III. At least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.

- All other employees should not report back to work until all three of the following criteria are met:
 - I. At least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - II. The employee has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
 - III. At least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.
- Employee may be allowed to telework for a maximum of five days if feeling well enough to work. If not feeling well enough to work or incapable of performing job responsibilities remotely, the employee may receive up to a maximum of five days of pay and thereafter should use leave in accordance with policy and procedure. HCDE will not pay for more than five days of absence/telework due to COVID-19 symptoms, diagnosis, or exposure (outside of work). Please refer to Telework and/or Pay During Period of Symptoms, Positive Diagnosis or Exposure for additional information.
- An employee who exhibits symptoms should not report to work until the criteria for returning as listed above has been met and the Return to Work Certification form is submitted to Human Resources.
- An employee may return to work earlier if a medical provider confirms the cause of an employee's fever or other symptoms is not COVID-19 related and releases the employee to return to work in writing based on an alternative diagnosis or the employee obtains an acute infection test at an approved testing location that comes back negative for COVID-19.

Exposure to COVID-19

- In an effort to keep all staff and students safe, employees who have been in close contact with an individual who is lab confirmed with COVID-19 will be asked to self-quarantine based on the CDC's new recommendations as follows:
 - Ten (10) days after the last close contact exposure, so long as the employee monitors daily for symptoms and takes appropriate precautions (e.g., more consistent mask usage) through day 14.
 - Seven (7) days after the last close contact exposure, after receiving a negative test result (administered at least 5 days after the last close contact), so long as the employee continues to monitor daily for symptoms and takes appropriate precautions (e.g., more consistent mask usage) through day 14.
- Surfaces in the employee's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected.

- Human Resources will be notified by the supervisor.
- Employee may be allowed to telework for a maximum of five days if feeling well enough to work. If not feeling well enough to work or incapable of performing job responsibilities remotely, the employee may receive up to a maximum of five days of pay and thereafter should use leave in accordance with policy and procedure. HCDE will not pay for more than five days of absence/telework due to COVID-19 symptoms, diagnosis, or exposure (outside of work). Please refer to Telework and/or Pay During Period of Symptoms, Positive Diagnosis or Exposure for additional information.
- Employee should keep Human Resources informed of health status and testing results.

Note: If an employee was exposed to COVID-19 while at work, the employee will be notified that he/she is required to self-quarantine for ten (10) days after the last contact exposure or seven (7) days after the last contact exposure as stated above. The employee will be allowed to telework during the self-quarantine period if capable of performing job responsibilities remotely. An employee's salary or pay will not be impacted by inability to telework during mandatory quarantine.

Based on updated guidance from the CDC and TEA, a vaccinated employee does not need to stay home following close contact exposure to a test-confirmed individual if the following conditions are true:

- The exposed employee is fully vaccinated (at least two weeks have passed since receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine or the first dose of a single-dose vaccine)
- The exposed employee has not experienced any COVID-19 symptoms following close contact exposure to a test-confirmed individual.

A fully vaccinated employee must submit documentation of vaccination to Human Resources to return to work without satisfying the self-quarantine period following close contact exposure to a test-confirmed individual. If an employee does not submit documentation of vaccination to Human Resources, the employee will be required to self-quarantine as described above.

Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do not have to stay home or get tested again, as long as they do not develop new symptoms.

- Employees who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

Diagnosis of COVID-19

- Employee should stay home and contact immediate supervisor for further direction.

- Human Resources will be notified by the supervisor.
- Surfaces in the employee's workspace will be cleaned and disinfected.
- An employee assigned to Head Start should not report back to work until all three of the following criteria are met:
 - I. At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - II. The employee has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
 - III. At least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.
- All other employees should not report back to work until all three of the following criteria are met:
 - I. At least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - II. The employee has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
 - III. At least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.
- In the case of an employee that is asymptomatic but has received a positive COVID-19 test result, the employee may not return until ten days have passed since a positive test.
- If the employee has tested positive for COVID-19 and believes the test was a false positive, and wants to return to work before completing the above stay at home period, the employee must either (a) obtain a medical provider's note clearing the employee for return based on an alternative diagnosis, or (b) obtain two acute infection tests at an approved testing location at least 24 hours apart that comes back negative for COVID-19.
- Employee may be allowed to telework for a maximum of five days if feeling well enough to work. If not feeling well enough to work or incapable of performing job responsibilities remotely, the employee may receive up to a maximum of five days of pay and thereafter should use leave in accordance with policy and procedure. HCDE will not pay for more than five days of absence/telework due to COVID-19 symptoms, diagnosis, or exposure (outside of work). Please refer to Telework and/or Pay During Period of Symptoms, Positive Diagnosis or Exposure for additional information.
- An employee should not report to work until the criteria for returning as listed above has been met and the Return to Work Certification form is submitted to Human Resources.
- Information on individuals who may have had close contact with the employee two days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic employees, two days prior to test specimen collection) will be compiled.

- Staff who were in close contact with the employee within the previous two days will be notified of potential exposure and will be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days from the last date of close contact with the infected individual. Employees who are able will be allowed to telework during the self-quarantine period; if not feeling well enough to work or incapable of performing job responsibilities remotely, the employee may be paid during the self-quarantine period.

Close Contact

The HCDE Exposure Control and Response Plan refers to “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. The definition of close contact is evolving and individual scenarios should be determined by an appropriate public health agency.

In general, close contact is defined as:

1. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
2. being within 6 feet for a total of approximately 15 minutes throughout the course of a day; however, additional factors like case/contact masking (i.e., both the infectious individual and the potential close contact have been consistently and properly masked), ventilation, presence of dividers, and case symptomology may affect this determination.

Either (a) or (b) defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 10 days following the confirming lab test.

Supervisor Report of Employee COVID-19 Diagnosis

Supervisors should report any disclosed diagnosis or potential infection immediately to Human Resources and maintain the confidentiality of any such report to avoid any potential violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Supervisors will be required to complete the Supervisor Report of Employee COVID-19 Diagnosis or Exposure Form when receiving a report from an employee or student who has been diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19. This completed form should be forwarded to the Executive Director of Human Resources.

If an employee who has been in a school or Head Start center is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the school or Head Start center must notify its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Disinfecting Protocol

Facilities custodial staff will provide enhanced cleaning and disinfection of the ill employee's workspace and other areas, as required. The following disinfecting protocol should be followed:

- Wait 24 hours to clean and disinfect or as long as possible.
- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.

Confidentiality

Medical information such as daily symptom assessments, temperature screenings, self-reporting information, and medical certifications will be kept confidential and maintained by the Human Resources division in a file separate from the employee's personnel file.

Human Resources will keep the identity of the employee who has exhibited symptoms, had exposure to COVID-19, or diagnosed with COVID-19 confidential to the extent practical.

Telework and/or Pay During Period of Symptoms, Positive Diagnosis or Exposure

Effective December 7, 2020, an employee who exhibits symptoms, presents a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 or is exposed outside of work, will be allowed a maximum of five days (40 hours) to telework if feeling well enough. If not feeling well enough to work or if the employee is incapable of performing job responsibilities remotely, the employee will receive a maximum of five days (40 hours) of pay and thereafter should use leave in accordance with policy and procedure. After the employee has been allowed to telework or receive pay for five days (40 hours) while the pandemic and associated safety protocols are still in force, any additional time off (beyond the five days or 40 hours) for that event or future events, will require the employee to use leave in accordance with policy and procedure.

Telework days/pay for part-time employees will be prorated based on the employee's work schedule.

However, if an employee was exposed to COVID-19 while at work, the employee will be allowed to telework during the self-quarantine period if capable of performing job responsibilities remotely. An employee's salary or pay will not be impacted by inability to telework during mandatory quarantine due to exposure at work. There will be no limit on the number of days an employee will be allowed to telework or receive pay due to exposure occurring at work.

Staff assigned to an ISD may be allowed to follow the telework policy or procedure of the district with approval from the superintendent or Human Resources executive director.

Revised: March 29, 2021

COVID-19 Exposure Control and Response Plan

At-A-Glance

COVID Status	What Should I Do?
<p>Exhibiting COVID-19 Symptoms</p> <p>(Employee comes to work sick, reports sick before coming to work, or becomes sick at work)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify supervisor • Do not report to work or go home immediately • Do not return until (Head Start employees): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications) ii. Improvement of respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) iii. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared • Do not return until (All other employees): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications) ii. Improvement of respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) iii. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared • Telework up to a maximum of 5 days and thereafter use leave in accordance with policy and procedure • Return to work after satisfying all three criteria listed above and submitting Return to Work Certification • May return to work earlier with written release from medical provider with alternative diagnosis or negative acute infection test results
<p>Diagnosis of COVID-19</p> <p>(Positive COVID-19 diagnosis)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify supervisor • Do not report to work or go home immediately • Provide list of employees you may have had close contact with 14 days prior to positive test results • Do not return until (Head Start employees): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications) ii. Improvement of respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) iii. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared • Do not return until (All other employees): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications) ii. Improvement of respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) iii. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared • Telework up to a maximum of 5 days and thereafter use leave in accordance with policy and procedure • Return to work after satisfying all three criteria listed above and submitting Return to Work Certification
<p>Exposure to COVID-19</p> <p>(Prolonged close contact with someone who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify supervisor • Do not report to work or go home immediately • Self-quarantine for 10 days after the last close contact exposure • Telework up to a maximum of 5 days and thereafter use leave in accordance with policy and procedure
<p>Exposure to COVID-19 (At HCDE)</p> <p>(Prolonged close contact with student or staff who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will be notified by supervisor or Human Resources • Do not report to work or go home immediately • Self-quarantine for 10 days after the last close contact exposure • Telework during self-quarantine period • Salary or pay will not be impacted