Warren Consolidated Schools

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

Disclaimer

This document is intended for use as a reference by employees of WCS. It contains a compilation of best practice procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic. The information contained in this document is not automatically applicable to all situations, or all environments. This is not a legal document, nor is it a substitute for professional medical advice or consultation or guidance offered by the CDC or other government sources. COVID-19 is a new disease and we are still learning much about it, including how it spreads. You are kindly requested to follow the procedures outlined here diligently to sustain a healthy and safe environment in this unique time. It is important that we all respond responsibly, consistently and transparently to these protocols.

This manual will be updated with new information as the situation evolves; however, best practices and information may change before a new version of the manual is issued.

NOTE: This manual is v.01.0

Table of Contents

Introduction

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It has spread from China to many other countries around the world, including the United States. Depending on the severity of COVID-19's international impacts, outbreak conditions—including those rising to the level of a pandemic—can affect all aspects of daily life, including travel, trade, tourism, food supplies, and financial markets.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides the latest information about COVID-19 and the global outbreak:
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

The OSHA COVID-19 webpage offers information specifically for workers and employers:
www.osha.gov/covid-19

About COVID-19

Symptoms of COVID-19

Infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases, can be fatal. Symptoms typically include fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, diarrhea, body aches and/or loss of taste or smell.

According to the CDC, symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as many as 14 days after exposure.

How COVID-19 Spreads

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person- to-person, including:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet);

- And through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has SARS-CoV-2 on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the primary way the virus spreads.

The CDC website provides the latest information about COVID-19 transmission: www.cdc.gov/ coronavirus/2019-ncov/ about/transmission.html.

Understanding Risk of Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 in the Workplace

Worker risk of occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, during an outbreak may vary from very high to high, medium, or lower (caution) risk. The level of risk depends in part on the industry type, need for contact within 6 feet of people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2, or requirement for repeated or extended contact with persons known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2.

Very High Exposure Risk

Very high exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19 during specific medical, postmortem, or laboratory procedures.

Workers in this category include:

- Healthcare workers performing aerosol-generating procedures (e.g., intubation, cough induction procedures, bronchoscopies, some dental procedures and exams, or invasive specimen collection) on known or suspected COVID-19 patients;

- Healthcare or laboratory personnel collecting or handling specimens from known or suspected COVID-19 patients (e.g., manipulating cultures from known or suspected COVID-19 patients);

- And morgue workers performing autopsies, which generally involve aerosol-generating procedures, on the bodies of people who are known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19 at the time of their death.

High Exposure Risk

High exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19. Workers in this category include:

- Healthcare delivery and support staff exposed to known or suspected COVID-19 patients (note: when such workers perform aerosol-generating procedures, their exposure risk level becomes very high);

- Medical transport workers (e.g., ambulance vehicle operators) moving known or suspected COVID-19 patients in enclosed vehicles;

- And, mortuary workers involved in preparing (e.g., for burial or cremation) the bodies of people who are known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19 at the time of their death.

Medium Exposure Risk

Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients. Workers in this category may have contact with the general public.

Lower Exposure Risk (Caution)

Lower exposure risk (caution) jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2 nor frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.

Reducing the Risk of Exposure to SARS-CoV-2

Develop a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

This response and preparedness plan outlines necessary processes and protocols related to COVID-19.

This plan includes relevant information for all employees, including:

- Understanding Exposure Risk;

- Basic Infection Prevention Measures;

- Identification and Isolation of Sick Individuals;

- Work Flexibilities and Protections;

- Workplace Controls to Reduce Risk;

- And Communication Processes.

Implement Basic Infection Prevention Measures

Protecting workers depends on emphasizing basic infection prevention measures *by all employees*. Staff shall:

- Practice frequent and thorough hand washing or the use of hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol);

- Stay home if sick;

- Use respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes;

- Work remotely, on a reduced-report schedule or staggered shift work as circumstances allow;

- Practice social distancing;

- Not use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, whenever possible;

- And perform routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and   other elements of the work environment.

Implement Policies and Procedures for Prompt Identification and Isolation of Sick People

Perform a self-screening prior to entering the workplace

All staff is expected to perform a self-screening prior to entering the workplace (posted at entryways). Staff must not enter the workplace if they are or have been exposed to a person with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19; if they are displaying symptoms; or if they have traveled internationally during the past 14 days. (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html). Staff is instructed to go home and notify the appropriate supervisor.

Employees and contractors who test positive for COVID-19 or who display one or more of the principal symptoms of COVID-19 are prohibited from entering property owned, leased, or controlled by the District until:

- Three days have passed since their symptoms have resolved and seven days have passed since their symptoms first appeared or since they were swabbed for the test that yielded the positive result;

- Or the employee or contractor receives a negative COVID-19 test.

Employees and contractors who have had close contact with an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 or with an individual who displays one or more of the principal symptoms of COVID-19 are prohibited from entering property owned, leased, or controlled by the District until:

- Fourteen days have passed since the last close contact with the sick or symptomatic individual;

- Or the symptomatic individual receives a negative COVID-19 test.

Take steps if symptoms begin at work

Should an employee become symptomatic at work, the employee shall:

- If symptoms are severe, call 911. Follow their advice. Communicate with the supervisor if possible.

- Further distance/isolate yourself from others, if possible. All buildings shall have a designated isolation space until the sick individual can be transported off-site as quickly as possible.

- If symptoms are mild, let your supervisor know and go home to call your health care professional. Follow their advice. As you can, please remain in communication with your supervisor. (Supervisors: contact the Executive Director of Facilities and Custodial Services for instructions regarding potential building closure and sanitization.)

Self-Report COVID-19 concerns (employees and contractors)

To proactively take measures to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and keep our school community as safe as possible during this Public Health Emergency, employees and contractors shall self-report any COVID-19 related concerns. In the event that an employee or contractor is unable to self-report, the employee should make best efforts to notify the District or have a member of the employee or contractor's family notify the District, as soon as practicable under the circumstances.

Employees and contractors shall self-report any one of the following situations:

Quarantine
- You have been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine;

- You have self-quarantined as a preventative care measure because of COVID-19 related symptoms as described by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (i.e. fever, cough, difficulty breathing);

- You are subject to a quarantine or isolation order;

Care for Others
- You are caring for an individual who is subject to an order as described above;

- You are caring for a son or daughter and the school or childcare provider has been closed or is unavailable due to COVID-19 (if this is impacting your ability to work);

- You must care for an at-risk family member who is following a requirement or recommendation to quarantine due to exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19;

Exposure
- You know or have reason to believe another employee has COVID-19;

- You have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19;

- You believe you have been exposed to COVID-19;

- You are experiencing symptoms and are actively seeking a medical diagnosis;

Diagnosis
- Or, you have been diagnosed with/tested positive for COVID-19.

Procedure to self-report

- Employees who are comfortable sharing that information with their immediate supervisor are welcome to do so. The immediate supervisor will inform the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO).

- Employees who are not comfortable sharing that information with their immediate supervisor may share directly with the CHRO.

When an employee or volunteer/visitor has been diagnosed

The CDC issued guidance to schools and child care programs that includes steps to take when an individual infected with COVID-19 has been in a school building. These steps include:

1. Notify local health officials. These officials will advise on a course of action.

2. The initial course of action may be to close the building or parts of the building for 2 to 5 days allowing additional time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the situation and provide the next best steps, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

3. Notify staff and parents that an employee or volunteer/visitor has tested positive for COVID-19 in accordance with the emergency operations plan and applicable privacy laws. Include guidance to self monitor and seek medical attention as needed.

4. Clean and disinfect thoroughly:

    • Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure.

    • Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfecting.

    • Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g. offices, bathrooms and common areas) used by ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces using disinfectants outlined in CDC guidance.

Maintain confidentiality

The District will take reasonable precautions to protect health information pursuant to all applicable laws and statutes, including, but not limited to, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

You may hear or become aware of an employee, volunteer, or a student who has been tested or diagnosed with COVID-19. We will ensure that information related to COVID-19 is safeguarded in accordance with Federal and State statutes that address confidentiality. Information will be confidentially managed and disclosed only to those with a need to know.

Staff can help by not engaging others who do not have a need to know, and by refraining from open dialogue or discussion about individual employee or student medical status. This will help us as a school community ensure we treat all members with dignity and respect.
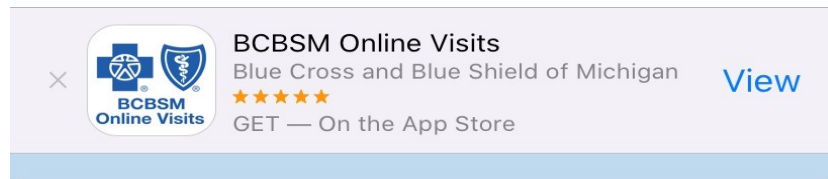
Report time spent on-site

Each time you are exiting a WCS building, please report your on-site time by using the link on the Employee tab on the District webpage. You will record the date, building, your name, time of entry and exit, as well as a confirmation that you performed the self-check and cleared yourself to enter the building. As a reminder, if you answer yes to any self-check question, ***do not enter the building***. In that case, ***no form should be completed because you did not enter the building***.

If you travel to multiple sites per day, you need to complete a new report for each time/site visited. Please keep this link readily accessible.

Additional Health Resources

In addition to your own doctor, MESSA has a 24/7 Online Doctor Visit App.

Members must download the BCBSM Online App pictured below (need enrollee ID):

Develop, Implement, and Communicate Workplace Flexibilities and Protections

- Time spent on-site should be kept at a minimum. As much work as possible should be done remotely.

- Sick employees are actively encouraged to stay home.

- Non-report of scheduled on-site days will be recorded and routed to bank time.

- Absences will be handled accordingly with appropriate documentation and may require adjustment/ restoration based on legislation and documentation in the future.

Essential staff

Federal guidance regarding critical infrastructure/essential workers found here:

https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA-Guidance-on-Essential-Critical-Infrastructure-Workers-1-20-508c.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Staff required to support or perform the following essential activities are to be included within our remote work, reduced reporting schedule, or on an on-call basis:

- Distributing food to students and families.

- Ensuring continuity of financial obligations (e.g. payroll, benefits, accounting).

- Continuing access and sanitation at facilities responsible for the essential activities of the District.

- Securing and maintaining facilities and the infrastructure at our facilities.

- Employees necessary to conduct minimum basic school operations consistent with the Continuity of Learning Plan, including those who facilitate alternative modes of instruction, such as distributing materials and equipment or perform other necessary in-person functions.

Leave protections and documentation

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA") provides for leaves under certain circumstances.

Emergency Sick Leave Act

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA") Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act provides eligible employees time under the following conditions:

- The employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID–19.
- The employee has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID–19.
- The employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID–19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
- The employee is caring for an individual who is subject to an order as described in (1) above or has been advised as described in (2) above.
- The employee is caring for a son or daughter of such employee if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, or the child care provider of such son or daughter is unavailable, due to COVID–19 precautions.
- The employee is experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor.

Paid sick time is calculated based on the employee's compensation and the number of hours the employee would otherwise be scheduled to work and is subject to statutory caps.

Though an employee is not required to use accrued paid vacation leave, personal leave or family leave, an employee may elect to use accrued paid vacation leave, personal leave or family leave should the statute not apply to the absence.

Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act

The FFCRA Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA) provides eligible employees up to twelve (12) weeks of leave if the employee is unable to work (or telework) due to a need for leave to care for the son or daughter under 18 years of age of such employee if the school or place of care has been closed, or the child care provider of such son or daughter is unavailable, due to a public health emergency.

An employee must have been employed for at least 30 calendar days to be eligible for leave under the EFMLEA.

The first ten (10) days for which an employee takes EFMLEA leave shall be unpaid, however the employee may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave, as described above. Each day of leave after the initial 10 shall be paid based on two-thirds of an employee's regular rate, and is subject to statutory caps.

Documentation

An employee who needs to take leave under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act or EFMLEA should submit a written request with the following information:

- The employee's name;
- The date or dates for which leave is requested;
- A statement of the COVID-19 related reason the employee is requesting leave and written support for such reason;
- And a statement that the employee is unable to work, including by means of telework, for such reason.

In the case of a leave request based on a quarantine order or self-quarantine advice, the statement from the employee should include the name of the governmental entity ordering quarantine or the name of the health care professional advising self-quarantine, and, if the person subject to quarantine or advised to self-quarantine is not the employee, that person's name and relation to the employee.

In the case of a leave request based on a school closing or child care provider unavailability, the statement from the employee should include the name and age of the child (or children) to be cared for, the name of the school that has closed or place of care that is unavailable, and a representation that no other person will be providing care for the child during the period for which the employee is receiving family medical leave and, with respect to the employee's inability to work or telework because of a need to provide care for a child older than fourteen during daylight hours, a statement that special circumstances exist requiring the employee to provide care.

Implement Workplace Controls

Occupational safety and health professionals use a framework called the "hierarchy of controls" to select ways of controlling workplace hazards. In other words, the best way to control a hazard is to systematically remove it from the workplace, rather than relying on workers to reduce their exposure.

During a COVID-19 outbreak, when it may not be possible to eliminate the hazard, the most effective protection measures are: engineering controls, administrative controls, safe work practices (a type of administrative control), and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Examples of Engineering Controls

Engineering controls involve isolating employees from work-related hazards. In workplaces where they are appropriate, these types of controls reduce exposure to hazards without relying on worker behavior and can be the most cost-effective solution to implement.

Examples of administrative controls for SARS-CoV-2 include:

- Installing high-efficiency air filters.

- Increasing ventilation rates in the work environment.

- Installing physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards.

- Installing a drive-through window for customer service.

- Using specialized negative pressure ventilation in some settings, such as for aerosol generating procedures (e.g., airborne infection isolation rooms in healthcare settings and specialized autopsy suites in mortuary settings).

Examples of Administrative Controls

Administrative controls require action by the worker or employer. Typically, administrative controls are changes in work policy or procedures to reduce or minimize exposure to a hazard.

Examples of administrative controls for SARS-CoV-2 include:

- Encouraging sick workers to stay at home.

- Minimizing contact among workers and public visitors by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications and implementing telework if feasible.

- Establishing alternating days or extra shifts that reduce the total number of employees in a facility at a given time, allowing them to maintain distance from one another while maintaining a full onsite work week.

- Discontinuing nonessential travel to locations with ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks. Regularly check CDC travel warning levels at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers.

- Developing emergency communications plans, including a forum for answering workers' concerns and internet-based communications, if feasible.

- Providing workers with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviors (e.g., cough etiquette and care of PPE).

- Training workers who need to use protective clothing and equipment how to put it on, use/wear it, and take it off correctly, including in the context of their current and potential duties. Training material should be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers.

Examples of Safe Work Practices

Safe work practices are types of administrative controls that include procedures for safe and proper work used to reduce the duration, frequency, or intensity of exposure to a hazard.

Examples of safe work practices for SARS-CoV-2 include:

- Providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for workers to clean their work surfaces.

- Requiring regular hand washing or the use of alcohol-based hand rubs. Workers should always wash hands when they are visibly soiled and after removing any PPE.

- Posting handwashing signs in restrooms.

Jobs Classified at Lower Exposure Risk (Caution):
What to Do to Protect Workers

As stated previously, lower exposure risk (caution) jobs are those that: 1) do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2; and do not have frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.

Workers who do not have frequent contact with the general public, should still follow the basic infection measures outlined previously in this handbook. Additional control measures described in this section should also be implemented.

Engineering Controls

Additional engineering controls are not recommended for workers in the lower exposure risk group.

Administrative Controls

- Monitor public health communications about COVID-19 recommendations and ensure that workers have access to that information. Frequently check the CDC COVID-19 website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov.

- Collaborate with workers to designate effective means of communicating important COVID-19 information.

Personal Protective Equipment and Face Coverings

Additional PPE is not recommended for workers in the lower exposure risk group. Workers should continue to use the PPE, if any, that they would ordinarily use for other job tasks.

Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-59, all employees performing in-person work are required to wear face coverings or masks. To the extent it can obtain supplies, the District will provide face coverings or masks to employees who do not have their own face covering or mask.

Jobs Classified at Medium Exposure Risk: What to Do to Protect Workers

As stated previously, medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients. Workers in this category may have contact with the general public.

Workers who have frequent or close contact with individuals who may be infected as part of the general public should still follow the basic infection measures outlined previously in this handbook. Additional control measures described in this section should also be implemented.

Engineering Controls

- Install physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards, where feasible.

Administrative Controls

- Keep public visitors informed about symptoms of COVID-19 and ask sick public visitors to minimize contact with workers until healthy again, such as by posting signs about COVID-19 and asking public visitors to self-screen and not enter the building if they cannot answer no to all questions.

- Where appropriate, limit customers' and the public's access to the worksite, or restrict access to only certain workplace areas.

- Consider strategies to minimize face-to-face contact (e.g., drive- through service delivery , phone-based communication, telework).

- Communicate the availability of medical screening or other worker health resources (e.g., on-site nurse; telemedicine services).

Personal Protective Equipment and Face Coverings

Workers with medium exposure risk may need to wear some combination of gloves, a gown, a face mask, and/or a face shield or goggles. PPE ensembles for workers in the medium exposure risk category will vary by work task, the results of the employer's hazard assessment, and the types of exposures workers have on the job. Each employer should select the combination of PPE that protects workers specific to their various work locations and duties. Additionally, workers should continue to use the PPE, if any, that they would ordinarily use for other job tasks.

Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-59, all employees performing in-person work are required to wear face coverings or masks. To the extent it can obtain supplies, the District will provide face coverings or masks to employees who do not have their own face covering or mask.

Jobs Classified Above Medium Exposure Risk

Recall, jobs with very high exposure risk are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19 during specific medical, postmortem, or laboratory procedures and high exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19, like workers in hospitals, nursing homes, mortuaries, first responders, etc. As such, specific controls are not addressed here.

Maintaining Communication Regarding SARS-CoV-2

Reporting Unsafe Working Conditions

Staff who wish to report working conditions which are not in alignment with expected COVID-19 practices may report concerns to the Chief Human Resources Officer directly, without fear of reprisal.

The Importance of E-Mail and Staff FAQs

Important District communication will be communicated via District e-mail addresses to impacted employees, this includes through the published Staff FAQs. As such, employees shall check e-mail regularly, at minimum, once a day. Recognizing that the Staff FAQs are updated usually weekly, typically on Friday afternoon, e-mail should be checked later in the day on Friday, or even twice a day on Friday to be sure staff has the most up-to-date information heading into the following week. This is a dynamic situation that often requires flexibility of some processes and responses.

Staff are encouraged to share any questions with their association leadership or supervisor. Association leaders maintain regular contact with District leadership. This enables the District to answer specific questions or concerns, as well as include broad-level questions and concerns in subsequent issues of the Staff FAQs.

For More Information

Federal, state, and local government agencies are the best source of information in the event of an infectious disease outbreak, such as COVID-19. Staying informed about the latest developments and recommendations is critical, since specific guidance may change based upon evolving outbreak situations.

Below are several recommended websites to access the most current and accurate information:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration website: www.osha.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: www.cdc.gov

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health website: www.cdc.gov/niosh