

ITD COVID-19 FAQ's

Effective 1/1/2021

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1. GENERAL COVID-19 QUESTIONS

What is novel coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some of which cause illness in people and some that are found in animals that can spread to humans. The novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 has not been seen in people before, so it is called new (novel). There are other known human coronaviruses that cause mild respiratory illnesses like the common cold, which more frequently occur in fall and winter.

Coronaviruses are thought to spread from person to person, like other respiratory viruses such as through coughing, sneezing or talking. They might also be spread by touching a contaminated surface then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates its website, [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus), daily with the latest information. The World Health Organization is also a trusted source of information about COVID-19. For information on COVID-19 in Idaho, see Idaho's novel coronavirus page, coronavirus.idaho.gov.

Where can I go for up-to-date information about coronavirus/COVID-19 in Idaho?

Visit coronavirus.idaho.gov and rebound.idaho.gov for updates, resources, and guidance for Idaho. For most current workforce guidance, visit <https://dhr.idaho.gov/covid-19-workforce-guidance/>

What can I do to protect myself?

The CDC recommends the following to protect yourself and others from COVID-19:

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. (For information about handwashing, see CDC's Handwashing website. For information specific to healthcare, see CDC's Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings.)

- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- **Avoid close contact:**

Inside your home: Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.

Outside your home: Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who do not live in your household.

- Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
- Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

- **Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others**

- You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
 - The mask is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Everyone should wear a mask in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker.
- Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others.
 - The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
- State employees and state facilities are expected to follow current local authority orders and guidelines as noted in the State Expectations for Masks memo.

- **Cover coughs and sneezes**

- Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

- **Clean AND disinfect** frequently touched surfaces daily.

- This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Then, use a household disinfectant.
 - Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.

What is the expectation of ITD employees in the workplace?

Simply put, ITD expects that CDC and local guidance will be followed. Some key expectations are:

- All employees practice 6 feet physical distancing in workspaces, common areas, and vehicles
- All employees **will wear a mask** where 6 feet physical distancing cannot be maintained
- All employees should be practicing good personal hygiene with increased hand washing and regular personal space sanitization

- All common areas should be regularly sanitized
 - If this is practiced regularly, the need to shut down common areas and sanitized when positive cases arise lessens

UPDATED: What can I do to protect my co-workers if I may have been exposed?

Refer to the question above regarding general precautions to take, when to stay home and guidance provided by the CDC. If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, you should take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people.

If you have not been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, please refer to the question above on how to protect yourself and others from spreading and contracting the virus.

Per CDC guidance, people who need to quarantine are those who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

What counts as close contact?

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic individuals, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time of isolation;
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19;
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them);
- You shared eating or drinking utensils;
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

If you have been in close contact, stay home and monitor your health

- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19
- Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19
- If possible, stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19

Additionally, you should discuss your telecommuting options with your supervisor in place of using your accrued leave.

I am having flu-like symptoms. What should I do?

You should stay home when you are sick to help prevent the spread of illness to others. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.

If you need to seek medical care, call your healthcare provider and tell them your symptoms before you go. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

If an employee feels they do not need to be seen in-person by their doctor for an illness or concern, they can use telehealth as an option. Visit ogi.idaho.gov to learn more about telehealth benefits.

Can a supervisor send an employee home if they display influenza-like symptoms?

No, however, we would ask that you consider the impact to your fellow coworkers and stay home when you are sick to help prevent the spread of illness to others.

2. ILLNESS RELATED PROCEDURES

UPDATED: What should an employee do if they have been exposed to or is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms?

If an employee has:

- met the definition or were notified to quarantine due to close contact *or*
- are experiencing symptoms *or*
- being tested *or*
- received a positive test result and in isolation

For these reasons, the employee should notify their supervisor and contact HR with medically related information to initiate employee notification procedures.

- The employee's HR Representative will conduct an assessment to identify any individuals that may have been in close contact (as defined above) for notification purposes.
- The HR Representative will discuss telecommuting, utilizing accrued leave, timesheet coding assistance and return to work procedures.

UPDATED: What leave options are available due to COVID-19?

- Telecommuting and flexible scheduling are options to discuss with your supervisor
- The Family First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) program and associated leave options expire 12/31/2020 and were not extended with the new COVID Relief Bill. Accordingly, effective 1/1/2021 those leave programs are no longer available and accrued leave will need to be used for absences related to COVID where telecommuting is not available.

UPDATED: How do I code my time if I am telecommuting?

- You would code your time as REG hours with CVR in the Reporting Field (Select Use Entered Accounting in the dropdown menu)
- This coding is still available and needs to be used any time an individual is working from home due to a COVID-19 related reason.

I have been out on COVID-19 illness related leave, do I need to provide documentation to come back?

Yes, HR will need one of the below items in order for employees to return to work after being out on illness related COVID-19 leave:

- Negative Test result

- *Note – Per CDC Guidance, even if you test negative for COVID-19 or feel healthy, you should stay home (quarantine) since symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.*
- Notice from the healthcare provider releasing the employee back to work
- Completed and signed “Self-Attestation” form (see your HR Representative for this form)

3. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Who is notified for COVID-19 related illnesses?

Only those identified during the assessment (discussed in the above section) as being in “close contact” with an employee who has tested positive will be notified. This is done through an email directly to those individuals identified as soon as HR is alerted to the employee’s positive test and has identified the “close contact” individuals.

- If you have not been notified directly, you were not identified as an individual who was in close contact to an employee who tested positive for COVID-19 and expected to continue to work per normal.

Can my supervisor tell me if someone tests positive?

No. Due to privacy laws, HR needs to conduct the assessment and notify those identified as being in “close contact” with an employee who has tested positive will be notified. Coworkers should not be sharing medical information about other coworkers as well.

Will a mass email to my work group be sent out for exposure or positive cases of COVID-19?

No. Only those identified during the assessment (discussed in the above section) as being in “close contact” with an employee who has tested positive will be notified. This is done through an email directly to those individuals identified as soon as HR is alerted to the employee’s positive test and has identified the “close contact” individuals.

4. CHILDCARE/SCHOOL RELATED PROCEDURES

UPDATED: My child’s school is not operating in person 5-days per week, what are my options?

The Family First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) program and leave options associated with it, to include the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA) expire 12/31/2020 and were not extended with the new COVID Relief Bill. Accordingly, effective 1/1/2021 those leave programs are no longer available. Please discuss telecommuting and flexible scheduling with your supervisor.