

## Protocol Regarding Employees with COVID-19 Exposure, Symptoms or Positive Diagnosis

### A. CLOSE CONTACT EXPOSURE OR SUSPECTED CLOSE CONTACT EXPOSURE

When an employee has been exposed, or has reasonable suspicion to having been exposed, by close contact with an individual known to be infected with COVID-19. Winthrop will use the CDC definition of “close contact” (Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.) in determining when the employee’s actual or potential exposure requires a period of self-quarantine prior to returning to work on campus.

- 1) If the employee becomes aware of exposure or suspected exposure:
  - a. At home or outside of work in the community - the employee should NOT COME TO WORK.
  - b. Go to the COVID-19 webpage on Winthrop’s website ([winthrop.edu/hr/covid19](http://winthrop.edu/hr/covid19)) and click on the link at the top of the page to complete a short form that will be submitted to HR. Alternatively, email Human Resources at [fscovidreporting@winthrop.edu](mailto:fscovidreporting@winthrop.edu).
  - c. At work - the employee should be isolated immediately, leave work if well enough to drive or contact a family member for transportation. The employee or supervisor should follow the instructions for notifying HR that are listed in 1)b. above.
    - i. The supervisor must take precautions to protect the employee’s privacy and not discuss protected health information with other employees;
    - ii. The supervisor is responsible for:
      1. Ensuring that the work area of the employee is immediately closed off and locked for the next 24 hours or longer (if an interior door is available);
      2. Opening exterior doors and windows in the employee’s office to allow ventilation to the outside;
      3. If there is no way to close off the employee’s work area, coworkers should avoid touching any surfaces in that work area for the next 24 hours. If it is necessary to touch door knobs and other surfaces immediately, employees should wash their hands for more than 20 seconds prior to touching their face; and
      4. Use of provided cleaning supplies to disinfect common areas like the copier, refrigerator door, etc. (These areas should already be routinely cleaned by users before and after each use).
- 2) Human Resources will contact the employee to provide assistance and obtain additional information.
  - a. The employee will be asked to provide information regarding known, or suspected, exposure.
  - b. Depending on the circumstances, the employee will likely be asked to self-quarantine according to SC DHEC and CDC guidelines. If there was close contact exposure to a

known positive individual, the employee will need to self-quarantine and will not be cleared to return to work on campus until the date supplied by Human Resources.

- c. If asked to self-quarantine, the employee must complete the Return from Self-Quarantine Questionnaire and receive clearance from Human Resources prior to returning to work on campus.
  - d. The employee will be asked to provide information about coworkers or others that the employee was in close contact with (or in the vicinity of) on campus since exposure, or possible exposure (per the CDC's definition of close contact - **Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.**).
  - e. Human Resources will notify coworkers who were in close contact with the employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 or that have been in close contact with an employee who is symptomatic and known to be exposed by close contact with a person who has tested positive.
  - f. Facilities will be notified as necessary regarding the location for disinfection measures, so that facilities can:
    - i. provide prompt cleaning of door knobs and common surfaces adjoining that work space;
    - ii. record the time when the employee left the premises and the area was closed off (if possible) to start the 24-hour shut down period prior to cleaning and disinfecting;
    - iii. If it is not possible to delay access to the area, the workers who perform cleaning/disinfecting should wear appropriate PPE for protection against the cleaning materials and the virus;
    - iv. Clean and disinfect the area where the employee was working, including all commonly touched surfaces, like the desktop, chair arms, keyboard, mouse, light switch and drawer pulls.
- 3) Living with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 generally requires that the employee assume they have been exposed in a close contact situation and, if asymptomatic, self-quarantine starting at the date the 10-day isolation period ends for the positive individual (based on onset of the other individual's symptoms for a minimum **17-24 days**), irrespective of any negative test results. However, if the employee can confirm they have separated themselves within the house from the positive individual and they are asymptomatic, they may be able to start the quarantine period concurrent to the positive individual's isolation.
- 4) Simply living in a home with a person who has been quarantined due to close contact with a third person with COVID-19 ("contact with a contact") where the person has not exhibited any symptoms of COVID-19, does not require the employee to self-quarantine unless or until the individual tests positive for COVID-19. If the individual begins to show symptoms of COVID-19, then the employee is required to remain off campus until the results of the individual's COVID-19 test are available. If the individual's test is positive, the employee will need to self-quarantine off campus. If the individual's test is negative, then the employee can return to work on campus.

**5) According to DEHC, if a fully vaccinated person has close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case, they will not be required to quarantine if they meet the following criteria:**

- Are fully vaccinated (two or more weeks following receipt of the second shot in a two-dose series, or more than two weeks following receipt of one shot in a single-dose vaccine);
- Are within three months following receipt of the last dose in the series; and
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current exposure.

**B. SYMPTOMATIC EMPLOYEES OR EXPOSED EMPLOYEES AWAITING COVID-19 TEST RESULTS**

**When an employee is exhibiting symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath) or when an employee is asymptomatic and awaiting COVID-19 test results following exposure or possible exposure.**

- 1) The employee should be sent home immediately, if on campus, or asked to remain at home and told to contact their health care provider for additional instructions. The supervisor must take precautions to protect the employee's privacy and not discuss protected health information with other employees.
  - a. The supervisor is responsible for:
    - i. Ensuring that the employee's work area is immediately closed off for the next 24 hours or longer (if an interior door is available);
    - ii. Opening exterior doors and windows in the office of the employee to allow ventilation to the outside;
    - iii. If there is no way to close off the employee's work area, then coworkers should avoid touching any surfaces in that work area for the next 24 hours. If it is necessary to touch door knobs and other surfaces immediately, employees should wash their hands for more than 20 seconds prior to touching their face; and
    - iv. Use of provided cleaning supplies to disinfect common areas like the copier, refrigerator door, etc. (These areas should already be routinely cleaned by the users before and after each use).
- 2) The employee or the supervisor must immediately go to the COVID-19 webpage on Winthrop's website ([winthrop.edu/hr/covid19](http://winthrop.edu/hr/covid19)) and click on the link at the top of the page to complete a short form that will be submitted to HR. Alternatively, email Human Resources at [fscovidreporting@winthrop.edu](mailto:fscovidreporting@winthrop.edu).
- 3) Human Resources will contact the employee to provide assistance and to obtain additional information.
  - a. The employee will be asked to provide information regarding known, or suspected, exposure.
  - b. Depending on the circumstances, the employee will likely be asked to self-quarantine according to SC DHEC and CDC guidelines.

- c. The employee may not return to work on campus until they have received their test results. If the test results are positive, the employee must confirm: (i) having been fever-free for 24 hours without the assistance of fever-reducing medication; (ii) their symptoms have shown improvement; and (iii) at least 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms.
- d. If the employee has had no known exposure and tests negative, they may return to work on campus when symptoms have resolved or upon the direction of their health care provider and clearance from Human Resources (this may involve consultation with DHEC).
- e. If the employee does not get tested, they should be told not to return to work on campus until they have recovered and met criteria in 3(c) above for release from the 10-day isolation period.
- f. The employee must complete the Return from Self-Quarantine Questionnaire and receive clearance from Human Resources prior to being allowed to return to work on campus.
- g. The employee will be asked to provide information about coworkers that the employee was in close contact with (or in the vicinity of) since exposure, or possible exposure (per the CDC's definition of close contact - Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.).
- h. Human Resources will notify any coworkers as necessary. Depending on the circumstances, coworkers that were in close contact with the employee or any coworker who is exhibiting symptoms may be asked to self-quarantine at home until more information is obtained about the diagnosis of the employee(s) exhibiting symptoms.
- i. Facilities will disinfect and clean as provided in the protocol for exposed employees at 2(f). above in Section A.

### **C. CONFIRMED POSITIVE RESULT OF COVID-19 INFECTION**

#### **When an employee has tested positive for COVID-19.**

1. The employee or the supervisor must immediately go to the COVID-19 webpage on Winthrop's website ([winthrop.edu/hr/covid19](http://winthrop.edu/hr/covid19)) and click on the link at the top of the page to complete a short form that will be submitted to HR. Alternatively, email Human Resources at [fscovidreporting@winthrop.edu](mailto:fscovidreporting@winthrop.edu). The supervisor must take precautions to protect the employee's privacy and not discuss protected health information with other employees.
2. Human Resources will contact the employee to provide assistance and to obtain additional information. If the employee is not able to speak with Human Resources, Human Resources will proceed to interview the supervisor or the employee's family members for additional information, if applicable.
  - a. The employee will be asked to provide information regarding known, or suspected, exposure.
  - b. The employee will be asked to provide information about coworkers or others on campus that the employee was in close contact with (per the CDC's definition - Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15

minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.) within 48 hours of onset of symptoms or specimen collection, if asymptomatic.

- c. Human Resources will notify any coworkers that were in close contact with the employee who tested positive for COVID-19 as necessary. These individuals will be asked to self-quarantine per the CDC guidelines from their last exposure to the employee who tested positive and to take their temperature twice daily to monitor for fever or the development of other symptoms. If an individual develops any symptoms while in self-quarantine, they should follow the steps in B. above.
- d. Coworkers who worked in the same area as the infected person within 48 hours of the employee becoming symptomatic or 48 hours prior to the employee providing a test specimen (when the test is positive), but are not considered close contacts (per the CDC's definition), will be notified of their potential exposure (while maintaining the infected person's confidentiality) and advised to self-monitor for signs or symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days. This includes taking their temperature and assessing themselves for symptoms twice a day. These coworkers do not need to self-quarantine or be tested unless they develop symptoms. If symptoms develop, the individual should follow the steps in B. above. Social distancing and mask wearing is even more important for these individuals.
- e. The employee who tested positive must complete the Return from Self-Quarantine Questionnaire before receiving clearance from Human Resources to return to work on campus. If asymptomatic, the isolation period can end ten days from the test specimen collection. If symptomatic, the employee must confirm: (i) having been fever-free for 24 hours without the assistance of fever-reducing medication; (ii) their symptoms have shown improvement; and (iii) at least 10 days have passed since the onset of first symptoms. (We understand that requesting medical documentation from a health care provider may place an additional burden on our medical community during this pandemic; therefore if you request medical documentation and are unable to obtain it, at a minimum, the name and date of your test and visit with your treating health care provider must be provided on the questionnaire.)
- f. Facilities will disinfect and clean as provided in the protocol for exposed employees at 2(f). in Section A above.