



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Enterprise Policy

COVID-19 Policy

Revised effective December 21, 2022
Division of Human Resources

A. Purpose

This policy establishes procedures for supporting employees who may be exposed to, infected with, or vaccinated against COVID-19. The goal of this policy is to maintain a safe and healthy workplace, protect the privacy of infected and exposed persons, and let all employees know their rights in discharging leave and remote work options related to this disease.

B. Agency and Employee Responsibilities

1. The State's decisions involving persons who have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to COVID-19 shall be based on current guidance and scientific and evidence-based data from the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
2. Executive Branch agencies will cooperate with RIDOH and the Department of Administration's Division of Human Resources in the event an employee reports potential exposure to COVID-19.
3. All employees have a responsibility to prevent the spread of COVID-19. To that end, when an employee meets one or more of the criteria below, they need to follow proper protocol outlined in this policy:
 - a. A [high-risk exposure](#) to a person with a confirmed, suspect, or probable case of COVID-19;
 - b. Have recently returned from travel anywhere outside the 50 United States or U.S. territories;
 - c. Have recently travelled within the 50 United States or U.S. territories for non-work-related travel by any mode of transportation (airplane, bus, train, car, etc.);
 - d. Have been infected with COVID-19 or are presenting with any signs of illness consistent with COVID-19, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. For more information, go to [symptoms of COVID-19 on the CDC website](#).
4. The State respects the right to privacy of any employee who is directly exposed to or infected with COVID-19. Information about the risk to employees related to COVID-19 will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health consequences to co-workers,

individuals, and others while complying with state and federal privacy and confidentiality laws.

5. The State will not tolerate any discrimination against and/or harassment of an employee as a result of an employee's contraction of or exposure to COVID-19. Any discrimination against and/or harassment of an employee may result in disciplinary action.
6. Upon receiving a positive test result for having COVID-19 (a home test kit is an acceptable testing method), **employees must:**
 - a. Immediately leave the workplace, and/or remain out of the workplace for the duration of their isolation period as stated in the C - Procedures section of this policy below.
 - b. Notify their immediate supervisor that they are unable to report to work. This notification should be made by contacting their supervisor directly by phone. If the supervisor is not available, the employee may leave a voice or text message or email explaining why they are unable to report to work and a contact number where the employee can be reached. Understanding that the employee's medical condition may not allow them to contact their supervisor, the Division of Human Resources will make every effort to reach the employee's emergency contact if the employee has an unexplained absence from work.
 - c. Notify the Human Resources Disability Management Unit (DMU) at 401-574-8401 regarding their positive COVID-19 status. DMU will assess the situation and initiate a Rapid Response Team call if necessary.
 - d. Where telework is a viable work option and approval is granted in accordance with the Teleworking Policy, an employee may temporarily work from home during an isolation period. While teleworking, an employee does not need to discharge time.
 - e. An employee who is restricted from work because of illness due to COVID-19 may return to work upon recovery following the Procedures section of this policy to end isolation.
 - f. All currently available forms of leave may be considered in the event an employee is out of work due to their own illness or the illness of a family member with a communicable disease:
 - Sick leave
 - Family sick leave
 - Annual leave (vacation)
 - Compensatory leave
 - Medical leave without pay
 - g. Note for healthcare workers: Please refer to your agency's guidance regarding proper protocols.

- h. Note for Department of Corrections staff: Please refer to your agency's guidance regarding proper protocols.

C. Isolation, COVID-19 Exposure and Travel Procedures

1. Aligning with the [CDC's COVID-19 Exposure, Quarantine and Isolation Recommendations by Population](#) guidance, the charts below provide procedures for employees who have or think they have COVID-19 (Isolation), those who have had a confirmed [high-risk exposure](#) to an individual with COVID-19, as well as those employees who have travelled domestically and internationally. In addition to the detailed procedures in the charts below, employees should note the following:

- a. Employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 should not report to work and should take a COVID-19 test and obtain test results before entering a state facility. If the test results are negative, and the employee is still symptomatic the employee should take another COVID test or follow-up with their healthcare provider. If the test results are positive, they must follow the Isolation and Post-Isolation Procedures below. Note that a COVID-19 home test kit is an acceptable testing method.
- b. Healthcare workers must refer to their agency's guidance regarding proper protocols for their agency and/or position.
- c. If any of the below situations in the charts for isolation or exposure and apply to you, you must contact your supervisor. Contact the Human Resources Disability Management Unit (DMU) at 401-574-8401 if you are COVID positive or if have any questions or need assistance regarding isolation, or exposure.
- d. If you are considering traveling domestically, internationally, or by cruise ship, be sure to review and follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and recommendations before and after traveling: [Travel | CDC](#). You can also check your domestic destination's community level here before traveling: [COVID-19 by County | CDC](#). Call the Human Resources Disability Management Unit (DMU) at 401-574-8401 if you have questions regarding COVID-19 travel protocols.
- e. The CDC has defined the factors that lower or increase the risk of transmission when an individual has come into proximity with an individual with COVID-19. The definition of a high-risk exposure to COVID-19 can be found on the CDC's website here: [Understanding Exposure Risks | CDC](#). In summary, an individual has had a high-risk exposure if:
 - i. The exposure time has been greater than 15 minutes.
 - ii. The infected person was shouting, singing, coughing, or breathing heavily.
 - iii. The infected person had COVID-19 symptoms at the time of exposure.
 - iv. Neither individual was masked.
 - v. The exposure took place in a poorly ventilated indoor area.

- vi. The infected individual was in close to the person who was exposed (e.g., crowded settings can raise your likelihood of being close to someone with COVID-19.)

If it is determined that the individual has had a high-risk exposure, they should follow the below Procedures for Those Exposed to COVID-19.

D. Isolation and Post-Isolation Procedures <i>For those who have COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status</i> For Symptomatic Cases: Isolation starts on the first day of symptoms (day 0) For Asymptomatic Cases: Isolation starts on the day of a positive test (day 0)	
Day 1-5 Isolation for COVID-19 Cases	<p>Symptomatic person (who does NOT have a moderately to severely compromised immune system)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home and isolate for at least 5 days until: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and; ○ At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without fever-reducing medications, and; ○ Symptoms have improved. <p>Asymptomatic person (who does NOT have a moderately to severely compromised immune system)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolate at home and away from others until at least 5 full days have passed since the date of the first positive test result.
Day 6-10 for COVID-19 Cases	<p>If all the above apply, you may return to the workplace on day 6. A high-quality mask must be worn on day 6 - 10.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are feeling better and have two negative antigen tests (home test or test given by at a pharmacy or medical provider) taken no earlier than day 6 and that are 48 hours apart, you may remove your mask sooner than day 10. • If your antigen test results are positive, you should continue wearing a mask and wait at least 48 hours before taking another test. Continue taking antigen tests at least 48 hours apart until you have negative results from two consecutive tests. This may mean you need to continue wearing a mask and testing beyond day 10.

Isolation for people who have moderate to severe illness from COVID-19 or who have moderate to severely compromised immune systems	Isolate for at least 10 full days AND consult a healthcare provider about when you can end isolation.
Recommendations for people who were asymptomatic and develop symptoms during isolation	Isolate for at least 10 full days AND consult a healthcare provider about when you can end isolation.

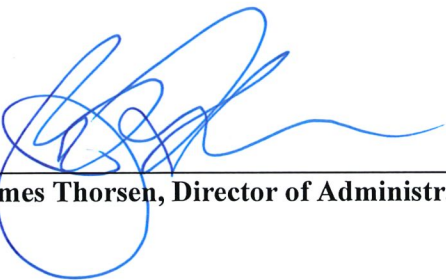
E. Procedures for Those Exposed to COVID-19
For those who have come in close contact with someone with COVID-19

If you were a high-risk exposure, regardless of vaccination status or previous infection	<p>For a full 10 days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a high-quality mask or respirator (e.g., N-95). • Monitor for COVID-19 symptoms. • If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, get tested and isolate immediately. Stay home until you receive the test results. • Get tested at least 5 days after your last exposure, even if you don't develop symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you test positive, isolate right away ○ If you test negative, continue to wear a mask and monitor for symptoms for 10 full days. • If you already had COVID-19 within the past 90 days, refer to the CDC's specific testing recommendations and call your health care provider for further guidance.
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F. Special Note on Collective Bargaining Agreements

Provisions of collective bargaining agreements, with respect to all paid leave options available to employees, should be consulted and this policy should be administered consistent with said provisions.

G. Signature



James Thorsen, Director of Administration

12/30/22

Date