

Guidance for Employees COVID-19

Coordinated School Health monicas.adamian@cms.k12.nc.us (704-965-3150)

Public Health Hotline **980-314-9400**

Benefits Department leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us (980-343-1754)

What happens if someone tests positive for COVID-19?

Any positive test is reported to the health department in the county where the patient lives. The health department contacts the positive person to ensure they are aware of their diagnosis, review home isolation requirements and assess their social service needs. Contact tracing is conducted to identify anyone who was in close contact to the patient for up to 48 hours before they showed symptoms. Close contacts include household members and anyone who was within 6 feet of the patient for more than 15 minutes during the time period they were infectious. The health department will attempt to contact anyone who was potentially exposed. For school-related exposures, the health department works directly with CMS to identify close contacts.

How will our workplace be maintained to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

- If an individual was in a CMS facility within two days of symptoms developing, a specialized disinfecting cleaning process will be performed, focusing on areas of the building in which the individual spent significant time.
- All buildings have enhanced cleaning/disinfection protocols in place, including frequent routine cleaning of high-touch areas.

What should I do if I test positive for COVID-19?

- Notify your manager via phone or e-mail.
- Leave work or do not report to work.
- Notify Benefits by emailing leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us.
- Stay isolated until you are released back to work by your physician and/or the health department's order.
- If you were in the workplace within 48 hours of experiencing symptoms and/or being tested, make note of any individuals at work who you may have been within six feet of for more than 15 minutes.

When can I return to work after a positive COVID-19 test?

- You must isolate until all three of the below items are true:
 1. It has been at least 10 days since symptoms started, or 10 days since the test if no symptoms are experienced.
 2. It has been at least 24 hours since running a fever with no fever-reducing medications used.
 3. All symptoms are showing improvement.

What should I do if I develop COVID-19 symptoms?

Symptoms include: fever of 100.4 or higher, new cough, shortness of breath, new loss of taste or smell.

- Notify your supervisor by phone or email.
- Leave work or do not report to work.
- Notify Benefits by emailing leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us.
- Consult with your healthcare provider and/or access available testing from the [Mecklenburg County COVID-19 Testing Site Locator website](#). The decision to get tested is up to you.

What should I do if I develop Post-vaccine symptoms?

- If you experience common symptoms from the vaccine: fever, fatigue, headache, chills, muscle or joint pain within 3 days of receiving the vaccine and you have not had a known exposure to someone then you should be excluded from work until the symptoms have improved/resolved and 24 hours fever-free. If symptoms persist for more than 2 days, then the employee should be evaluated by a healthcare professional.*
- If you experience certain uncommon symptoms within 3 days of receiving a vaccine: cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, loss of taste or smell and you have not had a known exposure to a positive person, then you should stay home from work and be evaluated for COVID (or potentially other illnesses) by a healthcare professional.*

*In both of these scenarios, if you have **had** a known exposure to a positive COVID person, you should follow the usual quarantine guidance and seek evaluation/testing.

When can I return to work?

- If you test positive, see the procedures for what to do if you test positive.
- If you test negative, you can return to work once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and you have felt well for 24 hours.
- If you receive confirmation of an alternative diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19 like symptom(s), you can return to work following normal policies once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and you have felt well for 24 hours.

What should I do if I was a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

- If you have previously tested positive for COVID-19 and are identified as a close contact, you do not need to quarantine if it has been within 3 months of the infection and there are no symptoms present. If symptoms develop or it has been more than 3 months since the infection, you must follow usual quarantine requirements.

- If you have been fully vaccinated and are exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19, you are NOT required to quarantine if you meet all of the following criteria:
 - Are fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine)
 - Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure
 - Anyone who does not meet all of the above criteria should continue to follow current quarantine guidance after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Notify your supervisor by phone or email.
- Leave work or do not report to work.
- Notify Benefits by emailing leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us.
- Consult with your healthcare provider and/or access available testing from the **Mecklenburg County COVID-19 Testing Site Locator website**. The decision to get tested is up to you.
- Self-quarantine for 10 days from the last exposure to the person who tested positive and follow strict precautions for the full 14 days (monitor for symptoms, wear a mask in public and social distance).
- You may end quarantine after 7 days, if you do not have any symptoms and receive a negative PCR test on or after 5 days from exposure.
- Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and contact your healthcare provider if you develop symptoms.
- If you have symptoms, you should be tested for COVID-19.
- If you do not develop symptoms, the recommendation is to be tested 5-7 days after exposure.
- Co-workers do not need to be informed unless you test positive or develop symptoms. In that case, your supervisor will handle notifying co-workers, and your identity will be kept confidential.

What are COVID related leave options are available?

- The **ONLY** COVID-19 related paid leave available at this time is when the **director of the local health department, orders an employee to leave his or her work environment**. The appropriate documentation from the director of the local health department is REQUIRED for you to be approved for a paid leave due to ordered quarantine or isolation of employees. This is the only paid leave available and the director of the health department will determine the timeframe of the leave. **Failure to provide the required documentation from the local health department may result in unpaid leave time.**

Employees will be able to apply for this leave by [clicking here](#) and submitting the required documentation from the health department. Please contact the Benefits department at leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us if you have any questions.