

Guidance for Employees COVID-19

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

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

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

- Everyone is required to wear a face covering indoors and maintain distance.
- 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 calling 980-343-1754 or emailing leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us.
- Stay isolated until you are released back to work by the provider or health department 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 5 days since symptoms started, or 5 days since the test if no symptoms are experienced.
 2. It has been at least 24 hours since fever with no fever-reducing medications.
 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, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell.

- Notify your supervisor by phone or email.
- Leave work or do not report to work.
- 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.

When can I return to work if I have symptoms?

- 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?

- Notify your supervisor by phone or email.
- If you and the individual who tested positive both wore their mask at all times in the classroom setting, you do not need to quarantine unless you develop symptoms.
- **If you are a close contact in a mask-required school setting or other setting outside of the household, you do not have to quarantine, if you have no symptoms. This includes unmasked exposures (e.g. during lunch). It is recommended that you get tested on the day of notification and as close as possible to day 5 after exposure. You MUST wear a mask in school to avoid quarantine.**
- If you have previously tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 3 months and identified as a close contact, you do not need to quarantine if 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 are fully vaccinated and not having any symptoms, **you do not need to quarantine from school if have received your primary series AND booster, if eligible.**
- It is recommended that you get tested 3-5 days after exposure and continue to wear your mask around others for 10 days.
- **If you are unable to wear a mask in the school setting or develops symptoms, you must leave school or not report to school:**
 - **self-quarantine for 10 days from the last exposure**
- Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and get tested if they develop symptoms.
- A test is recommended for anyone with known close contact. If they do not develop symptoms, the recommendation is to be tested 5-7 days after exposure.
- A negative test is not required to return to school after completing the required quarantine, as long as the student remains asymptomatic.
- Notify Benefits by calling 980-343-1754 or emailing at **leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us.**
- If you are a close contact and are required to quarantine and unable to wear a mask, you must quarantine for 10 days from the last exposure to the person who tested positive.
- 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.

- 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 COVID related leave options are available?

The **ONLY** available COVID-19 related paid leave for employees at this time is when the **Director of the local health department, orders an employee to leave his or her work environment if the employee has tested positive for COVID-19 and/or is being ordered to quarantine or isolate by the Director of the Local Health Department.** The appropriate documentation from the director of the local health department is **REQUIRED** for an employee to be eligible and approved for this paid leave. This is the only paid leave available and the director of the health department will determine the timeframe of the leave. To request the isolation letter, contact 980-314-9400. If you do not live in Mecklenburg County, please contact NC DHHS at 844-628-7223. **Failure to provide the required documentation from the local health department may result in unpaid leave time.**

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 follow the normal protocol for failing the screener and be excluded from work and 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.

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.