

Wyoming Judicial Branch
Coronavirus: Frequently Asked Questions
Effective: March 13, 2020
UPDATED: MARCH 19, 2020

Q. Should we take additional precautions? If so, what proactive steps can and should we take to keep our workplace healthy and safe?

A. Yes. We all need to promote and practice illness prevention strategies. The best way to prevent ANY viral illness is to avoid being exposed to a virus.

These are a few actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Hand washing is most important! Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick or unnecessary contact with people in general (e.g., handshake).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Eliminate any unnecessary travel.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) does not recommend the use of face masks as a preventive measure for the general public. Face masks are typically used in clinical and care giving settings to prevent the spread of diseases from sick patients to healthcare workers and/or caregivers who are in close contact.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading your illness to others, you should:

- Stay home when you are sick and do not return until you are free of fever, signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines.
- Cover your cough or sneeze, preferably into your elbow or sleeve. If a tissue is used, immediately throw the used tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as cell phones, keyboards, door and drawer handles, keys, countertops, etc.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

If you feel sick and think you may have been exposed to a virus, please call your medical practitioner first and talk to them about next steps (going to a clinic or ER first could unnecessarily expose others).

Q. How long does the virus live on surfaces, such as door handles and cardboard?

A. A study performed by the University of CA and the National Institutes of Health found the virus can survive on hard surfaces such as plastic and stainless steel for up to 72 hours and on cardboard for up to 24 hours.

Q. If an employee is experiencing symptoms similar to the Coronavirus (e.g., fever, cough, or shortness of breath), but the employee requests to continue to work, can they be sent home?

A. Yes. An employee who is sick should not come to the workplace. If an employee reports to the workplace exhibiting symptoms, the employee should be sent home immediately. A manager/supervisor must require an employee to take leave or work from home when he/she has a reasonable belief based on objective evidence that the employee's present medical condition would:

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- Impair their ability to perform *essential job functions* with or without reasonable accommodation, or
- Pose a *direct threat* (i.e., significant risk of substantial harm that cannot be reduced or eliminated by reasonable accommodation) to safety in the workplace.

The employee should not be allowed to return to work until they are free of fever, signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines.

If the employee is not too sick to work:

- For exempt employees, to the extent possible, employers should encourage flexible or remote working capabilities. The manager/supervisor needs to work closely with the employees to determine if their position enables temporary working from home during the period of illness.
- For non-exempt employees, the manager/supervisor needs to review whether remote work is feasible, making sure the employee understands accurate documentation of hours worked. If the employee cannot work from home or is too sick to work then the time would be considered sick leave, vacation, compensatory time (banked), or approved leave without pay. For further clarification or questions contact human resources.

R. Should we require a certification of fitness to work for employees who are sick with any acute respiratory illness, including Coronavirus?

- B. The CDC recommends that employers not require a medical practitioner's note for employees who are sick with any acute respiratory illness, like Coronavirus, to validate their illness or to return to work, since medical practitioner offices and medical facilities may be overburdened and unable to timely provide such documentation.

If a manager/supervisor has a special circumstance where they believe a certification of fitness to work from a medical practitioner might be necessary, please contact human resources first.

Q. If we require employees to stay home due to an emergency evacuation or building closure, what is the employees pay status?

- A. The Chief Justice or designee upon his directive, a district judge, or a circuit judge may instruct employees to work from home. Employees who are barred from performing their usual duties due to an emergency evacuation or closing will remain in pay status (**pandemic emergency** leave) and must remain ready for work assignments during all scheduled work hours. Employees must be available to return to work during all scheduled work hours. To remain in pay status, employees must provide the manager/supervisor with a telephone number at which an employee can be reached during normal work hours.

Wyoming Judicial Branch policies for the accumulation and use of sick, vacation, and other leave shall apply in the event of a declared public health emergency. Employees do not have to use

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paid accrued vacation or compensatory leave if they are not sick but are required to stay home, nor shall employees be subject to leave without pay.

Employees on preapproved vacation, sick, leave without pay, or another leave status shall charge leave to the appropriate leave balance until the end of the scheduled days off during a public health emergency, even if employees are directed not to report to the workplace.

Q. What are the responsibilities of a manager/supervisor when an employee in the workplace states that they have tested positive for the Coronavirus?

- A.** Employees shall inform supervisors of any evidence of a communicable disease that could seriously endanger the health of the public or others in the workplace.

If an employee is confirmed to have Coronavirus, managers/supervisors should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to Coronavirus in the workplace but maintain confidentiality by not giving the name of the employee testing positive. Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed Coronavirus should refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.

Supervisors shall also immediately notify State Court Administration by emailing Lily Sharpe at lsharpe@courts.state.wy.us, Ronda Munger at rmunger@courts.state.wy.us and Claire Smith at csmith@courts.state.wy.us and providing the following information:

1. Name of exposed employee
2. Summary about the exposure including how the employee came into contact with an infected person with a confirmed positive case (if known)
3. Date of the exposure
4. The location if out of state or out of country travel was involved
5. Summary of symptoms the employee is experiencing

This information has been requested by Administration & Information Human Resources Division (A&I HRD) in order to track the spread of the virus amongst state employees. We will forward this information to HRD with names redacted.

In any health emergency, the State Court Administrator shall consult with state and local health officials on an ongoing basis to determine the severity of the situation and the actions to be taken. Consistent with any directive issued by the Chief Justice or his designee, manager/supervisor and employees shall adhere to any communicable disease orders of state and local public health agencies to prevent transmission of a communicable disease.

If your office is in a county facility please also follow their communication plan as it relates to other county offices and citizens.

Q. If an employee is quarantined, what are our responsibilities as the manager/supervisor?

- A.** If an employee is quarantined by a public health official, the employee shall be granted **pandemic emergency leave (up to 3 weeks). If the employee has a family member who is quarantined by a public health official and the employee is also quarantined due to his/her**

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relationship to that person, the employee will receive up to 3 weeks of pandemic emergency leave.

Employees who travel to areas where the CDC recommends no travel will not receive pandemic emergency leave if they are subsequently quarantined. Please monitor the [CDC guidelines](#) often, as updates may be made frequently. If the employee travels to another country that does not have travel restrictions and is quarantined while trying to return home, the employee will receive up to three weeks of pandemic emergency leave. Beyond that, the employee will need to use annual leave. The employee can be required to provide a certification of fitness to work upon return, please consult with human resources. The manager/supervisor is not required to communicate about employees in quarantine with other employees in the work unit.

Q. How does a manager/supervisor handle a self or medical practitioner quarantine?

- A.** Employee and/or employee's medical practitioner need to review the CDC [Risk Assessment](#) and determine if they were exposed at the high or medium risk level. If the employee meets the high or medium risk level, they must inform manager/supervisor about self-quarantine. In this situation, the employee can use pandemic emergency leave, sick leave, vacation, compensatory bank, or approved leave without pay. If a work from home situation is feasible, the employee may be permitted to work from home during this time and should be paid for all time worked.

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Risk Level	Geographic (Travel-associated) Exposures*	Exposures Identified through Contact Investigation
High	Travel from Hubei Province, China	Living in the same household as, being an intimate partner of, or providing care in a nonhealthcare setting (such as a home) for a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection <i>without using recommended precautions</i> for home care and home isolation
Medium (assumes no exposures in the high-risk category)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel from mainland China outside Hubei Province or Iran • Travel from a country with widespread sustained transmission, other than China or Iran • Travel from a country with sustained community transmission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close contact with a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 • On an aircraft, being seated within 6 feet (two meters) of a traveler with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection; this distance correlates approximately with 2 seats in each direction • Living in the same household as, an intimate partner of, or caring for a person in a nonhealthcare setting (such as a home) to a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection <i>while consistently using recommended precautions</i> for home care and home isolation
Low (assumes no exposures in the high-risk category)	Travel from any other country	Being in the same indoor environment (e.g., a classroom, a hospital waiting room) as a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time but not meeting the definition of close contact
No identifiable risk	Not applicable	Interactions with a person with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection that do not meet any of the high-, medium- or low-risk conditions above, such as walking by the person or being briefly in the same room.

*In general, geographic exposure categories do not apply to travelers who only transit through an airport.

The employee should be encouraged to self-monitor their temperature and contact their medical practitioner if they develop any symptoms (e.g., fever, cough or difficulty breathing). The employee should also notify their manager/supervisor.

If no symptoms develop, the manager/supervisor need not take additional steps with respect to other employees, but still should be careful to encourage good sanitation. If the affected employee had contact with any other employee or workplace while sick, the manager/supervisor should inform other potentially affected employees (taking care to keep

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the affected employee's identity and medical information private to the extent possible) and ask those who have any symptoms to self-quarantine by staying at home either on a leave status or working from home until those employees are free of fever, signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines.

The manager/supervisor should contact their facilities office to request the disinfecting of the job site or workplace so that it may provide assurances to other asymptomatic employees that it is safe to return to work.

In taking the above actions, the manager/supervisor must be careful to avoid discrimination against individuals who are perceived as having contracted Coronavirus or who may be from high-risk areas. Additionally, the manager/supervisor must make sure to comply with the confidentiality restrictions imposed by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and similar state and local laws; in particular, the person who contracted Coronavirus or symptoms should not be identified to other employees, except as required by State Court Administration for reporting to A&I HRD. Employee names will be redacted before sending to A&I HRD.

- Q. Is there any duty for a manager/supervisor to report potential Coronavirus cases?**
- A. State health agencies and media outlets may seek voluntary information from larger employers about the number of employees infected. Inquiries of this nature should be directed to State Court Administration human resources.
- Q. What can we do if our employee does not have any symptoms of illness, and our workplace has been symptom-free, but the employee has refused to come to work or travel because of concerns related to Coronavirus and being in large groups generally?**
- A. The manager/supervisor should listen to employee concerns and, if they are genuine, explore alternative working arrangements with them. As discussed above, to the extent possible, the manager/supervisor should encourage flexible scheduling or remote work options, particularly for FLSA exempt employees. Where working from home is not an option, employees may be given the option to take annual leave. If there are any special circumstances, contact human resources for the next steps.
- Q. How should we handle an increase in employee absence related to potential Coronavirus illness or suspected illness?**
- A. Judges should communicate with State Court Administration if staffing reaches a point where critical functions cannot be performed.
- Q. What type of leave can an employee take if their daycare and/or school closes?**
- A. If the employee's children's daycare/school closes, the employee can take **up to three weeks of public emergency leave to care for a child under the age of 13 or for a child under 18 years of age who has a disability which requires full-time care. If the closure extends beyond three weeks, the employee will use available annual and sick leave.** If the employee does not have

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adequate leave, they may take authorized leave without pay. The supervisor may allow the employee to work from home, if possible.

Q. If an employee is quarantined or sick, what are the call-in procedures?

- A.** The employee needs to follow normal call in procedures. If the employee's health status changes the employee must notify the manager/supervisor immediately.

Q. Can I inform employees if an employee is quarantined or diagnosed with the Coronavirus?

- A.** The manager/supervisor can inform employees they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for Coronavirus, but you cannot disclose the employee's name.

Q. How does the employee's timesheet get completed and submitted if the employee is quarantined or sick?

- A.** The manager/supervisor should complete their time sheet to the best of his or her knowledge on behalf of the employee. When the employee returns the manager/supervisor is expected to verify the timesheet with the employee and the employee is expected to submit any leave slips, as applicable.

Q. Am I required to allow all employees to work from home?

- A.** No. The Wyoming Judicial Branch: Respiratory Disease Pandemic Plan provides guidance on allowing employees to work from home.

Q. How are timesheets and time off requests reviewed and processed if the employee's supervisor is out sick?

- A.** *Time off Requests:* Each supervisor should designate (and communicate to) another supervisor to review and approve time off requests. The alternate approver should also be communicated to the impacted employees.

Timesheets: Each supervisor should designate an alternate approver in order to process time sheets while the supervisor is out of the office. The alternate approver and employees should be communicated with to inform them of the process.

If assistance is needed with time off requests or to process timesheets, please contact human resources.

Q. How should we clean our computer equipment?

- A.** Many of the effective cleaning products that eliminate COVID-19 do not work well with electronic equipment. The Office of Court Technology is recommending the following:
- Desktop keyboards (not laptop) and mice – It is okay to use bleach-based products, however, do not soak or saturate. It is best to use cleaning wipes gently on the keyboard/mice and then let them air dry.
 - Monitors – Do not use bleach-based cleaning products. You can use isopropyl alcohol-based products as long as you do not saturate the screen. This may not eliminate the coronavirus,

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- but will provide a cleaner surface. Please do not do this daily. Perform a thorough cleaning and then stop. Cleaning the screen multiple times with an isopropyl alcohol-based product over time will damage the monitor.
- Mobile devices, laptops, iPhones, iPads – Do not use bleach-based cleaning products. You can use isopropyl alcohol-based products as long as you do not saturate. Lightly apply and then wipe clean. This may not eliminate the coronavirus, but will provide a cleaner surface. Please do not do this multiple times daily. Perform a thorough cleaning and then stop. Cleaning the screen multiple times with an isopropyl alcohol-based product daily will damage the device.
 - Surface Hubs – You can use many common disinfectant products to safely clean most Microsoft Surface devices. Use pre-moistened disinfectant wipes or apply an isopropyl alcohol (IPA) solution that's 70% or less to a soft, lint-free cloth to clean the device.

Once you have cleaned your technology it is recommended that you do not share it with others.