Guidelines for Health Care Providers and First Responders

Applies to

This Procedure applies to all faculty, staff and students across all University departments, Institutes, Centers and Schools who have the potential to be exposed to COVID-19 due to their work as Health Care Providers and First Responders. This includes faculty, staff and students who could be exposed due to work (campus safety, student care teams, etc.), clinical (PA, PT, OT students and faculty) or community volunteer activities (EMT, Fire, etc.).

Purpose

To provide special procedures and guidelines to mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and to ensure a healthy and safe working environment for employees in this category as well as the larger campus community.

Definition of Terms

Classification of Health Care Providers and First Responders: At Clarkson we have several categories of faculty, staff and students who have the potential to be exposed to COVID-19 through work (campus safety, student care teams, etc.), clinical (PA, PT, OT students and faculty) or community volunteer activities (EMT, Fire, etc.). Any employee or student who performs the role of a Health Care Provider or First Responder either as a part of their primary work or any secondary or volunteering work would come under the purview of this policy.

Isolation – Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID-19 and/or those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it is safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area and using a separate bathroom (if available).

Quarantine – Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include (but are not limited to):

- Cold or flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, chills, sore throat, muscle pain, diarrhea and persistent loss of smell or taste).
- Emergency warning signs for COVID-19 include, but are not limited to trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face. Seek medical attention immediately if you or a family member are experiencing any of these symptoms.


Anyone with flu-like symptoms should contact their Primary Care Provider. Your Primary Care Provider will help you determine whether to get assessment or treatment. Medical professionals are best equipped to offer advice based on factors such as how direct or indirect an individual’s contact with coronavirus was, recent travel history, an individual’s personal health history, and any symptoms that person may be experiencing.

Procedures

CDC has developed guidelines for risk assessment and work restrictions for healthcare providers and first responders with potential exposure for COVID-19. These guidelines were developed for settings where workers are aware of the potential exposure risks, the use of PPE mitigates risk and those exposures can be assessed differently from a non-protected exposure. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html
Potential exposure of employees in this category are often extensive and they have close contact with vulnerable individuals in healthcare settings. The following guidelines enable those employees to continue to perform their duties while minimizing the risk for COVID-19 exposure.

These procedures are in conjunction with the Clarkson University OM 8.3.9 Volunteer Emergency Responder Policy [https://confluence.clarkson.edu/display/UPR/OM+8.3.9+Volunteer+Emergency+Responder+Policy](https://confluence.clarkson.edu/display/UPR/OM+8.3.9+Volunteer+Emergency+Responder+Policy).

**Special Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements:**


**Mandatory PPE Training:**

Employees in this category will be required to complete the Mandatory PPE Training in addition to the Return to Work Safety Training [https://intranet.clarkson.edu/administrative/hr/covid-19-workplace-policies/covid-19-return-to-work/](https://intranet.clarkson.edu/administrative/hr/covid-19-workplace-policies/covid-19-return-to-work/). The Mandatory PPE Training will train these employees on the proper use of required PPE along with physical donning/doffing demos and practice. Employees must contact Erica Arnold from Environmental Health & Safety (earnold@clarkson.edu) for this training.

**Medical Evaluation questionnaire:**

Employees in this category must have a medical evaluation completed by a physician or other licensed Health Care professional (PLHCP) to determine the employee’s ability to use a respirator, before the employee is fit tested or required to use the respirator in the workplace. Per OSHA’s 1910.134: Respiratory Protection standard, the medical evaluation must obtain the information requested by the questionnaire in Sections 1 and 2, Part A of Appendix C. Individuals will have to fill out this questionnaire that is provided in OSHA’s standard and will need to be signed off by a medical professional. Employees can contact Erica Arnold from Environmental Health & Safety (earnold@clarkson.edu) to coordinate these medical evaluations.

**Respirator Fit Testing:**

Employees in this category who will be using respirators on campus are required to be fit tested for the specific respirator model and size they will use per OSHA’s 1910.134: Respiratory Protection standard. Employees can contact Erica Arnold from Environmental Health & Safety (earnold@clarkson.edu) to coordinate fit testing.

**Daily Employee Health Screening Questionnaire:**

All incoming employees are required to monitor their body temperature daily and complete a daily health screening questionnaire at the start of their work shift, as per the “Entry Requirements and Screening Procedures for Return to Work during COVID 19” policy. Health Care Providers and First Responders are required to respond to a few additional questions about exposure and the use of PPE.

The daily health screening can be completed by one of the following methods:

- Using the following link: [https://forms.gle/XD9LyTnzaB9swi9q9](https://forms.gle/XD9LyTnzaB9swi9q9);
- Scanning the QR code, which will be posted on the entrance to each building; or
- Calling Human Resources (315-268-6497) during business hours or Campus Safety & Security (315-268-6666) after hours.

**Protocols to follow in case of exposure to COVID-19:**

The guidelines breakdown the employees performing these roles into two classes: protected and unprotected.

- **Unprotected exposure:** An unprotected “prolonged” close “contact” for a Health Care Provider or First Responder is assessed and considered the same as a community “prolonged contact” for the general public. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) defines close contact for COVID-19 as anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient was isolated. In this case, of unprotected exposure, where there was “close contact” with a confirmed or presumptive COVID-19 person and no PPE worn, the recommendation is exclusion from work, self-quarantine for 14 days, monitoring for symptoms and notifying Human Resources if symptoms develop. Please also refer to the “Positive Diagnosis or Exposure during COVID-19” policy.

- **Protected exposure:** For exposure where appropriate PPE is used, the assessment of “contact” and “exposure” changes. In this case, the use of PPE lowers the risk assessment of the exposure. The recommendations in this case are:

  - No work restrictions
  - Monitoring for symptoms
  - Wearing a mask
  - Reporting if symptoms ([https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)) develop. Employees should contact their physician or Health Care Provider and Clarkson Human Resources in case of symptoms and stay home. Please also refer to the “Positive Diagnosis or Exposure during COVID-19” policy.

**General:**

In general, all employees are encouraged to wash their hands frequently, avoid touching their faces, follow cleaning guidelines, wear their face coverings and maintain social distance.