COVID-2019 Caregiver Exposure FAQs

The COVID-19 situation is evolving quickly, and the information provided here represents our best responses based on the information we currently have available and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Please understand it may be subject to change. We will continue to keep you informed.

Caregiver Health and Exposure

- I recently traveled outside of the United States and might have been exposed to COVID-19. What should I do?
  Your health and safety is our top priority. If you have returned home from a Level 3 Travel Health Notice Country, you may have been exposed to COVID-19. Please call the Cleveland Clinic COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246 for instructions on next steps.

- I recently traveled within the United States. Do I need to do anything?
  If you traveled within the United States, you should monitor yourself for signs of fever, chills, and/or cough. If you develop any symptoms, please let your manager know immediately and contact the Cleveland Clinic COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246 for further instruction.

- Someone in my household has been diagnosed with COVID-19. What should I do?
  If someone in your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19, you must call the Cleveland Clinic COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246 for further instruction before reporting to work.

- I was exposed to a patient with COVID-19 at work. What should I do?
  First, we need to clarify the definition of exposure. Exposure occurs when you have had close (6 feet or less) contact with a person with COVID-19, and you were not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). If you cared for a patient with COVID-19, and you were wearing appropriate PPE, you did not have an exposure.

  If you were exposed at work, speak with your manager immediately. Your manager will communicate with Occupational Health and Infection Prevention. Occupational Health will then contact you.

- Are exposed caregivers without symptoms returning to work?
  The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released new guidelines on healthcare worker exposure to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Caregivers who were exposed to COVID-19 without wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) may continue to work if they do not have symptoms. They will be required to wear a mask as a precaution and our Occupational Health team will check in with them twice each day to monitor for any symptoms. Occupational Health coordinates return-to-work dates for anyone who has symptoms and is not cleared to return to work.

  Following these guidelines will help us be prepared to serve our patients during this uncertain time.

- What happens when a caregiver calls Occupational Health?
  The Occupational Health team will explain the 14-day monitoring period and will maintain contact with you twice a day. If you have symptoms or a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, Occupational Health will keep in contact with you throughout your time at home and will notify your manager when you are cleared to return to work.

- I think I may have symptoms of COVID-19. Who should I contact?
  COVID-19 can be a serious illness. Please take the following steps:

  1. If you have a fever, cough, shortness of breath or are otherwise concerned you have COVID-19, do not return to work. You need to be screened by a clinician.
  2. To be screened, call the Cleveland Clinic COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246 (Option 1). These clinicians will determine if COVID-19 testing is needed.

Updated as of March 20, 2020
How do I get tested for COVID-19?
If you are concerned you have COVID-19, call the Cleveland Clinic COVID-19 Hotline at 216.445.8246 (Option 1) to be screened. These clinicians will determine if COVID-19 testing is needed. They can evaluate you and determine if you meet the CDC guidelines for testing based on symptoms, travel and exposures. If you meet the criteria, you will be advised as to how to proceed with testing. Testing is limited to those with a physician order for testing.

Attendance, Pay and Benefits

How are my work duties, attendance and pay handled during Cleveland Clinic-approved time away due to COVID-19?
You may be asked to work remotely during your time away. This is determined by your manager and based on availability of work as well as accessibility of necessary systems.

Regardless of whether you are able to work remotely, you will continue to receive compensation and benefits during Cleveland Clinic-approved time away due to COVID-19. Managers and/or timekeepers will be responsible for documenting hours for non-exempt hourly caregivers in Kronos.

Absences due to COVID-19 will not count toward attendance (occurrences). The absences will be recorded using the new Required Time Away pay code (RqTA) in Kronos.

What if I am diagnosed with COVID-19?
When sick with COVID-19, you should continue to practice social distancing and stay at home until you have recovered and your return to work has been approved by Occupational Health.

You will continue to receive compensation and benefits during this period, and will not be charged with PTO or required to apply for Salary Continuation. Once you are diagnosed with COVID-19, you are not expected to work remotely. You will also not receive attendance occurrences for absences.

Cleveland Clinic has established the pay code of Required Time Away (RqTA) to ensure full payment of all regularly scheduled hours, PTO accrual and exemption from any attendance occurrences.

Will I earn PTO during Cleveland Clinic-approved time away due to COVID-19?
Benefit-eligible caregivers will continue to accrue PTO and other associated benefits during their required time away.

My child’s school/daycare has closed and I need to stay home.
If you miss scheduled shifts due to unforeseen school/daycare closures that impact your children as a result of COVID-19, you will not receive absence occurrences under the Attendance Policy. You may use accrued PTO or take an unpaid personal leave. If you are authorized to work from home, your manager and HR representative will determine the terms of that arrangement consistent with the Telecommuting Standard Operating Procedure, and you will receive your regular pay and benefits. We encourage you to start planning now for child care coverage in the event of a closure.
- **I need to take PTO to be home with my family but have run out of PTO hours.**
  We ask that everyone be mindful of the critical need for all caregivers to work as scheduled wherever possible. Caregivers under Cleveland Clinic-approved time away or diagnosed with COVID-19 will not need to use PTO to cover these absences. In other circumstances related to the impact of COVID-19, caregivers are eligible to use PTO beyond their current balance up to a total of negative forty (-40) hours. Our payroll and timekeeping systems have been adapted to accommodate a negative PTO balance. Caregivers whose PTO balance does not cover necessary time away from work should simply follow their standard process to request time off. Caregivers drawing on a negative PTO balance of up to 40 hours will continue to accrue PTO while away from work when PTO is used.

- **Are caregivers’ jobs protected during Cleveland Clinic-approved time away or recovery period?**
  Yes. Absence Management will contact caregivers who are eligible for FMLA due to being diagnosed with COVID-19 or having to care for an immediate family member diagnosed with COVID-19. Any days that qualify as FMLA associated with COVID-19 will be credited to the caregiver upon return to work. Job protection also applies for days off due to quarantine or for those caregivers who have been diagnosed but who are not eligible for FMLA.

- **What information can a manager share with the team if one of their colleagues is not working in the office due to COVID-19 or has been diagnosed with COVID-19?**
  Managers should not reveal the reason for a caregiver’s absence. Managers may share that the team member is working from home or on a leave of absence.

- **What guidelines should we follow in our interactions with on-site contractors, vendors and other personnel who are not governed by Cleveland Clinic policies?**
  Vendors/non-employees should not be on-site unless their work is mission critical and cannot be done virtually. If vendors must be on-site, they will be expected to take the same precautionary measures, including holding virtual meetings whenever possible and postponing any non-essential business meetings with Cleveland Clinic contacts. [Review these talking points on the intranet.](#)

- **What precautions are in place for new caregivers who have not yet started work?**
  As of March 16, 2020, all New Caregiver Orientation sessions are being held virtually. New caregivers are expected to report to work on Day 2, unless otherwise instructed by their managers and/or recruiters. In addition, the Nursing Institute is creating additional guidelines for new nurses, which will be communicated when available.