

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF BROOKLYN/SUNY DOWNSTATE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Subject: Quarantine, Isolation and Return to Work Policy Following Covid-19 Related Medical Leave or Travel During the Pandemic Period

Prepared by: Mona Pervil-Ulysse, MD
Mohamed Nakeshbandi, MD
Michael Augenbraun, MD

Reviewed by: Office of General Counsel
Employee & Labor Relations

Approved by: David Berger, MD

Committee Approval:
Executive Performance Improvement Council
Medical Executive Committee

No. HR 29-C

Page 1 **of** 5

Original Issue Date: January 2021

Supersedes: January 2021(New)

Effective Date: February 2021

The JC Standards: HR.01.01.01 EP 5
Staff comply with applicable health screening as required by law and regulation or hospital policy

Issued by: Regulatory Affairs

I. PURPOSE:

To establish return-to-work criteria during COVID-19 pandemic period for staff and students at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University ("SUNY Downstate") who were quarantined or isolated due to:

- Suspected or confirmed COVID-19; or
- Return from travel; or
- Exposure to COVID-19 positive patients, staff or people in the community

The purpose of this policy is to update and provide clarity as to the protocols currently in place to decrease the risk of exposing other staff, patients and students to COVID-19 infection during the pandemic period.

II. POLICY:

The following criteria will apply prospectively to all staff and students when making decisions about returning to work or in-person class attendance following confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection or exposure.

These criteria also update the SUNY Downstate's Travel Policy as it relates to the protocol that will be in place for staff and/or students who travel outside of New York State (NYS) during the pandemic period.

III. DEFINITION(S)

1. **Isolation:** Separation of persons colonized or infected with a contagious pathogen from persons who have not been identified as colonized or infected. All persons with a documented COVID-19 infection must be isolated from others to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (See CDC or April 2020 NYS recommendations for what constitutes isolation)
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/03/quarantine_guidance_0.pdf
2. **Quarantine:** Separation and restriction of the movement of persons who have been exposed to a contagious disease in order to monitor and determine if they subsequently develop an infection or a disease. All persons who have had a “significant exposure” to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 must be quarantined to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19.

Individuals or persons who have completed the two (2) dose COVID-19 vaccine regimen and are between two (2) weeks following second dose and three (3) months (ninety (90) days) following second dose, will not be required to quarantine following an exposure to a COVID-19 case. Such individuals should continue to observe all social distancing and masking requirements. They must closely monitor their health and report any development of symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to Employee Health Services.
3. **Index Case:** A person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
4. **Interested Parties:** The Division of Infectious Diseases (“DID”), Student and Employee Health Services (“SEHS”) and the Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Corps (“Contact Tracing Team”).
5. **Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”):** Specialized clothing or equipment worn by an employee for protection against infectious material. These include gloves, face masks, protective eyewear, face shields, and protective clothing (e.g., reusable or disposable gown).
6. **Significant Exposure:** Close contact (within 6 feet) with a known or highly suspected COVID19 case and that contact was for a minimum of 15 minutes.
7. **Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Test:** A PCR test amplifies DNA in order to detect a virus or bacteria.

IV. **APPLICATION:**

The proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) eliminates the concern of possible exposure.

In applying the definitions above, the following will be implemented at SUNY Downstate:

- 1) If both the Index Case and the health care employee were both wearing the appropriate PPE¹, it will be determined that there was no exposure warranting further action. In this instance, quarantine will not be mandated and there will be no notification to any of the interested parties. The employee will be allowed to return to work.
- 2) If the Index Case was not wearing a face mask/face covering, the exposed health care employee, to avoid quarantine, must have been wearing the appropriate PPE. If the health care employee was not wearing the appropriate PPE, that employee may be subject to mandatory quarantine as determined by a consensus between the interested parties.

¹ Appropriate PPE may change, dependent on circumstances, job duties, procedures, etc.

A. **IMPLEMENTING ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE:**

1. **POST WORKPLACE EXPOSURE:**

a. **Notification to Interested Parties:**

- i. Once a Supervisor becomes aware of an Index Case (patient or staff), i.e. positive COVID diagnosis, the Supervisor must **identify and immediately isolate** the person, i.e. patient. The Supervisor or his/her designee must then report the exposure(s) to Infection Control and/or the Contact Tracing Team. Do not send any exposed employees to EHS. In the event health care workers have been exposed to an Index Case, those health care workers must be directed to wait for further instruction from EHS, Infection Control and/or the Contact Tracing Team.
- ii. The Supervisor **will be required to provide to either EHS and/or the Contact Tracing Team**, a list of all employees who may have been exposed to the staff/patient who tested positive for COVID-19 within 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms in the person who tested positive for COVID-19.
- iii. The list should include the following: date, staff full name/Title, department, best contact number (**see Attachment A**), and should be e-mailed simultaneously to the following interested parties:

Contact Tracing Team: covid19testtracecorps@downstate.edu
EHS Director: Mona.Pervil-Ulysse@downstate.edu
Infection Control Director: Ogie.Umasabor-Bubu@downstate.edu

The Contact Tracing Team, in collaboration with EHS, will contact all exposed health care workers to identify the risk of exposure based on the criteria above to determine whether quarantine or isolation will be required. EHS will notify supervisors of employees who will be subject to quarantine and any other additional requirements that may be applicable.

b. **The Procedure:**

- i. **Positive Index Case:** The person will be in Isolation for minimum of ten (10) days after the initial onset of any symptom(s) and at least 24 hours after the resolution of fever without the use of anti-pyretics. **No retest is necessary at conclusion of the Isolation period if these end points are met.** Immunocompromised patients may need a longer period of Isolation. For additional information, Supervisors are required to contact Infection Control before removing the patient from Isolation. The patient must be reminded to continue to use appropriate PPE for remainder of a full fourteen (14) days in all social situations and beyond as appropriate.
- ii. **Employees with 'Significant Exposure':** All employees (except those within the vaccine parameters indicated above) will be required to quarantine for a minimum of seven (7) days. During that period,

employees must monitor their symptoms/clinical status and follow up with EHS on day seven (7) as to a determination of whether they can return to work on day eight (8). EHS will contact the employees for this follow up:

- a. If the employee is asymptomatic, a COVID-19 test by PCR will be administered. If the test results are negative, the employee will be removed from Quarantine and may be cleared to return to work;
 - b. If the COVID-19 test by PCR is positive, the employee will continue in Isolation for the requisite period and until there is a negative COVID-19 test result;
 - c. If any employee who was placed in Quarantine develop symptoms at any time, that employee will be required to undergo a COVID-19 test by PCR. If the result of the test is positive, the employee will be required to be isolated as outlined above.
- **Once an employee is eligible to return to work, EHS will e-mail the “Return to Duty” Slip to both the employee and their Supervisor.**

2. EMPLOYEE IS EXPOSED TO COVID-19 THROUGH COMMUNITY EXPOSURE:

1. Employee (except those within the vaccine parameters indicated above) **MUST** remain at home and should contact EHS **and their supervisor, respectively concerning their exposure and resulting absence.**
2. EHS must notify Infection Control and/or the Contact Tracing Team.
3. If exposure is deemed significant by Infection Control or the Contact Tracing Team, the employee may be placed on Quarantine and the procedure as outlined above should be followed.

V. TRAVELING DURING THE PANDEMIC:

SUNY Downstate strongly discourages ANY travel except essential travel during the period of this pandemic. Furthermore, we encourage employees to discuss their travel plans with their supervisor, as it may have an impact on staffing, in the event a quarantine period is warranted upon return.

Although the New York State Travel Guidelines provides for an exemption for health care providers, SUNY Downstate strongly encourages its employees and students (where applicable) to adhere to the following rules and depending on the health status of the persons returning from travel, may be subject to these additional rules:

- a. All employees arriving from outside of New York State (“NYS”) (including international travel):
 - **Periods less than 36 hours:**

- The employee may return to work but should monitor their temperature and for COVID-19 symptoms;
 - The employee should maintain social distancing and wear appropriate PPE; and
 - The employee will not be required to be tested.
- **Periods greater than 36 hours from a state non-contiguous with NYS (i.e. NJ, CT, PA, MA, VT) or international travel:**
- The employee (except those within vaccine parameters indicated above) must quarantine for a minimum of ten (10) days and must have a Quarantine Release Order from the New York State Department of Health; **OR**
 - The employee must undergo COVID-19 testing within three (3) days prior to return to NYS and then must quarantine for four (4) days after arrival in NYS. On day four (4), the employee must obtain a COVID-19 test. If both COVID19 tests are negative, the employee will be able to exit quarantine only after clearance by EHS.
 - If any of the COVID-19 test results in a positive finding, the employee must follow the COVID-19 isolation as outlined above.
 - Employees must use accrued leave for any period of Quarantine and/or Isolation²

VOLUNTARY PCR TESTING: (may resume work if asymptomatic)

Fast track testing: PCR and Antibody testing at EHS, Tuesday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 am.

Testing may be done any other time during EHS Hours: Mon – Fri 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 pm.

- VII. ATTACHMENTS:**
- A. Exposure List**
 - B. Travel Guidelines and Addendum**

² Please note GSEU use accruals as negotiated

VIII. REFERENCES:

NYSDOH HEALTH ADVISORY: QUARANTINE FOR PERSONS EXPOSED TO COVID-19
December 26, 2020

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/12/covid19-health-advisory-updated-quarantine-guidance-12.26.20.pdf>

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Interim Containment Guidance: Precautionary Quarantine, Mandatory Quarantine and Mandatory Isolation Applicable to all Local Health Departments (LHD).

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/03/quarantine_guidance_0.pdf

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-updated-quarantine-guidelines-align-cdc-recommendations>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>

Date Reviewed	Revision Required (Circle One)		Responsible Staff Name and Title
	(Yes)	No	
			Michael Augenbraun (February 2021)

A. Exposure List Template

Role (MD, RN, etc.)	Dept	Contact Number	Regular Mask ✓	N95 Mask	Gown ✓	Gloves ✓	Eye Protection ✓	Maintained distance > 6ft from Index case (Yes/No)	Positive/Index case wearing mask? (Yes/No)	Prolonged close contact (>15 minutes) or Brief close contact (<15 minutes)

B. ADDENDUM³
TO
THE SUNY DOWNSTATE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY TRAVEL POLICY⁴

On December 29, 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced Updated Quarantine Guidelines (“New York State Guidelines”) to align with the updated Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) recommendations updated on December 2, 2020. Under the revised New York State Guidelines, persons exposed to COVID-19 can end their quarantine after ten (10) days without a testing requirement as long as no symptoms have been reported during the quarantine period. After day 10 is reached, all persons must continue to monitor their symptoms through to day 14 and if any symptoms develop they should immediately self-isolate and/or undergo COVID-19 testing. As always, all persons must adhere to all recommended safe behaviors to stop the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to wearing a face covering, practicing social distancing and avoid congregate settings.

The SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Policy is revised to reflect these updated guidelines. As such, the following provisions from the December, 2020 policy is amended as follows:

Section IV: Policy/Procedures/Guidelines:

Beginning November 4, 2020, all persons arriving from outside of New York, including internationally, (except contiguous states) is required to quarantine for a period of **ten (10)** days;

Section IV(1)(d):

If any of the tests has a positive finding for COVID-19, you must remain in quarantine for the remainder of the **ten (10)** day period and follow the guidance of the local health departments and/or the Student and Employee Health Services (“SEHS”)

Section V: Responsibilities

Subsection B: International Travel

All returning travel to New York from international destinations (except for essential employees who must follow the instructions as outlined in A(a)(i)) under the Executive Order 205.1 and 205.2) will be subject to a **ten (10)** day quarantine period from the date you returned to New York. You will be allowed to follow the procedures listed in (VI)(1) and (2) to shorten the quarantine period. During the quarantine period, persons (non-essential employees, faculty, students, contractors and vendors) should take the following steps to monitor COVID-19 symptoms:

Attachment B (7):

7. All non-essential persons who have traveled internationally to any of the Level 2 or 3 travel health notice countries, must quarantine for **ten (10) days**, or test out under (A)(1) and (2) under the Travel Policy and comply with the instructions given to them by the S/EHS.

³ Updated January 25, 2021

⁴ December, 2020

Resources/Links:

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-updated-quarantine-guidelines-align-cdc-recommendations>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>

FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE QUARANTINE/ISOLATION POLICIES

On February 10, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”) announced a change to the quarantine requirements for individuals/persons who have received the two (2) doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. On February 11, 2021, the Governor of New York State and the New York State Department of Health have adopted these recommendations.

*To comply with the above instructions, all individuals who have received their two (2) doses of COVID-19 vaccine **will not be required to quarantine** in the event of an exposure to a known or suspected COVID-19 infected individual, or if they have traveled provided that:*

- It has been at least two (2) weeks since the individual has received the 2nd dose of vaccine; or*
- Ninety (90) days have not elapsed since the receipt of the second (2nd) dose of vaccine; or*
- The individual is not exhibiting any symptoms consistent with COVID-19.*

While this is a prudent recognition of the efficacy of the vaccine, it must be noted that there remain many unknowns about the risk of transmission and contagion of the COVID-19 disease. All persons whether or not they have been exposed to COVID-19, or fully vaccinated, must remember to continue to rigorously observe masking and social distancing requirements. All persons, whether they have been vaccinated or not, who develop symptoms should be evaluated promptly by Employee Health Services or other health care professionals.

Non-vaccinated members of the SUNY Downstate work force will still need to be quarantined following exposure. Vaccinated staff and students who have been exposed to COVID-19, although able to avoid quarantine for the first ninety (90) days after receipt of the second dose of the vaccine, should notify the Contact and Tracing Team at COVID19TestTraceCorps@downstate.edu so their health and those of their contacts can be monitored.