

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Office of the Executive Director – Regents Information Systems  
– Enrollment Services Center

COVID-19 RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE GUIDELINES

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# Returning to the Workplace Guidelines

## Workplace Expectations and Guidance

The SD Board of Regent's policies and protocols for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic are rooted in the safety and well-being of the employees, guests and public we interact with. Employees are expected to comply with policies, protocols, and guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in corrective action.

Thank you for your continued flexibility, as the guidance changes from public health officials, the contents of this document may be updated to comply with new guidelines as well.

## Symptom Monitoring

SDBOR will not implement required screening protocols for employees who return to the worksite. Employees who have been instructed to return to the workplace should self-monitor symptoms. At this time, these symptoms include one or more of the following:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New GI symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell

If you are experiencing these symptoms, or are overall just not feeling well, DO NOT come to work and contact your healthcare provider. Notify your supervisor and develop a plan with them on utilizing sick leave or working remotely if applicable to your situation.

## Symptom Checker

Apple, Inc. and the CDC partnered to develop this online [symptom checker](#) to assist with evaluating your symptoms.

The SD Department of Health also provides this [helpful tool](#) to assist in assessing your symptoms.

## Telehealth Services

To help slow the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan will cover 100% of the cost for Telehealth services for the period of March 16 through June 30. Telehealth services are a convenient and affordable video alternative that can help minimize exposure for others during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you experience symptoms, a video visit can be an excellent way to contact a health care provider conveniently from your own home.

You should contact your health care provider if you have reason to believe you have been exposed to the virus, even if you are not showing any symptoms. Notify your supervisor so that they can assist you in properly assessing the situation.

## High Risk Categories

The CDC has identified that individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 infection. At this time, those at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
  - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medication. Please consult with your physician if you have concerns about being immunocompromised.
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

Employees who are in a high risk category, or have family members who reside in their home that are in a high risk category, and are concerned about returning to work should contact their supervisor to discuss options for an accommodation. Accommodations could include remote work, implementing social distancing measures, development of an alternative work schedule, use of leave, or any other arrangement deemed appropriate.

## Phased Staffing

SDBOR will phase in a return of staff over time in a coordinated process to ensure appropriate social distancing measures. Supervisors will communicate expectations with staff regarding their scheduled return to the office and eventual return to normal operations.

As staffing on-site increases and operations expand, officials will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus, as well as existing policies and procedures to mitigate it. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing may need to be implemented again in accordance with guidance from the SD Department of Health.

## Personal Safety Practices

### Masks

SDBOR will not require the use of face masks for employees as they return to their worksite. However, employees are welcome to wear their personal mask to wear at the worksite if they choose.

### Social Distancing

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Staff at work on-site must follow these social distancing practices:

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people at all times;
- Do not gather in groups of 10 or more;
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

### Handwashing & Office Hygiene

Hand sanitizer dispensers are provided at multiple areas in communal spaces in the office. Antibacterial cleaning supplies will also be provided, please assist in cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that are frequently touched, including cell phones, desk phones, keyboards, remote controls, refrigerators, countertops, and door handles. Cleaning individual work spaces are the responsibility of the employee.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

Cover your mouth with tissues when you sneeze and immediately discard them in the trash.

## Meetings

Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.). In person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state, and federal orders and should not exceed 50 percent of a room's capacity, assuming individuals can still maintain 6 feet of separation for social distancing requirements. During your time on-site, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed with social distancing measures in mind.

## Leaves Available for COVID-19 Infection, Quarantine or Loss of Childcare

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("Act"), enacted on March 18, 2020, provides employees with access to emergency paid sick leave ("EPSL") for certain leave requests related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, there are provisions to provide partially-paid FMLA leave for those who do not have childcare due to COVID-19.

Details are outlined here:

[Department of Labor FFCRA Information.](#)

[SDBOR Employee FFCRA FAQ](#)

If you have questions related to the use of these leaves, please contact your supervisor or human resources office.

## Up-To-Date Information

The following websites will provide you with up-to-date information on COVID-19.

[Covid.sd.gov](https://www.southdakota.gov/covid-19) - A new Department of Health website with up-to-date information on COVID-19 in South Dakota.

[CDC Coronavirus Page - The official CDC page for COVID-19.](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/)

## Close Contact with Person with COVID-19

If you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who is being tested for COVID-19, you should follow the instructions found in the attached "What Should I Do Document". Close contact is defined as spending prolonged periods of time in the same room (more than 5 minutes), direct personal contact (e.g., hugging), contact with respiratory secretions (e.g. cough, sneeze on you), and shared eating/drinking utensils.

### COVID-19 Positive Employee in the Workplace

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 and has been at the workplace, Human Resources will work with the DOH on individual employee or agency issues. Human Resource Managers will give additional direction on those specific issues as they arise.

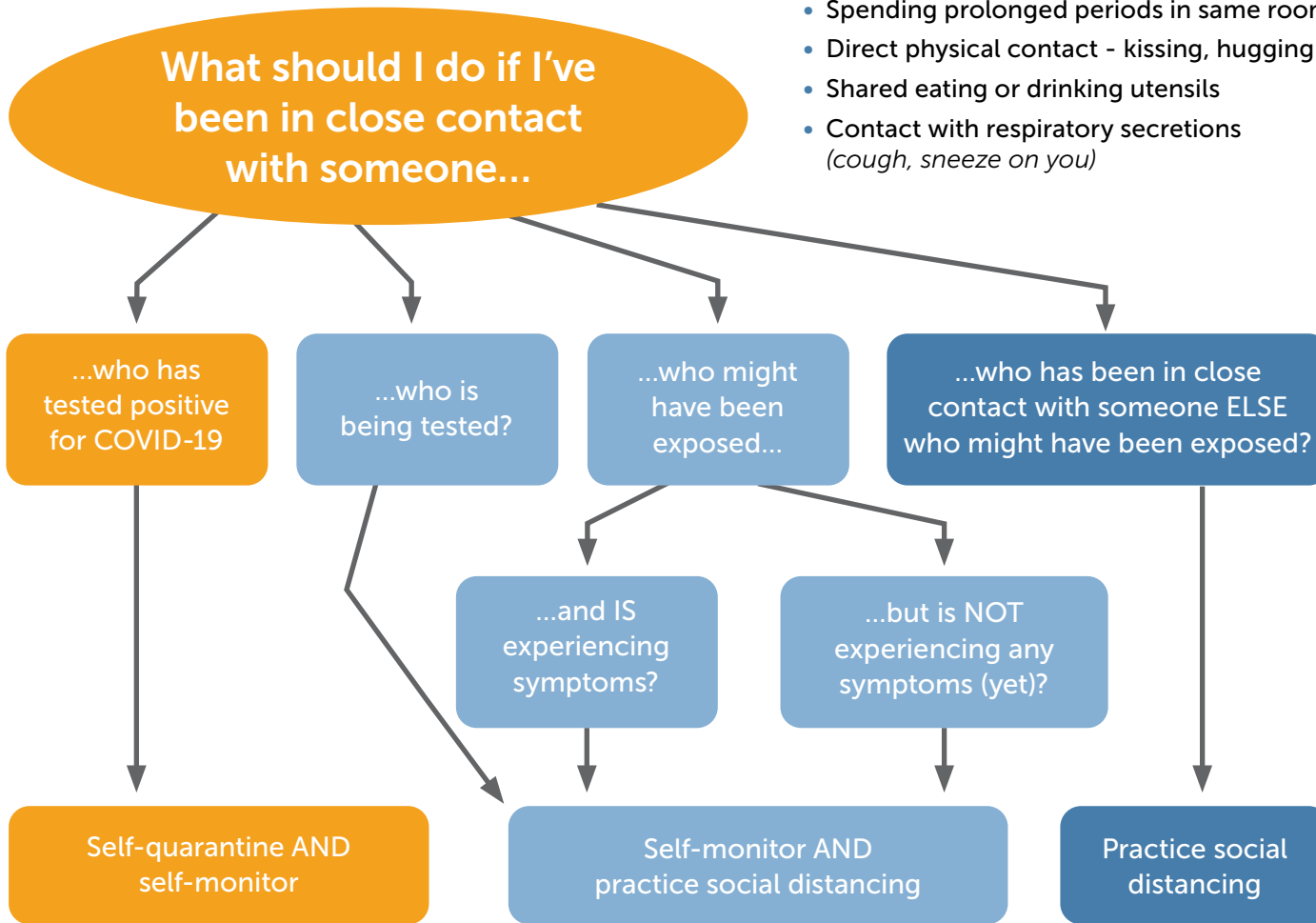
Supervisors can require that employees to go home if they are suspected to be sick. The employee would then be allowed to utilize sick leave if they have available accrual.



What should I do if I've been in close contact with someone...

### CLOSE CONTACT MEANS:

- Spending prolonged periods in same room
- Direct physical contact - kissing, hugging
- Shared eating or drinking utensils
- Contact with respiratory secretions (*cough, sneeze on you*)



### HOW DO I...

#### Self-Quarantine

- Stay home for 14 days.
- Avoid contact with other people.
- Don't share household items.

#### Self-Monitor

- Be alert for symptoms of COVID-19, including a cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell.
- Take your temperature every morning and night and write it down.
- Call your doctor if you have trouble breathing or a fever (100.4°F/38°C).
- Don't seek medical treatment without calling first!

#### Practice Social Distancing

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Don't physically get close to people. Try to stay 6 feet away.
- Don't hug or shake hands.
- Avoid groups of people.
- Be aware of frequently touched surfaces, including doorknobs, elevator buttons, service counters, shared pens, touch screens, steering wheels, and cell phones.

**WHAT IF I HAVE SYMPTOMS?** Call your healthcare provider.

