



## **MEMORANDUM**

Date: April 16, 2020

To: Water Utility Commission

From: Dan Duchniak

Re: Coronavirus Working Conditions

Since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, at the invitation of the City Administrator and the Mayor, I have been working closely with City Department Heads and other key staff to address various workplace issues. The goal has been to apply practices and policies as uniformly as possible across all departments.

The attached policy provides guidance to departments on workplace rules and protocols to be established for employees that may contract or be exposed to COVID-19. The City of Waukesha HR Department created an emergency policy based on CDC guidelines and other authoritative sources. The attached was modified slightly to apply to the Utility.

I will ask that you Ratify acceptance of these protocols to be applied to our Utility.

Please contact me if you have any questions prior to the meeting.

***Recommended Motion:*** Ratify application of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Working Conditions to be followed by Waukesha Water Utility.

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# Waukesha Water Utility

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Working Conditions

April 9, 2020

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### Purpose

Community Transmission of COVID-19 is increasing in the nation and Wisconsin. In response, the City of Waukesha Water Utility has developed these guidelines for use specifically during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic period and is subject to change based on changing conditions of the situation. Following the completion of the pandemic period, all regular Utility policies regarding leaves of absence will be followed and enforced.

In response to the need to continue operations, the Utility has adopted a strategy of social distancing and expanded work from home options during this pandemic. Even with expanded work from home options, many employees will need to report to our facilities in order to provide essential government functions.

### Definitions

**Employee (during COVID-19 Pandemic):** All employees are required to report to work as directed by their supervisor. Reporting to work may be done onsite or through remote access.

**Essential Employee (during COVID-19 Pandemic):** Employees who provide essential government functions include all permanent full time employees. Additionally, all contractors currently working on City/Utility construction projects, and all contractors performing work related to Utility operations, including but not limited to Information Technology consultants and contracted custodial services are considered essential.

**Note:** *Exempt from this list are all seasonal employees, regardless of hours worked.*

**Employee Reassignment:** In an effort to maintain essential services, the Utility may order or reassign personnel to work outside their regular departments during a declared emergency.

**Alternative Work Rotations.** During the period of this emergency, employees may be required to work an alternative schedule that requires different shifts or to be available to work from home, depending on the unique needs of each department.

Employees on an alternative work rotation will continue to receive their full pay during their at home rotation. However, they are required to be ready and available to come in to work, sober and fit for duty, within thirty minutes of being contacted. In the event a staff member becomes ill or is exposed to COVID-19 during their “working” rotation, the entire at home group would take over that scheduled rotation while the other group isolates.

## **I. Recommended Action for Employees with Symptoms of COVID-19**

The single most effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus is to limit exposure to persons infected with this virus. Therefore, employees who are experiencing symptoms consistent with the COVID-19 coronavirus, or have been diagnosed by a health care provider as having COVID-19 coronavirus, should stay home from work and should not go out except to get medical treatment.

Symptoms of COVID-19 coronavirus include fever (Greater than 100.4 F), sore throat, runny nose, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms typically appear 2-14 days after exposure. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed COVID-19 cases.

If an employee develops the above symptoms while at work, the employee will be separated from other workers, will be sent home as soon as practically possible, and will follow the requirements below regarding return to work.

At the time of absence, employees must advise their immediate supervisor whether their absence is due to symptoms of COVID-19 or due to other illness reasons. Supervisor should, as practical, follow up with Critical Employees to determine availability to return to the work force.

Employees who have knowingly come into direct contact with a person who has tested positive for the Coronavirus must contact the Public Health Department immediately.

## **II. Symptom Self-Monitoring**

It is critically important that employees assume personal responsibility for reducing the spread of respiratory viruses by not reporting to work when ill, including if they only have mild symptoms that would not normally cause them to miss work.

The CDC recommends that people who are experiencing respiratory illness stay home until they are free of fever and other symptoms, for at least 24 hours without the use of medicines (e.g., aspirin and cough suppressants).

The Utility may implement procedures for evaluating employees for symptoms of respiratory illness before every shift involving critical utility functions (e.g., direct customer contact, EOC operations, etc.)

## **III. Critical Employees: Isolation, Quarantine, Monitoring Guidance and Return to Work**

At this time, DHS and CDC continue to recommend voluntary home quarantine and active symptom monitoring for all individuals who have a high or moderate risk (see Chart A) exposure to a person with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. As community-level transmission continues to increase in Wisconsin, and exposure to COVID-19 becomes more commonplace, excluding individuals from work who provide essential services such as **utility workers** and other important functions may become impossible. At this time, DHS recommends continuing to evaluate the risk level of all possible COVID-19 exposures, and to abide by quarantine recommendations if resources allow.

If supervisors have determined that staffing shortages among essential employees cannot support routine exclusion from work due to COVID-19 exposure, then staff may return to work with the department following the *Periods of Critical Employee Shortage Guidance* below, and a system of daily symptom monitoring is in place. All employees should stop working and notify

their employer if they develop fever (greater than 100.4 F) or respiratory symptoms including sore throat, runny nose, cough, or shortness of breath.

#### **IV. Periods of Critical Employee Shortage**

According to DHS priorities for COVID-19 testing, health care workers (which the City has expanded to include **Essential Employees**) who have a febrile “influenza-like illness” with lower respiratory symptoms should be tested for COVID-19.

1. If the test is negative, then staff may return to work after the illness has resolved, according to usual best practices, if not quarantined by Public Health.
2. If staff is confirmed as having COVID-19 disease, they must be excluded from work for no fewer than 7 days from symptom onset, and 3 days after fever is resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication.
3. If staff is tested but the test was not processed for results due to lab capacity, staff must be excluded from work for no fewer than 7 days from symptom onset, and 3 days after fever is resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication.
4. Staff with COVID-19 symptoms who are not tested for COVID-19 must be excluded from work for no fewer than 7 days from symptom onset, and 3 days after fever is resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication.

#### **V. Isolation, Quarantine, Monitoring Guidance and Return to Work for COVID-19**

**Isolation:** the separation of a person or group of people known or reasonably believed to be infected with a communicable disease, and potentially infectious, from those who are not infected, in order to prevent spread of the communicable disease.

**Quarantine:** the separation of a person or group of people reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease but not yet symptomatic, from others who have not been so exposed, to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease.

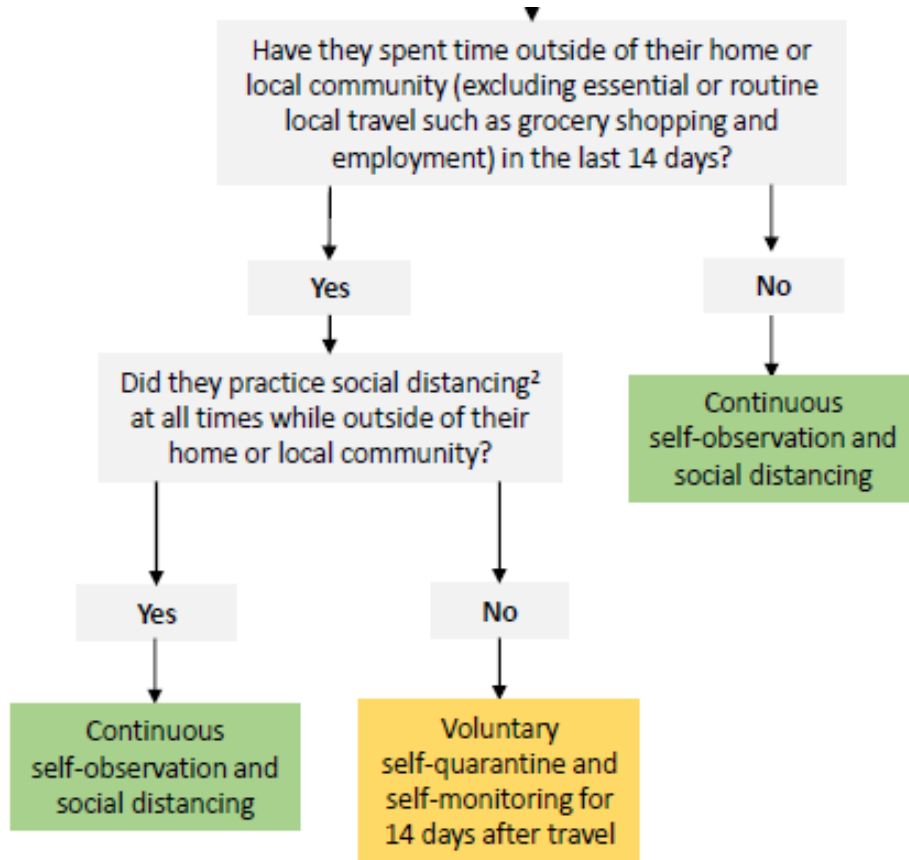
Chart A

	<b>High/ Moderate Exposure Risk (Travel)</b>		<b>High/Moderate Exposure Risk (Home)</b>	<b>Other - Community Transmission</b>
	Traveled to Country with a <u>Level 3 Travel Health Notice</u> .		Exposure identified as a household or close contact, or proximity on airplane of confirmed case.*	Patients w/COVID-19 test results pending w/ no known exposure risks (testing due to clinical suspicion)
Asymptomatic	<i>Action</i>	Self-quarantine/self-monitor, Public Health to help create action plan	Self-quarantine/self-monitor with active follow-up by Public Health	N/A
	<i>Duration</i>	14 days (begins day after last day in Level 3 Country or area with sustained community transmission)	14 days or more (begins day after household contact is symptom free or day after last contact with confirmed case)	N/A
	<i>DX test</i>	NA	NA	N/A
	<i>Release from quarantine</i>	After 14 days unless symptoms develop (then move to symptomatic)	After 14 days unless symptoms develop (then move to symptomatic)	N/A
Symptomatic	<i>Action</i>	Isolation by Public Health, testing required	Isolation by Public Health, testing required	Isolation by Public Health
	<i>Duration</i>	14 days or more	14 days or more	Until results are received
	<i>DX test</i>	Consult physician / Public Health	Consult physician / Public Health	Yes
	<i>Release from quarantine/ isolation</i>	If test is negative, quarantine remains through day 14  If test is positive, must be symptom free for 72 hours <b>AND</b> 7 days since day 1 of onset of symptoms	If test is negative, quarantine remains through day 14  If test is positive, must be symptom free for 72 hours <b>AND</b> 7 days since day 1 of onset of symptoms	If test is negative, resume normal activities  If test is positive, must be symptom free for 72 hours <b>AND</b> 7 days since day 1 of onset of symptoms

\*Identified during Contact Investigations of laboratory-confirmed Cases

\*\*Employees who have contact with individuals with COVID-19 who are in proper PPE are not consider High Risk exposures

## COVID-19 Risk Assessment for Asymptomatic People – Community Transmission



**NOTE:** Employees under voluntary self-quarantine must notify supervisor and complete self-certification form, (Flag for Mission Critical employees do not apply to this chart.

### **VI. Return to Work Requirements**

If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 coronavirus, they will not be allowed to return to work until they meet current CDC guidance for release from isolation from the local Public Health Officer. See above guidance regarding return to work.

Employees are expected to return to work immediately once the above criteria have been met. If the employee chooses to remain at home because they are still not feeling well, all regular Utility and departmental sick leave policies and procedures should be followed.

### **VII. Payroll Considerations**

Until further notice, all **regular** full-time staff should receive their normal pay. Therefore, individuals who are not working because they are on a rotating "administrative leave", will receive their full pay.

This process **does not apply** to temporary and seasonal staff, or individuals who are currently on an approved leave prior to March 30, 2020.

If the Utility determines we are not able to continue to fund salaries as outlined above, there are other resources for employees to utilize including vacation, compensatory time, sick leave (if applicable), and unpaid time.

Departments should strongly consider utilizing Alternative Work Rotations whenever possible.

In additional to current leave balances, effective April 1, 2020, until the end of 2020 when the legislation sunsets, certain employers will be required to provide two new forms of paid leave: **Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Paid Family Medical Leave**. These leaves can only be taken for reasons related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

#### **VIII. Additional Information**

Until further notice, although not specifically addressed in the FFCRA, the Utility is not currently requiring a health care provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to return to work as health care provider offices and medical facilities are *very busy* and will likely not be able to provide the documentation. All other illnesses and injuries will be handled on a case by case basis, depending on the individuals' access to health care providers.