

# COVID-19: Employee Guide to Reporting Illness, Infection and Testing and Employee Privacy



Department of Human Resources

May 1, 2022

This document provides information and protocols regarding:

- general tips on protecting yourself and others from COVID-19 infection;
- employee privacy with respect to illness and health information;
- employee responsibilities for reporting COVID-19-related illness, infection, or testing; and
- frequently asked questions and additional resources.

More information on the University's response to COVID-19 can be found at [www.uwindsor.ca/returntocampus](http://www.uwindsor.ca/returntocampus) If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact:

- 1) Your Supervisor
- 2) Your [Joint Health and Safety Representative](#)
- 3) A member of the Health and Safety team by email at [safety@uwindsor.ca](mailto:safety@uwindsor.ca)

## Protecting Yourself and Co-workers

To ensure the health and safety of yourself and members of the University community, employees are required to follow the protocols established by the University which include:

- Conducting a [self-assessment](#) for COVID-19 each day before coming to work
- Staying home if you are sick and report your illness/absence to your Supervisor per the instructions below.
- Practicing proper hand hygiene & respiratory etiquette:
  - Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
  - Sneeze and cough into your sleeve. If you use a tissue, discard immediately and wash your hands afterward.
- Following local and provincial public health recommendations.
- Maintaining physical distancing from others (minimum of 2 metres distancing from others) where possible.
- Wearing a mask, per the University's [COVID-19 Mandatory Non-Medical Mask Policy](#).

## Employee Privacy

As with other employee illnesses and health information, reasonable measures will be taken to protect the identity of an employee with respect to COVID-19. The University will take appropriate actions to mitigate any possible risks in the workplace. The University has established a COVID-19 Case Response Team, which includes members of Health and Safety, Student Health Services, and the individual's Supervisor and/or Director/Dean. No names or identifying details will be given when information is communicated to other individuals and/or departments outside of this Team.

You may be asked questions to protect health and safety in the workplace, without violating your right to privacy, such as:

- Are you exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19? When did your symptoms start?
- Have you come into close contact with anyone who is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive or suspected case of COVID-19?
- Have you been tested or plan to be tested for COVID-19?
- Has your health care provider or a public health authority asked you to self-isolate or get tested?
- Have you travelled outside of the country in the last 14 days or been in close contact with anyone who has travelled?

- To forward your personal log of work days, building locations, potential close contacts on campus, and procedures/protocols followed.

### Employees with a Positive or Presumed Case of COVID-19

Employees who are exhibiting [symptoms of COVID-19](#), or those with a positive test result (PCR or rapid antigen test) must:

- Stay home and self-isolate, and not come to campus;
- Report your illness/absence to your Supervisor and email the following address: [covid19reporting@uwindsor.ca](mailto:covid19reporting@uwindsor.ca), which will provide you with isolation requirements and information regarding your return to campus;
- Contact your health care provider, Telehealth, or public health authority for additional health information;
- If you have been on campus within 48-hours of symptom onset, or if you did not experience symptoms, from the date of your positive test, forward your record of work days/locations and possible University **close contacts** within that period to [safety@uwindsor.ca](mailto:safety@uwindsor.ca)

**Close contact means:**

- *being less than two metres apart for at least a cumulative duration of 15 minutes in a 24-hour period, within the 48-hour period before symptoms began, or, if no symptoms, the date of the positive test; or,*
- *living in the same home.*

*\* This definition does not apply to those who wear prescribed Personal Protective Equipment.*

- Follow the directions regarding return to campus as outlined in the instruction letter, including notification to your Supervisor.

Please note that reasonable measures will be taken to protect the identity of employees.

If you begin to experience symptoms of COVID-19 while at work:

- Notify your Supervisor of the new symptoms;
- Wear a mask to prevent the potential spread of the virus through respiratory droplets;
- Immediately isolate and distance yourself from others (>2 metres) and move outdoors, if possible;
- Proceed home to begin self-isolation and follow the directions to report your illness as outlined above.

If you believe your COVID-19 infection occurred at the workplace or in the course of employment, an Accident/Incident Report must be completed by you and your Supervisor as best possible. The University's Accident/Incident Report can be accessed at: [www.uwindsor.ca/safety/report-an-accident](http://www.uwindsor.ca/safety/report-an-accident)

### Employees with Close Contact to a Positive or Presumed Case of COVID-19

Employees who are living in the same household as an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19, or with an individual who has symptoms of COVID-19, must follow the instructions below.

**Close contact means:**

- *being less than two metres apart for at least a cumulative duration of 15 minutes in a 24-hour period, within the 48-hour period before symptoms began, or, if no symptoms, the date of the positive test; or,*
- *living in the same home.*

*\* This definition does not apply to those who wear prescribed Personal Protective Equipment.*

- Stay home and self-isolate, do not come to campus;
- Report your close contact by emailing the following address: [covid19reporting@uwindsor.ca](mailto:covid19reporting@uwindsor.ca), which will provide you with isolation requirements and information regarding your return to campus;
- Follow the directions regarding return to campus as outlined in the instruction email, including notification to your Supervisor;
- Contact your health care provider, Telehealth, or public health authority for additional health information;
- Get tested for COVID-19 at an assessment centre as directed by public health authorities, if eligible;

- [Self-monitor](#) daily for symptoms of COVID-19 and if your situation changes (e.g. become symptomatic), report the change by following the instructions above (Symptoms of COVID-19 or Positive Case of COVID-19); and
- Conduct a [self-assessment](#) for COVID-19 prior to returning to campus and on a regular basis thereafter each time that you are required to be on campus.

## Employee FAQs Regarding COVID-19

### *I am concerned about contracting COVID-19 in the workplace. Can I refuse to come to work?*

When you have reason to believe there is a dangerous condition present in the workplace, or your duties present a danger to your health and safety, you have the right to refuse work or certain duties. Employees are to follow the University's Work Refusal process, which can be accessed at [www.uwindsor.ca/safety/workrefusal](http://www.uwindsor.ca/safety/workrefusal)

The first step in the work refusal process is to report the concern to your Supervisor. Supervisors have an obligation to investigate the employee's concerns, and to take all reasonable precautions for a worker's health and safety, without reprisal.

### *I am experiencing a great deal of stress and anxiety about the COVID-19 pandemic. What can I do?*

It is natural for individuals to experience different levels of anxiety and stress under these circumstances. Employees can use the following services that are available for support:

- Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) <https://www.workhealthlife.com/>  
The University of Windsor provides employees with access to Lifeworks , an outside counselling service, to provide professional counselling and information services to staff and their eligible immediate family members.
- [Coronavirus and UWindsor: Mental Health Wellbeing Portal](#)
- [Mental Health and Well-Being Supports and Resources](#)
- Community resources and a listing of local support services available at: <https://www.wechu.org/cv/mental-health>

## Additional Resources

University of Windsor [Return to Campus website](#)

[Windsor-Essex County Health Unit](#)

[Government of Canada Coronavirus information](#)

[Ontario Ministry of Health Coronavirus information](#)

[Public Services Health and Safety Association](#)

**The COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly.**

**These protocols will be updated on an as-required basis to reflect the latest adopted measures.**

## References and Sources Consulted:

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit <https://www.wechu.org/cv/workplaces>

Government of Canada <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/covid-19/rights-responsibilities.html>

Ontario Ministry of Health <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>

Public Services Health and Safety Association <https://www.pshsa.ca/resources/health-and-safety-guidance-during-covid-19-for-employers-of-office-settings>