

# Preventing the Spread of Infection in the Workplace

March 30, 2020

The City of Fond du Lac will take proactive steps to protect our employees during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The City is committed to providing authoritative information about the nature and spread of COVID – 19.

<https://stories.opengov.com/fonddulacwi/published/ksiErY1hd>

The City will ensure clean workplaces, including the regular cleaning of objects and areas that are frequently used, such as bathrooms, break rooms, conference rooms, door handles and railings.

We ask all employees to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of the virus in the workplace. The best strategy remains the most obvious—frequent hand washing with warm, soapy water; covering your mouth whenever you sneeze or cough; and discarding used tissues in wastebaskets.

Individuals who believe they may face particular challenges reporting to work during this emergency should take steps to develop any necessary contingency plans. For example, employees might want to arrange for back-up sources of child care and/or speak with supervisors about the potential to work from home temporarily or on an alternative work schedule.

## Limiting Travel

All nonessential travel is prohibited. Business-related travel outside the City is not authorized until further notice. There will be no official or essential travel outside the continental U.S. or to states where the CDC has determined that widespread community transmission is occurring.

Governor Ever's Safer at Home Order of March 24, 2020 restricts essential travel to the following:

- a) Any travel related to provision of or access to Essential Activities, Special Situations, Essential Governmental Functions, Essential Businesses and Operations, or Minimum Basic Operations. (As spelled out in the Order.)
- b) Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons.
- c) Travel to or from educational institutions for the purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, or any other related services.
- d) Travel to return to a place of residence from outside the jurisdiction.
- e) Travel required by law enforcement or court order, including to transport children pursuant to a custody agreement.
- f) Travel required for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside Wisconsin. Individuals are strongly encouraged to verify that their transportation out of Wisconsin remains available and functional prior to commencing such travel.

A self-quarantine due to personal non-essential travel will not qualify for emergency paid sick leave.

## Staying Home When Ill

It is critical that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing the following symptoms: fever, chills, cough, and shortness of breath or sore throat.

## Requests for Medical Information and/or Documentation

If you are out sick or show symptoms of being ill, it may become necessary to request information from you and/or your health care provider. In general, we would request medical information to confirm your need to

be absent, to show whether and how an absence relates to the infection, and to know that it is appropriate for you to return to work. As always, we expect and appreciate your cooperation if and when medical information is sought.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Labor (DOL) are discouraging employers from requiring medical documentation for sick leave approval. Further, our FMLA administrator, FMLASource, is going to start taking a sworn statement from the employee when they cannot obtain or get in to see a health care provider. The City may accept a sworn written statement from the employee that they cannot get into a health care provider but have been advised over the phone by their doctor to self-quarantine. The City will reserve the right to request medical certification of the leave at a later date.

## **Confidentiality of Medical Information**

Our policy is to treat any medical information as a confidential medical record. In furtherance of this policy, any disclosure of medical information is in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel, and government officials as required by law.

## **For Persons with COVID-19 under Home Isolation**

The decision to discontinue home isolation should be made in the context of local circumstances. Options now include both 1) a time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery (non-test-based) strategy, and 2) a test-based strategy.

**Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms** and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:

1. At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
2. At least 7 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*.

**Test-based strategy** (simplified from initial protocol) previous recommendations for a test-based strategy remain applicable; however, a test-based strategy is contingent on the availability of ample testing supplies and laboratory capacity as well as convenient access to testing. For jurisdictions that choose to use a test-based strategy, the recommended protocol has been simplified so that *only one swab is needed at every sampling*.

**Persons who have COVID-19 who have symptoms** and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:

1. Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
2. Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) **and**
3. Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens).

**Individuals with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms** may discontinue home isolation when at least 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness.

In all cases, **follow the guidance of your healthcare provider and local health department**. The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with your healthcare provider and state and local health departments. Local decisions depend on local circumstances.