

Notification to Employees: Confirmation of COVID-19 in the Workplace

An employee or client within your general work location has become ill with COVID-19. While flu-like illnesses and respiratory viruses are common in Wisconsin and in workplaces at this time of year, the case has been reported, as appropriate. Below is advice from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) about what information to provide you.

If you are not experiencing acute respiratory illness symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing) and are otherwise healthy, you do not need to take any additional action.

If you have a chronic illness, like asthma or diabetes, a weakened immune system or are pregnant, you should consult with your health care provider to determine if additional actions are needed. If in doubt, contact your health care provider for advice.

If you have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, the CDC recommends you should stay home and not come to work until you are free of fever (100.4 degrees or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of a fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). You should also notify your supervisor that you are sick and stay home. If you regularly work in a health care setting, including health services staff, support staff, and security staff, you must remain home until you are symptom-free for 24 hours and seven days have passed from the onset of symptoms. These instructions are critical if we are to stop the illness from spreading.

Consistent with CDC and Wisconsin Public Health recommendations, normal agency requirements to provide a doctor's note to justify an extended absence have been temporarily suspended for an employee's absence due to respiratory viruses or flu-like symptoms, *unless* the employee is currently required to provide medical verification for all absences. If you are currently required to provide medical verification for all illnesses, you will be required to supply a note from your medical provider for your absence from work for flu-like symptoms. If your medical provider refuses to see you and/or to provide a medical note for your absence related to flu-like symptoms, you must inform your supervisor of this immediately upon your return to work. You must also provide information about your contact with your health care provider or attempted visit, including the clinic, medical provider's name, and time of your visit or phone call.

Individuals who have flu-like symptoms should not be harassed, discriminated, or retaliated against. Negative behavior of this sort will not be tolerated.

As a reminder, remember the best way to prevent or spreading a virus is by:

- Washing your hands or using a hand sanitizer regularly
- Covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your shirtsleeve (using your hand is less helpful as you may unintentionally pass a virus through contact)
- If you develop flu-like symptoms, *go home or stay home.*

Wisconsin's COVID-19 Resource page may be found at: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/covid-19.htm>. This page includes information about the illness, its symptoms, and precautions you can take to keep yourself healthy. Additionally, DOC employees may also find more information about DOC and COVID-19 on myDOC by following this [link](#).