Title: General Requirements (Mandatory Reporting, Return to Work, and Employee Rights)  
Effective Date: October 13, 2020

Number: COVID-19 EMERGENCY STANDARD-01

Date Last Reviewed/Revised: August 25, 2022

Date of Next Review:

I. Authority

The Occupational Health and Safety Act and Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A requires employers to provide a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

II. Policy Statement

The County shall comply with all applicable federal and state regulations governing employee health and safety related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including, but not limited to employer guidelines issued and/or enforced by the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (“VOSH”) Program, the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (“DOLI”), the Virginia Department of Health (“VDH”), and any applicable Virginia Executive Order or Order of Public Health Emergency.

The standards and requirements outlined in this policy are applicable to all regular and temporary County employees. Further, Department Directors shall ensure that this policy is also enforced with respect to all temporary employees hired through a staffing agency, contractors/sub-contractors and the companies by whom they are employed, as well as interns, volunteers and other non-County employees working within a County workplace. Individuals in these categories shall collectively be referred to as “other covered individuals.”

Failure to follow the standards and requirements outlined in this policy shall subject an employee to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Cases of contractors or subcontractors refusing to comply with the requirements of this policy shall immediately be reported by the Contract Administrator to the Department of Finance and Budget-Procurement Division.

III. Definitions

A. “Close contact” is being inside of six feet of another for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, with or without a face covering.
B. "Confirmed COVID-19" means a person, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, who has tested positive for SARS-CoV-2.

C. "COVID-19 positive and confirmed COVID-19" refer to a person who has a confirmed positive test for, or who has been diagnosed by a licensed healthcare provider with, COVID-19.

D. "COVID-19 test" means a test for SARS-CoV-2 that is: (1) Cleared or approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) or is authorized by an Emergency Use Authorization (“EUA”) from the FDA to diagnose current infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus; and (2) Administered in accordance with the FDA clearance or approval or the FDA EUA as applicable.

IV. Employee Self-Monitoring and Self-Reporting of Symptoms or Positive Test

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that has spread throughout the world. The virus that causes COVID-19 and has many variants is thought to spread mainly from person to person, primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths, noses or eyes of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another.

COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild to severe illness. Persons with COVID-19 can also be asymptomatic (experiencing no symptoms). As COVID-19 and its variants spread in our community, employees should be aware of the symptoms which may appear 2-14 days after exposure. These symptoms may include, but are not limited to:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell
- Gastrointestinal problems, including nausea, diarrhea, and vomiting
- Inability to stay awake/fatigue

The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 are defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and/or DOLI and updated as more information is learned about the virus. Employees and other covered individuals are encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Self-monitoring is especially important when an individual has reason to suspect possible exposure to COVID-19 or is experiencing signs of an oncoming illness.
Employees and other covered individuals who are not feeling well shall not report to the worksite, regardless of the types of symptoms they may be experiencing and shall not return to their physical work location until they meet the guidelines in Section IV (D), Return to Work, below.

Employees and other covered individuals, regardless of vaccination status, shall utilize the following procedures to report symptoms of COVID-19 and/or a positive COVID-19 test result:

**A. Procedure for Self-Reporting Symptoms of COVID-19:**

1. **Symptoms Develop While at Home:**
   Employees and other covered individuals who develop symptoms of COVID-19 shall not report to the worksite. Employees shall follow the department’s normal call-in procedure and shall utilize this procedure to report that the employee is unable to come to work due to symptoms of COVID-19. Other covered individuals shall follow the applicable protocol to report absences and shall report the absence is due to experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

2. **Symptoms Develop While at Work:**
   Employees or other covered individuals who develop symptoms of COVID-19 while at work shall immediately inform their supervisor or another member of management. This notification can be made by email, phone call, or in person. If in person, the employee or other covered individual shall maintain six feet of distance from the supervisor or manager while providing notice. It is recommended that the employee wear a face covering and maintain six feet of distance from all other persons until he/she has left the worksite. If the employee or other covered individual is well enough to transport him/herself home, he or she shall immediately exit the worksite.

**B. Procedure for Self-Reporting a COVID-19 Positive Test Result:**

1. Employees, temporary employees, volunteers, and interns who receive a positive test result for COVID-19 and who were present at the worksite within the previous 2 days from the date of the positive test or when symptoms began, whichever was earlier, or who are scheduled to report to the worksite, shall immediately notify their Department Director or supervisor of the positive test result regardless of whether they are asymptomatic or experiencing symptoms.

2. Contractors, sub-contractors, and other vendors who receive a positive test result for COVID-19 and who were present at a County work location within the previous 2 days from the date of the positive test or when symptoms began, whichever was earlier, or who are scheduled to report to a County work location, shall immediately notify the County’s Contract Administrator for the applicable vendor contract.

3. Employees, temporary employees, volunteers, and interns who voluntarily participate in County sponsored testing for COVID-19 shall be required to release
the results of the test to the County’s Department of Human Resources (“DHR”) as a condition of participation in such testing.


A. How to Handle a Report of Symptoms of COVID-19

1. Symptoms Reported while the Employee/Covered Individual is Home or Otherwise Off-Site:

   a. Managers and supervisors who receive a report that an employee or other covered individual is unable to report to work due to experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 shall ask the employee when the symptoms first began; the last day at the worksite; whether the symptoms were experienced when last at work; and whether the employee or other covered individual had any close contact with other employees or covered individuals, beginning two (2) days prior to becoming ill.

   b. Managers and supervisors should encourage employees and other covered individuals who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 to contact their health provider or obtain a COVID-19 test from a testing provider or by using an At Home Testing kit.

   c. Managers and supervisors are responsible for explaining the return to work procedures to employees/other covered individuals as outlined in this policy. Managers and supervisors should consult with the DHR on any questions they are unable to answer.

2. Symptoms Reported while the Employee/Covered Individual is at the Worksite

   a. The manager or supervisor shall determine whether the employee is well enough to transport him/herself home. If the employee/covered individual is well enough to transport him/herself home, the manager or supervisor shall request that the employee exit the building immediately, wear a face covering and avoid others upon exiting.

   b. Employees or other covered individuals who are unable to transport themselves home due to their symptoms shall be asked by management to wait in an office or conference room with a closed door. If the employee does not appear to need emergency care, management shall ask the employee or covered individual to contact a family member or friend to transport him or her home and should assist with making contact if necessary. If the employee or other covered individual appears to need emergency care, management shall immediately call 911 and request an ambulance. The manager making the call shall inform the dispatcher that the employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
c. Supervisors and managers who receive a report that an employee or covered individual has developed symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, shall attempt to ask the employee/covered individual when the symptoms first began, whether the employee/covered individual had any close contact with other employees/covered individuals beginning 2 days prior to becoming ill through their last day at the worksite. These questions can be asked in a follow-up phone call to the employee/covered individual after he or she has exited the workplace. This information may be recorded and maintained in a secured departmental file. If the employee or covered individual later reports that a positive test within the following days, this information can be used to complete Attachment A, Report of COVID 19 Symptoms or Positive Test.

d. Managers and supervisors should encourage employees/covered individuals who are unable to report to work due to experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 to contact their health provider or obtain a COVID-19 test from a testing provider or by using an At Home Testing kit.

e. Managers and supervisors are responsible for explaining the return to work procedures to employees/other covered individuals as outlined in this policy. Managers and supervisors should consult with the DHR on any questions they are unable to answer.

f. DHR may arrange for cleaning of impacted spaces within the affected department, as necessary and pursuant to CDC guidelines, through the Department of General Services (“DGS”) by contacting the Director of DGS and the DGS Facilities Services Administrator. Where the worksite is a facility that the County does not own, DGS shall notify the building/facility owner. When the need for cleaning arises after core County business hours, and it is not feasible to wait beyond 24 hours, departments may report requests for cleaning to DGS by calling 703-737-8181 and also advise DHR of this request as soon as practical.

B. How Employees Should Report Their Positive COVID-19 Test Result

1. Management (or the Contract Administrator in the case of a contractor or sub-contractor) shall ask the employee/other covered individual the following:
   a. if he or she is experiencing symptoms,
   b. when he or she first began experiencing symptoms,
   c. the employee’s last day at the worksite,
   d. if the employee was experiencing symptoms when last at work, and
   e. whether the employee had any close contact with another employee while at work during the 2 days prior to being tested or the start of symptoms through their last day at the worksite.

2. Management (or the Contract Administrator in the case of a contractor or sub-contractor)
shall record the answers on Attachment A, Report of COVID-19 Symptoms or Positive Test, and forward the form to the Employee Relations Section of DHR by following the directions listed on the form. The employee/other covered individual shall be designated on the form as “Confirmed Positive for COVID-19.”

3. If the employee is in the workplace when he or she receives notification of a positive COVID-19 test, the manager or supervisor shall request that the employee/other covered individual immediately leave the workplace and wear his or her face covering and avoid others upon exiting. The manager or supervisor shall follow-up with a phone call to the employee to request the required information needed to complete Attachment A, Report of COVID-19 Symptoms or Positive Test.

4. In the case of an employee reporting a positive test result, management shall also notify the department’s internal Human Resources Liaison and ensure that a copy of this policy is sent to the employee.

5. Management shall notify its own employees who may have been exposed, within 24 hours of discovery of their possible exposure, while keeping confidential the identity of the individual known to be infected with COVID-19 in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other applicable federal and Virginia laws and regulations; and in the same manner, notify other employers whose employees were present at the work site during the same time period. The Contract Administrator shall be responsible for making the notification to any vendor impacted.

6. DHR may arrange for cleaning of impacted spaces within the affected department, as necessary and pursuant to CDC guidelines, by contacting the Director of DGS and the DGS Facilities Services Administrator. Where the worksite is a facility that the County does not own, DGS shall notify the building/facility owner. When the need for cleaning arises after core County business hours, and it is not feasible to wait beyond 24 hours, departments may report requests for cleaning to DGS by calling 703-737-8181 and advise DHR of this request as soon as practical.

C. Return to Work

An employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 may have written guidance from his/her healthcare practitioner detailing when a return to work may be possible. According to the most recent guidance from the CDC, people with COVID-19 who are positive or suspected positive may end isolation and return to work when one of the following standards are met:

1. **Symptom Based Return to Work Standard:**
   a. No fever for at least 24 hours (that is, one full day of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers) AND
   b. Other symptoms have improved (for example, when an individual’s cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND
   c. At least 5 days have passed since the individual’s symptoms first appeared (or 5 days since specimen was collected if the individual remained asymptomatic)
   d. If asymptomatic after 5 days, continue wearing a face covering around others for a
minimum of 5 additional days.

2. **Consultation with Healthcare Practitioners or a VDH public health professional:**
   An employee who was symptomatic, but never tested for COVID-19, can provide a note from a healthcare practitioner or a VDH public health official stating that his/her belief that the employee is not sick with COVID-19, is not contagious, and clearing the employee to return to work.

3. **Special Circumstances:** An employee who is severely ill with COVID-19 may need to stay home longer than 5 days and up to 20 days after symptoms first appear. Further, an employee with a weakened immune system may require testing to determine when he/she can be around others. Employees in these specific situations are encouraged to talk with their health care provider regarding ending isolation based on the results of testing.

4. Department Heads responsible for overseeing public safety and/or other 24-hour essential services may request approval from the County Administrator by written memorandum in order to maintain the 10-day isolation and quarantine requirement for legitimate operational concerns (e.g., inability to wear face coverings for the entire shift).

VI. **Self-Reporting as a “Close Contact” of COVID-19 Positive Individual**

Employees who have been informed that they have been identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 positive individual shall wear a face covering around others for 10 days following the close contact. If the close contact is a household member, then the employee must wear a face covering for 10 days following the last day of isolation of the household member.

A. **Procedure for Self-Reporting as a Close Contact of a COVID-19 Positive Individual**

1. An employee or other covered individual may learn that he or she is a “close contact” of a person with COVID-19 from the Health Department, the Department Supervisor, DHR, and/or the person for whom he or she is a Close Contact. Employees and other covered individuals who are informed that they are a “close contact” of a COVID-19 positive individual shall wear a face covering for 10 days around others following the close contact.

2. If the employee or other covered individual is at work when he or she is notified of being a close contact of a COVID-19 positive individual, the employee or other covered individual shall immediately inform the supervisor or other member of management. This notification can be made by email, phone call, or in person. If the employee is not experiencing symptoms, he/she will be permitted to remain at the worksite but must wear a face covering around others for 10 days from the date of close contact, or for 10 days following the last day of isolation if the positive individuals is a household member.
B. Management Procedures for Handling a Report of a “Close Contact”

1. Attachment B to this policy outlines various scenarios to assist the Department and Employee Relations in assessing the circumstances and the steps that need to be taken after an employee notifies his/her supervisor of a close contact.

2. Managers and supervisors should encourage employees and other covered individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 to contact their health provider or obtain a COVID-19 test from a testing provider or by using an At Home Testing kit.

VII. Employee/Covered Individual Quarantine and Isolation Requirements

Attachment B to this policy, Employee Scenarios, Risks, and Recommendations, outlines additional guidance related to when an employee/covered individual is required to stay home from work under various COVID-19 situations. This Attachment is updated frequently and available on the County intranet. Questions related to this attachment shall be directed to DHR.

Employees who experience COVID-19 like symptoms during the 24-48 hours after inoculation and have no known exposure to COVID-19 can return to work once symptoms resolve.

Employees or covered individuals who are identified as having close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual must monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms for 5 days after the exposure and continue to follow all COVID-19 mitigating recommendations, such as wearing a face covering and practicing physical distancing. They are also encouraged to get tested for COVID-19 5 days after exposure.

VIII. County Sponsored COVID-19 Employee Testing

A. From time to time the County may offer County-sponsored, voluntary COVID-19 testing to County employees and volunteers. Further, County departments, in consultation with DHR, may develop testing requirements for certain job classifications of employees.

B. As of the effective date of this policy, employees, temporary employees, volunteers, and interns who voluntarily participate in County sponsored testing for COVID-19 shall be required to release the results of the test to DHR as a condition of participation in such testing.

C. Departments that establish required testing requirements for job classifications within the department shall develop a written Standard Operating Procedure (“SOP”)
detailing the impacted job classification and when testing will be required. The Department Director shall submit the SOP to DHR for review and approval prior to implementation.

IX. COVID-19 Related Medical Records

All medical records created by the County in accordance with this policy shall be designated as “confidential” and shall be maintained by DHR outside of the Official Personnel File and in a secure location with controlled access. Employees shall have access to their own COVID-19 disease related exposure forms and medical records.

X. Face Coverings

A. Face coverings are not currently required in the workplace unless the employee is returning to work after a positive test and becoming asymptomatic in accordance with this policy, or has been identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 positive individual. The County complies with CDC guidance related to face coverings, which requires employees who work in a healthcare setting to wear a face covering under certain conditions, such as when they are in contact with patients.

B. Employees may voluntarily wear a face covering in the workplace at his or her discretion. All personal face coverings must comply with County and department level dress and appearance policies and must be free from potentially inappropriate, offensive, or political language, images, and graphics. When using a personal face covering, it is recommended that employees choose solid colored material with no visible markings.

C. Face coverings are not PPE and shall not be used in place of County issued PPE under any circumstances. PPE is intended to be worn by employees who must provide services to individuals who are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, may have close contact with such individuals, or may be exposed to contaminated spaces as part of their job duties. Employees who are assigned these types of job duties are issued appropriate PPE by the County as necessary.

D. Face coverings are not intended to allow employees who are showing symptoms of an infectious illness, such as the cold, flu, or COVID-19, to report to work. Employees who are showing signs of illness shall not report to their work location with or without a face covering. Employees who are sick or who suspect they may be sick must stay home. If an employee becomes sick at work, he/she should alert his/her supervisor and be sent home immediately.

Responsible Department/Division: Department of Human Resources

This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.