COVID-19 Testing, Reporting, Case Management, and Contact Tracing Protocols

I. Purpose
The following COVID-19 testing, reporting, case management, and contact tracing protocols are to identify and notify affected faculty, staff, and students to prevent the spread of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2.

II. Scope and Application
The subsequent COVID-19 testing, reporting, case management, and contact tracing protocols apply to all Northwestern faculty, staff, and students.

These protocols established by the University do not supersede those required by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Cook County Department of Public Health, or the Evanston Health and Human Services Department. These public health departments are responsible, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) interim guidance, for conducting COVID-19 case investigations and contact tracing, including notifying contacts of potential exposure.

III. Responsibilities
A. Faculty and Staff
i. Required to report if they test positive for COVID-19 or if they develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19. If faculty and staff test positive for COVID-19 or are exposed to an individual who is known or suspected to have COVID-19, they must notify the University immediately by filing an online report or by contacting the University’s Director of Environmental Health and Safety.
ii. In the event of a positive or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis, faculty and staff are required to cooperate fully with the University’s self-isolation, contact tracing, and notification protocols, in alignment with the CDC and IDPH.
iii. Must complete the daily health survey prior to leaving their residence so their department/school/unit knows the faculty/staff completed the survey and are cleared to report to campus.

B. Students
i. Required to report if they test positive for COVID-19 or if they develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19. If students test positive for COVID-19 or are exposed to an individual who is known or suspected to have COVID-19, they must provide notify the University immediately by contacting Health Services at (847)-491-8100.
ii. In the event of a positive or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis, students are required to cooperate fully with the University’s self-isolation, contact tracing, and notification protocols, in alignment with CDC and IDPH.
iii. Must complete the daily health survey prior to leaving their residence so Health Services knows students completed the health survey and the student can attend classes and activities held on campuses.
C. Departments/Schools/Units
   i. Ensure all faculty, staff, and students are provided and complying with the subsequent COVID-19 reporting, case investigation, and contact tracing protocols.
   ii. Assign at least one designate, depending on the unit size, to assist with the University’s contact tracing and notification processes.
   iii. Coordinate all efforts through the COVID-19 Response Team prior to sharing any contact tracing information.
   iv. Receive and review daily health surveys to confirm:
       a. Faculty and staff that reported to work completed their health survey and are cleared to return to work.
       b. Faculty and staff who did not complete their health survey and are not cleared to report to work as sent home immediately until the health survey is completed or they seek medical guidance.
   v. Faculty and staff who have not completed the daily health survey will be notified of University policy.

D. Risk Management
   i. Manages the digital infrastructure for surveillance and contact investigation.
   ii. Manages, reviews, and updates this document, per regulatory and guidance revisions.
   iii. Director of Environmental Health and Safety reviews all faculty and staff COVID-19 self-isolation reports.
   iv. Receives daily health surveys and audits for compliance.
   v. Reviews the list of all faculty and staff who have reported signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19, and assigns a case manager to the individual.
   vi. Assigns a case manager to an individual if contact tracing is deemed required following their COVID-19 diagnosis.
   vii. Coordinates cleaning and disinfection activities in a specific location with Facilities following confirmation of a positive case.
   viii. Reviews the list of all positive cases of COVID-19 for faculty, staff, and students to determine if there are multiple positive cases in the same locations. If so, these will be reported to University Senior Leadership and state/local health authorities.

E. Human Resources
   i. Receives initial reporting of positive COVID-19 cases and self-isolation reports.
   ii. Manages self-isolations, and provides notification to individual’s managers of self-isolation releases via a Return to Work Self-Certification.

F. Case Managers
   i. Receive all reports of self-isolation and positive cases.
   ii. Validate positive COVID-19 cases, and confirm each individual’s signs and symptoms experienced.
   iii. Identify any potential direct contact with individuals in the Northwestern community, and determine if contract tracing efforts are required.
   iv. Notify Risk Management or Student Affairs of a positive COVID-19 case so cleaning and disinfection activities can be coordinated, if necessary.

G. Contact Tracers
i. Individuals identified by their departments, schools, or units are required to complete the Johns Hopkins University COVID-19 Contact Tracing online course.

ii. Communicate with contacts of those diagnosed with COVID-19 to notify them of potential exposure.

iii. Provide disease and transmission information.

iv. Ask about signs/symptoms and underlying medical conditions.

v. Provide the University’s policy and instructions for self-isolation and information pertaining to returning to work/class.

H. Health Services (i.e., the Clinical Consultant)

i. Provides medical care and support to students diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspected exposure.

ii. Provides clinical support to the case investigation team.

iii. Provides consultation for complex cases.

iv. Report positive cases of students, faculty, and staff to the local health department.

IV. Requirements

A. Testing

i. The University is establishing a comprehensive testing system to rapidly assess, test, and contact trace faculty, staff, and students who report symptoms of COVID-19 and for those identified through contact tracing.

a. **Students:** Health Services will provide COVID-19 testing for students and athletes. Health Services will directly inform students of test results and delineate an appropriate strategy for care based on the result of their test.

b. **Faculty and Staff:** Faculty and staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 while on campus, or who have direct contact with a member of the Northwestern community who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be advised of how to access testing for infection from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. In some cases, such as when access through the usual provider is not available, a referral from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety may be made to Health Services. Upon receipt of a referral, staff and faculty can contact Health Services at (847) 491-8100 to schedule a test and receive direction on the process to receive the results of the test. Health Services does not provide medical care for faculty and staff other than testing service for referred cases. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety will develop a plan for any needed self-isolation and return to work with the involved individuals.

ii. Positive cases will managed and coordinated with Illinois Department of Public Health, Chicago Department of Public Health, Evanston Health and Human Services Departments, and applicable Northwestern-related units.

iii. See **Appendix A** for approved testing locations.

B. Case Management

Case managers will:

i. Inform departments/schools/units of individuals who are authorized to return to work. The terms for faculty, staff, and students to end their self-isolation vary based on the following scenarios:
a. The person thinks or knows they had COVID-19 and had symptoms:
   1. You can end your self-isolation after 3 days with no fever, your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved, and 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
   2. Alternatively, if you have no fever, your respiratory symptoms have improved, and you receive two negative COVID-19 tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart, you can end your self-isolation earlier than the 10 day period.

b. The person tested positive for COVID-19, but did not have symptoms:
   1. If you continue to have no symptoms, you can end your self-isolation after 10 days have passed since you tested positive for COVID-19.
   2. Alternatively, if you receive two negative COVID-19 tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart, you can end your self-isolation earlier than the 10 day period.

c. The person has been around someone who tested positive for COVID-19:
   1. As it can take up to 14 days to develop symptoms, this person should self-isolate for 14 days after exposure to the person who tested positive for COVID-19, or for whatever duration their doctor tells them to self-isolate for.

   ii. Alert Human Resources of positive COVID-19 or self-isolation cases so they can provide available benefit information or actions to the employee.

   iii. For Students: Provide medical follow-up.

   iv. For Faculty and Staff: Review cases and approve individual to return to work (i.e., on campus or remotely).

   v. See Appendix B for more guidance for Case Managers.

C. Contact Tracing

Contact tracing and case management are fundamental activities that Northwestern conducts as a result of infection with COVID-19. As a community comprised of individuals whom live in differing cities and counties, the University will promptly conduct contact tracing, in conjunction with local and state public health departments, to prevent the further spread of SARS-CoV-2 within the Northwestern community.

   i. Contact tracing will be conducted for close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 patients; a close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before the onset of their symptoms (or, for asymptomatic persons, 10 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

   ii. Contacts will be educated about COVID-19 symptoms to monitor for and be instructed to promptly report any new symptoms to public health authorities and seek medical care when necessary.

   iii. Contacts tracers and case managers will explain and reinforce the measures needed for close contacts and confirmed cases to practice isolation from other individuals to further spread of the virus.

   iv. Northwestern community members identified as close contacts are not allowed to return to campus until their self-isolation is complete (based on the absence of symptoms, or testing, or have received written clearance to return to work from their primary health care provider or physician overseeing their treatment.
v. See Appendix C for more guidance for Contact Tracers.

V. Privacy
All medical records will remain confidential, including COVID-19 testing results and those identified during the contact tracing process.

Illinois state law requires known COVID-19 cases to be reported to local health authorities in a confidential manner.

VI. Notifications
After an individual self-reports a positive COVID-19 case or reports a self-isolation, a notification will be sent to the Office of Human Resources. Once a positive case is confirmed, the individual’s supervisor will be notified of one of the following:
   i. Their direct report is on leave of absence or
   ii. Their direct report is self-isolating while working remotely.

After the individual receives approval to return to work, their supervisor will be notified of their return date.

Once contact tracers have identified individuals who may have been exposed to someone who is known or suspected to have COVID-19, a notification will be sent to the potentially exposed individual(s), their supervisor(s), and the Office of Human Resources – see Appendix B for exposure notification template.

VII. Regulatory Authority and Related Information
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Cook County Department of Public Health
Evanston Health and Human Services Department
Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)
Northwestern University COVID-19 and Campus and Updates

VIII. Contact
For questions, concerns, or additional information, please contact:

**Dr. Robert Palinkas**, Executive Director, Health Services
(847)-491-8100
robert.palinkas@northwestern.edu

**Gwen Butler**, Director, Environmental Health and Safety
(847)-491-4936
gwen.butler@northwestern.edu.
Appendix A – COVID-19 Testing Locations

Depending on each individual’s insurance and/or location preference, the following are approved COVID-19 testing locations, should it become requested or necessary:

1) Northwestern University Health Services
   Searle Hall – 633 Emerson St.
   Evanston, IL 60201

2) Northwestern Medicine Immediate Care
   1704 Maple Ave., Suite 100
   Evanston, IL 60201

Additional Illinois community-based testing locations can be found here.
Appendix B – Case Manager Checklist

The following checklist is to aid case managers in assisting the University with potential positive COVID-19 cases:

_____ Approve University-provided testing for faculty and staff, as needed, and work with Health Services to coordinate COVID-19 testing.

_____ Validate every positive COVID-19 case received, and confirm the individual’s signs and symptoms experienced or if they were asymptomatic (i.e., did not experience any signs or symptoms).
  - For Students: Provide medical follow-up.
  - For Faculty and Staff: Review the case, and approve individual to return to work (i.e., on campus or remotely).

_____ For Faculty and Staff: Alert Human Resources of positive COVID-19 or self-isolation cases so they can provide available benefit information or actions to the employee.

_____ If an individual has a confirmed case, identify any potential direct contact with individuals in the Northwestern community, and determine if contract tracing efforts are required; if they are, assign a contact tracer to the case.

_____ So cleaning and disinfection activities can be coordinated, if necessary:
  - For Students: notify Student Affairs, and
  - For Faculty and Staff: notify Risk Management.

_____ Certify individuals’ to return to work, and inform their department/school/unit of authorization to return to work.
## Appendix C – Contact Tracer Script

The following script will aid contact tracers in having an efficient, productive, and pleasant conversation while performing contact tracing efforts on behalf of the University:

**Introduction:** Aims to introduce yourself, establish credibility/build rapport, verify contact information, and address confidentiality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intro</th>
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| • May I speak with [respondent name]?
| • Hello, this is [your name]. I am a Contact Tracer with Northwestern University, calling for [respondent name].
| • I am following up with you to discuss an important health matter. This call is private and intended to assist you with this matter. Is now a good time to talk privately? If not, what time works best for you?
| • If you are not available now, let's schedule a time to talk. We have some important health information for you and want to ensure you can get the referrals and resources you may need, and answer questions that you may have. |

**Verifying Identity**

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<th>Verifying Identity</th>
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| • It is important for me to ensure I am speaking with the right person. What is your full name and date of birth, please? I have [birth month and birth date] – can you please confirm the year? And I have [address street name] – can you please confirm the rest?
| • Before we get started, I would like to ensure the information we received is correct. Please spell your full name. And what name do you go by? |

**Reason for Call**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Call</th>
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| • It has come to our attention that you may have recently been exposed to COVID-19.
| • Has anyone already talked to you regarding your possible COVID-19 exposure? If so, who? Some of the early symptoms of COVID-19 can look similar to other illnesses, and sometimes, people have no symptoms. You may have been exposed by someone who had no idea they were sick.
| • In order to stop COVID-19 from spreading in the community, we follow-up with people who have been exposed and work with them to ensure they get care if they need it. We also ask them to watch for symptoms and stay separate from others so they don’t spread it by accident, if they start to get sick.
| • This type of information can be overwhelming for many people. We want to work with you to help you get the care you may need.
| • [if asked] The name of the person who tested positive is confidential. I cannot tell you their name, just like I cannot share your personal information with others.
| • I would like to review some important information and questions with you so we can provide you with support and work together to stop the spread of COVID-19 within the Northwestern community. |

**Confidentiality & Privacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confidentiality &amp; Privacy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Before we go into detail, I want to ensure you understand everything we discuss is confidential. This means your personal and medical information will be kept private and only shared with those who may need to know, like the Offices of Human Resources and Risk Management. What questions do you have about your privacy/confidentiality?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Other</th>
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<tr>
<td>• What questions can I answer for you before we start?</td>
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</table>
**Collecting Locating and Demographic Information:** Aims to verify demographic and locating information; establish the best way to reach the contact; obtain information on residence, work, and emergency contact numbers.

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<tr>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>If it’s okay with you, I’d like to start with a few questions to ensure the information we have is correct and find out the best way to contact you.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Locating and Contact Information | • What is your home address?  
• Who else lives with you?  
• What is the best number for me to reach you? |
| Work | • What department, school, or unit are you in?  
• What is your supervisor’s name and email address? |

**Health Information and Assessing Disease Comprehension:** Aims to gain insight regarding patient’s knowledge of COVID-19; provide disease-specific information; assess potential COVID-19 symptoms and underlying health conditions; and make referrals for medical care, as appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>I would like to take a few minutes to talk with you about the virus, check in on your health, and discuss how to keep you as healthy as possible and support you during this time. How does that sound?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Symptoms of COVID-19 | • COVID-19 can cause a variety of symptoms. Some COVID-19 symptoms can seem like a common cold, and others are more severe, and sometimes people have no symptoms. Please let me know if you have had any of the following symptoms and when they started:  
  o Fever (above 100.4 °F)  
  o Cough  
  o Diarrhea/GI  
  o Headache  
  o Muscle ache  
  o Chills  
  o Sore throat  
  o Vomiting  
  o Abdominal pain  
  o Nasal congestion  
  o Loss of sense of smell or taste  
  o Malaise  
  o Fatigue  
  o Shortness of breath or difficulty/trouble breathing*  
  o Persistent pain or pressure in the chest*  
  o New confusion*  
  o Inability to wake or stay awake*  
  o Bluish lips or face*  

*Emergency Warning Signs – persons with these symptoms should be referred for emergency medical care.  
• [If patient states any of the emergency warning signs, refer them for emergency medical attention immediately!]
| If you have any of these symptoms, have you gone to see the doctor/ER/health care provider? |
| Did your doctor/nurse/health care provider test or diagnose you with COVID-19? What type of test did you receive? What were your test results? |
| How are you feeling now? |
| [If no to symptoms] It is good that you have not noticed any symptoms yet. It can take between 1-14 days for COVID symptoms to show up, and in some instances, people with COVID-19 do not show any obvious symptoms, but they can still spread the virus. We don’t know yet if you have the virus or not. Let’s talk about some other risk factors for COVID-19 and then we can talk about next steps. |

### Underlying Health Conditions and Other Risk Factors

- Some other health conditions may impact how COVID-19 affects the body. Sometimes we may need to do extra monitoring for people who have other health conditions to ensure we can get them help if they need it.
- Be sure to chat with your health care provider if you have any of the following: chronic lung disease, moderate-to-severe asthma, heart conditions, obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, or a health condition that affects your immune system, such as cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, HIV or AIDS, prolonged use of corticosteroids and other medications that can weaken the immune system.

### Testing for COVID-19

- [If the respondent has already been tested for COVID-19, skip this section.]
- It is important to go in for testing as soon as possible. When will you be able to go for testing?
- A case manager will confirm if testing will be provided by the University. If not, we can also provide recommendations of other testing locations.

### Reviewing Quarantine Recommendations and Resources

Aims to discuss parameters and importance of quarantine recommendations, assess patient’s concerns and resources to enable safe and healthy quarantine, and cooperatively identify potential areas for support and referral.

### Quarantine Recommendations

- Now, I’d like to talk with you about home quarantine, review the recommendations, and identify what you may need to support you and keep you, your family, and other household members healthy. How does that sound?
- [If you don’t know if respondent has COVID-19 or not]:
  - Since we don’t know yet if you will develop COVID-19, you will need to self-quarantine, meaning stay at home, for <XXX> days or until [date]. You should not go to work or out into the community to run errands or attend events. Ideally, you should stay in a separate part of the house from others who live with you, preferably in a bedroom by yourself, and use your own bathroom that no one else uses during this time.
  - There are a number of preventive measures that you can put in place to protect your family and other household members, such as: wiping down shared spaces with appropriate cleaning products, keeping a separate set of dishes, silverware and glasses available for your use.
### Assessing Concerns

- What concerns do you have about the situation that I just described?
- What would be helpful for you to better understand or remember the instructions about home isolation?

### Health Monitoring and Responding to Changes in Health Status

Aims to cooperatively establish a plan for daily monitoring of health status and discuss the importance and develop a clear plan to access medical services, should the need arise.

### Intro

Let’s talk about setting up daily check-ins in order to monitor your health by taking your temperature every day and keeping track of how you feel. There are a few things that we can provide to help you monitor your symptoms.

### Monitoring Agreements & Tools

- Some of the more basic items to help you monitor your symptoms and keep you and those living with you safe include a washable cloth face covering, gloves, thermometer, 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer, soap, EPA-registered household disinfectant.
- Monitor your symptoms daily

### Responding If Symptoms Develop

- If you develop any of the symptoms we discussed earlier, you should reach out to your primary care provider.
- Sometimes people with COVID-19 can have complications. If you have any emergency warning signs (including trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face) or any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you, please call your medical provider or go to the emergency room right away.

### Other

This was a lot of information, what questions did this raise for you about COVID-19?

### Conclusion: Aims to confirm check-in agreements, answer remaining questions, and set stage for follow-up.

#### Check-in, Questions and Agreements

- We have talked about several topics today. I want to take a few minutes to check in on how you’re feeling and discuss our agreements.
- So, our daily check-in starts tomorrow. What questions do you have about the time and monitoring your symptoms that we discussed?

#### Acknowledging the difficulty and keeping the door open for contact.

- I just want to check-in to ensure you know how to reach me if you have other questions or concerns after we get off the phone. My name is spelled `<insert name>`, and my phone number is `<insert phone number>`.
- Either my colleague or I may reach out to you to check-in to see if you are ok or whether you’ve connected with the other services we talked about today. They will also protect your privacy. I just want to confirm the best number to reach you is `<repeat `best contact number’ provided by patient>`.
- I can’t thank you enough for talking to me and helping us stop the spread of COVID-19 within the Northwestern community. I know this is a very difficult time for you and your family, and we truly want everything to go well for you.
- Before we hang up, I just want to check on what additional questions you may have for me?
Appendix D – Sample Exposure Notification

Dear [insert first and last name],

We are writing to inform you that on [insert date], a staff member/faculty member/student/resident who works/lives at [insert location] tested positive for COVID-19. The staff member/faculty member/student/resident has been self-isolating off-campus since [insert date]. We wish our colleague a speedy recovery. You have been identified as someone who has been in contact with, or in close proximity to, the individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. In accordance with University policy and guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), you are required to self-isolate and complete the self-isolation report on Northwestern’s Coronavirus/COVID-19 website, and you should not return to campus until [insert date – add 14 days to self-isolation date].

Symptoms of COVID-19 include a fever (above 100.4 °F), coughing, and difficulty breathing. If you have symptoms that could be COVID-19 related, contact your health provider or pursue care at an urgent care center. If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, please contact your department head or operational lead (Associate Dean, Associate Vice President (VP), Assistant VP, or VP) and myself at [insert email address]. In addition, fill out a second self-isolation report online, and check the box indicating you have a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis.

We understand this announcement will cause concern. The health and well-being of our community is Northwestern’s top priority. Please contact me should you have questions.

Please take care of yourself and your family.

Sincerely,

[insert signature]