



## COVID-19 in the Workplace

As the GVSU community begins returning to campus, the COVID Assessment Team continues to monitor cases and provide outreach to keep our community safe and robust. The following information is being shared to help guide responses to positive COVID-19 cases in the workplace setting.

### Key Terms

*Isolation* = The practice of separating people infected with the virus (COVID-19 positive) from people who are not infected.

*Quarantine* = The practice of keeping someone who has been – or who might have been – exposed to COVID-19 away from others.

*Close contact* = Generally, a close contact is a person who was within 6 feet of a person infected with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes, with or without a mask, over the course of 24 hours.

*Fully vaccinated* = Two (2) weeks after the final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

*Release date* = The last full day of a person's 10-day isolation or quarantine period. They should stay home until they are released by the local health department or by GVSU on behalf of the Kent and Ottawa county health departments. A person can return to activities the day after their release date.

### Roles and Responsibilities

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, has COVID-19 symptoms or is in quarantine due to close contact, **employees** must:

- Report their positive test, symptoms, and/or exposure, on their daily self-assessment.
- Stay home and contact their supervisor to discuss virtual work options, if possible, or utilize paid leave.
- Get tested and isolate if they have not already tested positive and develop symptoms, whether they are vaccinated or not.

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, has COVID-19 symptoms, or is in quarantine due to close contact **supervisors** must:

- Inform the employee that they must complete their daily self-assessment and report their positive test, symptoms, and/or exposure.
- Discuss plans for virtual work, if possible, or use of paid leave.
- Remember that positive cases must remain confidential (see guide on next page).

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 or has COVID-19 symptoms, the **COVID Assessment Team (CAT)** will:

- Call and email the positive individual to provide isolation information, resources, and conduct contact tracing.
- Identify contacts who should quarantine.
- Contact close contacts and other exposed individuals to verify exposure and vaccination status, and provide information about quarantine.

## Guidelines for COVID-19 Scenarios

Individuals who have **COVID-19 symptoms** should stay home until their symptoms improve and they are fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g. acetaminophen [Tylenol]). They should also get tested as soon as possible, whether or not they are vaccinated, since vaccinated individuals can still get COVID-19.

Individuals who test **positive for COVID-19** will be required to isolate for 10 days, starting with their first day of symptoms or their test date, if they have no symptoms. Isolation is required whether or not the individual is vaccinated.

Individuals who are identified and confirmed as **close contacts** will have different requirements based on vaccination and symptom status:

- *Not fully vaccinated individuals with no symptoms* must quarantine for 10 days from their last exposure and get tested 5-7 days after they were exposed.
- *Fully vaccinated individuals with no symptoms* will not be required to quarantine but should wear a mask for 14 days or until they test negative for COVID-19. They must get tested 3-5 days after exposure and get tested again as soon as possible if symptoms develop.
- *Exposed individuals with symptoms*, whether vaccinated or not, must get tested as soon as possible and isolate immediately. They will need to stay in isolation for 10 days from their exposure, regardless of their test results.

Individuals who share workplace space but **do not meet close contact/quarantine criteria** should monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after their last potential exposure and get tested if any symptoms develop. They may get tested at the GVSU Surveillance site at any time.

**All individuals** should follow [GVSU guidelines](#) and complete their daily self-assessment. This is particularly important to monitor symptoms and, if isolated or quarantined, allow the COVID Assessment Team to send a release letter.

To discuss any additional concerns or questions, please contact Kersten O'Brien (GVSU COVID Assessment Team lead) with any questions by calling 616-331-5422 or by emailing [covidassessment@gvsu.edu](mailto:covidassessment@gvsu.edu) or [obrikers@gvsu.edu](mailto:obrikers@gvsu.edu).

## Supervisor Guide

### For the COVID Positive Employee/Student Employee

*When an employee brings you the news:*

1. Be empathic. Even if the person has no symptoms, they are likely to be anxious about what might happen or whether they might have spread the virus to their family or coworkers.
2. Clearly communicate that they can count on you and the team to be supportive.
3. Ask the employee to leave work and head home, if they are at work when they find out they're positive.
4. Provide the number for the GVSU 24/7 COVID call center, (833) 734- 0020, in case they have further questions regarding their medical care and the COVID Assessment Team, (616) 331-9565, if they have further questions about isolation and next steps.

*Inform the employee:*

- That the COVID Assessment Team (CAT) will contact them to provide information and ask with whom they have come into close contact with during their infectious period. They must answer this call and participate in these efforts.
  - While supervisors may also ask the positive person whom may need to quarantine and notify other employees, the CAT conducts university contact tracing and this is not supervisors' responsibility.
- That the CAT will inform the individual of their last day of isolation and they must share this date with you to make plans to return to the workplace.
- Whether remote work is an option and discuss plans, if they are well enough to work. If remote work is not an option, discuss utilizing paid leave.

### For Other Employees in the Department

- The CAT will ask employees who are identified as close contacts to discuss their need to quarantine with their supervisor to determine whether remote work or paid leave may be utilized.
- Maintain confidentiality by not disclosing the person who tested positive.
  - “We have been informed that you may have been exposed to someone in the department who tested positive for COVID-19. If you are identified as a close contact and need to quarantine, you will be contacted by the GVSU COVID Assessment Team.”
- Encourage employees who are not identified as close contacts, but who are concerned of potential exposure, to monitor for symptoms for 14 days and get tested if any develop. They may seek testing at any time, but are not required to quarantine.
- Reinforce that all employees must complete their daily self-assessment, report any symptoms, and follow-up as instructed.

### For the Office

Contact custodial services at (616) 331-3000 to request a deep clean of the area where the individual worked.

To discuss any additional concerns or questions, please contact the COVID Assessment Team with by emailing [covidassessment@gvsu.edu](mailto:covidassessment@gvsu.edu).