

RESPONDING TO COVID-19 IN THE WORKPLACE PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

To guide CARL response to an incident of possible COVID-19 exposure in the workplace.

STATEMENT

CARL will work to achieve a workplace that follows all precautionary measures identified by applicable governmental bodies and public health authorities to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

PROCEDURE

If at any time during the assessment process the employee's symptoms appear life-threatening, call 9-1-1.

Employee Responsibilities

If an employee identifies that they have developed [symptoms](#) similar to those of COVID-19, they must immediately notify the *Executive Director or Manager, Administration and Programs* so necessary steps can be taken.

The employee must provide pertinent information regarding their exposure to the workspace, other employees, and third parties as guided by the Government of Canada's [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Your rights and responsibilities as an employee](#) and any other relevant information.

If an employee is well but has a family member at home with a confirmed case of COVID-19, they should notify the *Executive Director and Manager, Administration and Programs* and not present themselves to the CARL office to reduce the spread.

Management Obligations and Responsibilities

If an employee reports that they present symptoms similar to COVID-19, certain management actions will be taken. The following is guidance based on Universities Canada and University of Ottawa policies and procedures.

Attempt to Place the Employee at Ease

Do not presume when an employee feels unwell that they have COVID-19. Communicate to the employee that all necessary precautions are to be taken to ensure that any potential risk is mitigated.

Offer the employee any available resources, such as [self-isolation instructions](#) and testing locations, and ensure they feel comfortable disclosing information required to properly assess the risk of possible exposure to

others. Make the employee aware of their right to privacy and that they are not required to disclose any medical or personal information not relevant to determining possible exposure to others.

Isolate the Employee

If the employee is unable to return home immediately, request that the employee remain in their office with the door closed. The employee can also go to the boardroom with the door closed. Ensure that the area where the employee is isolated leaves enough space (at least two meters) between the manager or supervisor and the employee. Where possible, use teleconferencing equipment or physical barriers when communicating with the employee. CARL will provide a surgical mask to the employee to be worn until the employee leaves the office area.

Assess Symptoms and Determine Possible Exposure

Once the employee is safely isolated, assess any symptoms the employee has experienced using the [Employee Screening Questionnaire](#) and the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#) and determine when they first experienced such symptoms. Figure out how long the employee worked with the symptoms or whether there are any other additional factors which could explain the symptoms, such as allergies.

Make the employee aware of their right to privacy and that their privacy will be protected.

Have the employee provide as much information as available to determine the possible exposure to employees and other third parties, including:

- Whom the employee associated with while in the office;
- Any workstations and equipment the employee used;
- Any common areas the employee visited, including restrooms and break areas;
- Any third parties the employee interacted with, including stakeholders, suppliers, and visitors; and
- Any areas the employee visited outside their normal scope of work.

Help the Employee Leave Work

If the employee drove themselves to work, instruct them to go home immediately and self-isolate. If the employee took public transport, the employee should be returned home safely, avoiding the use of public transportation.

Manage Return to Work

Employees will be permitted to work remotely during the isolation period, after taking the necessary time (sick leave) to rest and recover from the symptoms developed.

Employees are not to return to work until a public health authority advises it is safe to do so. The quarantine period will likely last a minimum of 14 days or

until a negative test result is obtained. For more information on self-isolation instructions, please see the [Ottawa Public Health](#) website.

The employee should inform the *Executive Director and Manager, Administration and Programs* once he or she has been cleared to return to work.

Additional Measures

If an employee or third party who has been in the workplace notifies CARL of a positive test for COVID-19, it is important to gather the same information as identified above under Assess Symptoms and Determine Possible Exposure.

Exposed employees are to self-isolate and follow the guidelines provided by the relevant public health authorities and report to the organization when they have been cleared for return to work.

Upon notification of a positive test for COVID-19, the *Executive Director or Manager, Administration and Programs* will follow public health guidelines, some measures may include:

- Conduct a risk assessment of the possible exposure to other employees, customers, and third parties by the affected person.
- Communicate the risk to any person identified as possibly exposed and encourage them to take precautions to protect themselves and others while monitoring themselves for symptoms.
- Provide information and support to affected or possibly affected employees during periods of self-isolation.
- Ensure that any workspace, common area, or other location possibly infected are properly cleaned per public health guidelines.
- Identify tools or other equipment that could have been infected and ensure they are properly cleaned per public health guidelines
- Review policies, procedures, and protocols in place to determine whether there are any improvements that can be implemented to better mitigate against future risks.
- Report any confirmed cases to the relevant public health department for further investigation.

GUIDELINES

Should there be any differences in the procedures described in this policy and with public health, public health guidelines and policies shall prevail.

REFERENCES

Ottawa Public Health, [Self-Isolation Instructions for Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[COVID-19 Employee Screening Questionnaire](#)

Ontario Government, [COVID-19 self-assessment](#)

Ontario Government, [COVID-19: Stop the Spread](#)

[Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#)

DEFINITIONS

N/A

FORMS

N/A

APPROVAL

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