

From: Human Resources <Human_Resources@cwa-union.org>

Date: March 4, 2020 at 6:42:59 PM EST

To: Human Resources <Human_Resources@cwa-union.org>

Subject: COVID-19 Pandemic Protocols for CWA Employees - PLEASE READ

Dear CWA Employees:

As the novel coronavirus, a.k.a. COVID-19, outbreak continues to expand, so have all of our concerns. As of March 4, 2020, the total number of COVID-19 cases confirmed or presumed positive in the United States is still low -- just north of 100 total cases. Of these, there have been 9 fatalities, with 7 of these concentrated in a single nursing home, as health authorities have emphasized that the fatality rate is higher among the elderly and those with underlying health problems. It is likely that the number of cases will increase so it is important to plan for a variety of scenarios.

At this early stage of the outbreak in this country the best thing to do is stay informed and be prepared to alter plans when needed. CWA is committed to doing what we can to keep CWA employees safe by instituting workplace policies and guidance to reduce the risk of infection. We want a workplace where employees feel free to communicate their health and safety concerns without fear of reprisal or negative impacts on pay or employment. We are vigilantly evaluating the situation daily and will continue to discuss contingency plans to be able to continue the work of the union without jeopardizing the health of employees. We will issue new instructions or recommendations in real time as the conditions change and will communicate the information to you.

The below protocols are based on the current situation with COVID-19. They are being implemented with respect to this current outbreak only, on a non-precedent-setting basis, and will be lifted and/or updated as the situation evolves.

CWA Internal Protocol

What specific safety measures are in place to prevent infection while at work?

We plan to provide updates on information about COVID-19 and visual reminders of how to minimize your risks, including through posters provided by the Centers for Disease Control.

Employees should follow a number of precautions when it comes to avoiding and containing infection, as outlined below.

At this point in time there are several, common sense precautions that can be taken to reduce the risk of becoming ill with COVID-19 or of spreading the virus to others. Those precautions include:

- Know the symptoms of COVID-19: fever, cough, and shortness of breath. The symptoms seem to begin 2 to 14 days after an exposure.
- If you develop symptoms, call your health care provider for advice rather than stopping by their office where you may infect other patients and the providers themselves.
- Notify HR and your supervisor if you are ill or if someone you live with has been confirmed as having COVID-19.
- If you have had a known exposure to someone who has been confirmed to have COVID-19 or is quarantined, self-quarantine for 2 weeks.
- As the situation evolves, depending on local conditions, it may become important to avoid crowded settings, and, if you must be in a crowded setting, reduce your time there.

Use basic hygiene and social distancing precautions, including:

- Stay home if you are sick. If you have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, follow the CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf> If you are unable to confirm whether you have COVID-19, but you do have upper respiratory infection symptoms, do not return to work unless you have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol. It is especially important to clean your hands before eating food or touching your face. Frequent hand washing or use of hand sanitizer can cause your hands to become very dry or cracked, so use lotion to keep your hands moisturized. Soap and water remain the best method for cleaning in part because of the mechanical action of rubbing your hands. There are health concerns about chemical additives in hand sanitizers, so use it when soap and water are not available.

- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, or eyes, especially if your hands have not been cleaned.
- Cover your coughs or sneezes with a tissue or cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve. Dispose of tissues in no-touch receptacles. Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with people who are ill.
- Avoid shaking hands.
- If you have been wearing gloves, wash your hands after removing them because they may have been contaminated.
- Keep frequently touched common surfaces or objects in the workplace clean, especially in break rooms.
- If you can, avoid using co-workers' phones, computers, offices, work tools, or equipment.
- Minimize group meetings by using email, video conferencing, or phone. If a group meeting is unavoidable, avoid close contact and meet in a well ventilated space.
- Limit unnecessary visitors to the workplace.

For staff who travel:

- At this stage, as we attempt to do our part to contain or slow down the spread of the virus, do not engage in non-essential travel. Non-essential travel is travel to meetings that may be conducted through other means, such as telephone or web video. In those cases, telephone or internet should be used. If you have a question about whether a particular travel assignment is essential or not, consult with your supervisor.
- CWA-sponsored meetings or events that require people to travel will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be canceled or postponed, particularly in these early stages of containment/slowing efforts.

CWA will also communicate with non-CWA tenants in shared locations about any concerns.

Is there a contact tracking process in place?

If working for CWA, we are suggesting you use your Google calendar for meetings with invitations to the meeting. These invites will provide information about individuals who may have had contact for work purposes in a relevant period. If there is a confirmed case, we can alert others to be on the lookout for symptoms. This information can be shared if requested by public health authorities. CWA will follow appropriate confidentiality requirements, i.e., names of infected employees will not be disclosed to other employees as part of contact tracking.

Is there a confirmed case reporting protocol or process?

All employees are encouraged to use the incident tracking form [\[CLICK HERE FOR INCIDENT TRACKING FORM\]](#)

Do you have a business/work contingency plan in case of a required shutdown?

If a work location needs to be temporarily shut down, employees will work from home if possible. If you need your CWA laptop to work from home, you may wish to bring it home each evening in case you are told not to report to work the next day.

Each Department/Vice President will report to Ameenah Salaam whether there are employees who can't work from home but must report to the office to do essential work. We will discuss options to stagger reporting time to minimize contact.

What safeguards are in place to protect employees, including customer-facing employees (e.g., locals, represented employer locations such as call centers, retail stores, airports, healthcare centers etc.)?

Staff are encouraged to utilize the most safe method to get their work done. This may include utilizing the telephone, conference calls, or zoom-video conferencing where practical in lieu of in-person meetings for the time being. A key to prevention is to limit potential exposure.

Are the District/HQ teams trained on the protocols?

They will be trained as soon as possible. CWA will utilize the current fire monitors in HQ/District Offices. Monitors will receive information on best practices and serve as a point of contact for the floor/office for COVID-19 update conference calls in the case CWA needs to communicate news and policies as things evolve. Monitors will be encouraged to post signs and any other communication to assist in prevention of spreading the virus.

How will payment of employees be handled in case of shutdown?

CWA will pay affected employees until they are cleared to return to work, as work will continue from home if possible. If necessary, payroll will be run remotely so that employees will continue to be paid.

How will payment of employees be handled in case of employees with coronavirus or who are quarantined due to coronavirus exposure?

Coronavirus infection or quarantine will be covered by sick leave policies. If employees do not have enough days of sick leave to cover the duration of their symptoms/infection, then CWA will extend their sick days, without penalty, to cover the length of their symptoms or quarantine. Accordingly, if you are

symptomatic with suspected or confirmed coronavirus, or quarantined due to exposure, you should stay home. If you run out of sick leave, additional sick leave will be granted to you until you are able to return to work (24 hours without a fever and without using fever-reducing medication, or expiration of the quarantine period).

How will attendance absences/occurrences be handled as a result of any of the incidents above?

We have established an upfront disciplinary exemption for coronavirus-related absence instances similar to an FMLA exemption. Fraudulent use is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

How has the above information been communicated to the employee unions' leadership?

CWA is distributing these responses to all staff unions on March 4, 2020, in addition to a conference call to discuss drafts of this information held on March 4, 2020 at 2:00 pm ET.

How has the above information been communicated to the employees?

CWA is distributing these responses, including the best practice precautions described above, to all employees on March 4, 2020 following a meeting with employee unions.

CWA will send priority updates and human resources information through email, floor monitors/safety teams and conference calls, as appropriate.

CWA will instruct managers to advise employees of the sick leave, pay and prevention protocols.

Every CWA employee's union and/or supervisor have been informed about this process. Should you have specific questions, feel free to contact either your union or supervisor.

Adherence to these protocols will help us all to get through these events with as little disruption to your work and family life as possible.

CWA will remain available to discuss with you or your staff union, as appropriate, further issues or concerns that arise regarding these protocols or processes, particularly as events or unique individual circumstances change. We will continue monitoring the situation and evaluating the needs of the organization and will update you on how and when these measures will be lifted or changed.

Thank you for your cooperation in advance.

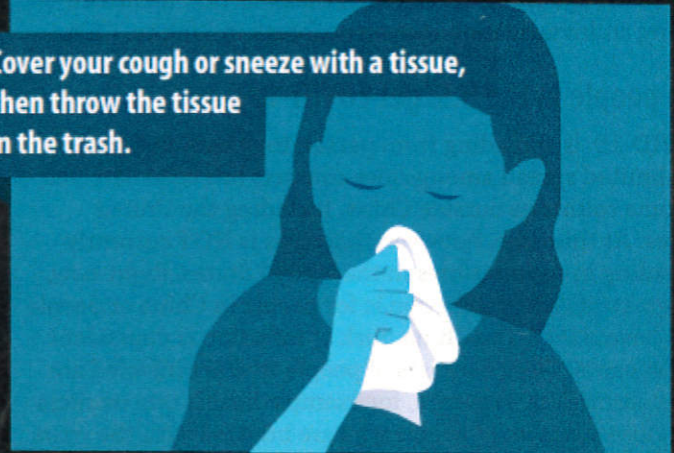
STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

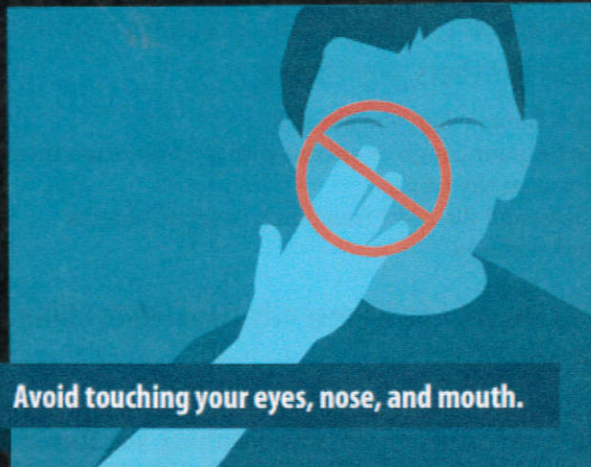
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19

What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in China, and limited spread among close contacts has been detected in some countries outside China, including the United States. At this time, however, this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure, for example health care workers and close contacts of people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but now it seems to be spreading from person to person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some diseases are highly contagious (like measles), while other diseases are less so. At this time, it's unclear how easily or sustainably the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

These include

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently traveled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

