

## Supervisor FAQ – Phased Return to Work

**Q1.** What should I tell my staff member if they indicate that they have failed their health assessment?

- a. Refer employee to the [Reducing Pandemic Transmission Among Employees Guidelines](#) and remind them of the times/criteria that must be satisfied before returning to work.
- b. Advise them to contact Human Resources to determine what kind of leave they may use for any time away from work.
- c. Instruct employee to seek the advice of their medical provider.
- d. Suggest that the employee ask their medical provider for a referral to get tested for COVID-19. Whatcom County Health Department is now advising testing for anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

**Q2.** Who should be informed if I have a staff member report that they failed their daily health assessment?

*Please notify Human Resources and your department head.*

**Q3.** What should I do if an employee reports that they have tested positive for COVID19?

*If the employee learns that they have COVID-19, they must report this to you and you in turn must report this to HR. The employee may choose to report this directly to HR and bypass you. This information is confidential but may trigger action on our part (contact tracing of any staff members the employee have been in close and prolonged proximity to, deep cleaning of a library building, etc.). We will follow the guidance of the Whatcom County Health Department and the [Reducing Pandemic Transmission Among Employees Guidelines](#).*

**Q4.** What if my staff member reports they aren't feeling well, but the symptoms are not consistent with COVID or the symptoms are something they regularly experience (i.e. migraine)?

*They should follow regular procedures for reporting their absence and take regular sick leave, if available. They may return to work once their symptoms have resolved.*

**Q5.** If a staff member fails their assessment, and their symptoms cannot be attributed to something else can they use the FFCRA sick time (Emergency Paid Sick Leave)?

*The answer is yes, but they have to be "seeking a diagnosis" and request the leave using the [EPSL Sick Leave Request Form](#).*

**Q6.** What should I tell my other staff, if an employee reports that they have failed their health assessment?

*We want to retain employee confidentiality as much as possible. You can tell them that the staff member off work today, and out of an abundance of caution, will be following the return*

*to work guidelines in the Reducing Pandemic Transmission Among Employees procedure (and therefore not returning to the office/library immediately). This could mean that they are experiencing symptoms, or that they have had exposure, etc. and retains the employee's confidentiality.*

- Q7.** What if one of my part-time employees who has another job reports that their coworker at the other job is ill and being tested? Should they still come to work?

*Inquire if the employee had close and prolonged contact – generally described as within 6 feet and for 30 minutes or more – with their coworker, particularly if one or both individuals were not wearing a face covering. If so, the safest course of action would be to wait for the results of the coworker's test before reporting to work. If there was not close and prolonged contact, the employee may report to work as normal, following regular safety precautions.*

- Q8.** If an employee starts to feel sick with COVID-like symptoms during their shift, or they start to feel symptoms shortly after being at work, do we tell their coworkers they may have been in contact with? Or would we wait for them to be tested?

*This is similar to the situation of an employee failing their health assessment. We want to retain employee confidentiality as much as possible. However, work groups are fairly small currently, and so it may be obvious to other staff that are working in the location that their coworker is going home. If this is the case, you should tell other staff present that the staff member is going home, and out of an abundance of caution, will be following the return to work guidelines in the Reducing Pandemic Transmission Among Employees procedure (and therefore not returning to the office/library immediately). It would be helpful to ask the ill employee which employees that they have been in close contact with so far that day (and the previous 1-2 days if they have been at the worksite), so that we have those names documented in the event that the ill employee later tests positive and we need to notify staff. You can assure staff that if there is a confirmed case, they will be notified of possible exposure. Please notify Christina Read and your department head if someone goes home ill during their shift.*

- Q9.** The EPSL request form requires the employee to certify that they are unable to work or telework in order to claim EPSL. Does this mean that an employee who initially claimed EPSL, but is now feeling better and just completing their 10-days isolation following the onset of symptoms may not work from home?

*Work from home may be considered in this situation, with pre-approval from the employee's supervisor, where there is demonstratable work that can reasonably be accomplished remotely, and the tools and technology are available in the remote location. An employee may not take EPSL and claim work hours for the same time, but may take EPSL to supplement their work hours if they are unable to telework their full number of hours.*

- Q10.** A staff member will be traveling to a small family event in the mid-west with other family members from other parts of the country. When that staff member returns, they feel strongly

that they should self-quarantine out of an abundance of caution for their co-workers, and, if we're in Phase 3, out of an abundance of caution for patrons. However, they would like to be able to work from home and would have work they could do to cover some of their hours. Would this be permitted? What leave options would be available to the employee?

*The CDC does not make a recommendation for quarantine in this scenario, however, I appreciate the employee's desire to be cautious, and we would accommodate the employee if they wish to voluntarily quarantine. Work from home may be considered in this situation on a case-by-case basis, with pre-approval from the employee's supervisor, where there is demonstratable work that can reasonably be accomplished remotely, and the tools and technology are available in the remote location. The employee would not be eligible for EPSL unless advised to quarantine by a medical provider or by federal, state, or local health officials. They would be able to use their regular sick leave and/or vacation/personal leave if available.*

- Q11.** A staff member had a friend visit one week ago. They did it properly, using PPE, keeping socially distant, and cleaning after the visit. The friend lives with her brother, who has now tested positive for the virus. The friend hasn't been tested, yet. The question is whether or not to take any extra precautions at this point.

*WCLS looks to official guidance for this type of situation. The CDC indicates that if an individual has been around someone who was identified as a close contact to a person with COVID-19 (the friend), they should closely monitor themselves for any [symptoms of COVID-19](#). They do not need to self-quarantine.*