

Coworker tests positive for COVID-19, stay vigilant

An asymptomatic employee who works in the Kent County Administrative Complex located at 555 Bay Road in Dover tested positive for COVID-19 via the rapid (finger stick) blood test on Thursday, April 30 and results from a nose swab are pending. The employee's daughter has tested positive for coronavirus via nose swab, and test results for other members of the household are pending.

The employee reports that social distancing was maintained at all times while working in the Administrative Complex (first floor) this week. The employee reports no direct contact (without social distancing) with other County employees this week.

According to the employee, the daughter experienced respiratory issues without a fever on Monday - thought to be seasonal allergies, and was tested for COVID as a precaution. The nose swab results were received on Thursday afternoon as the employee was returning home from work and as a result immediately sought testing.

Upon learning of the test results, Facilities Management staff sanitized the employee's work area.

The employee has been directed by medical professionals to self-quarantine for 7 days and must receive two consecutive negative tests before returning to work. Since the employee reports no direct contact with coworkers or customers, the required contact tracing procedure will not be initiated.

This case illustrates the importance of social distancing and vigilance. Anyone, even someone without the typical symptoms, can be exposed to and diagnosed with COVID-19.

Remember Kent County employees must wear a face covering while working within 6 feet of other staff and in areas open to the general public according to the 13th modification of Governor John Carney's State of Emergency declaration. Social distancing must continue.

For purposes of the Governor's Order, a "face covering" means a soft cloth or fabric covering that fully covers a person's nose and mouth, not a medical-grade mask. The term "face covering" includes, without limitation, scarves and bandanas. The face covering should be comfortable, so that the wearer can breathe comfortably through the nose and does not have to adjust it frequently, so as to avoid touching the face. A "medical-grade mask" means an N95, KN95, surgical, or other mask that would be appropriate for a health care setting. For as long as medical grade masks such as N95

masks and surgical masks are in short supply, members of the public should not purchase those masks as face coverings under this Order; those medical grade masks should be reserved for health care providers and first responders. Wearing a medical-grade mask satisfies any requirement in this Order to wear a face covering, but all Delawareans are urged to reserve medical-grade masks for use by health care workers and first responders.

A video showing how to make a face covering and additional information about how to wear and clean face coverings may be found at the website of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

Kent County continues to require the following:

- 1) All employees **must** immediately report to their Department Head and the Personnel Director if they:
 - (a) have been diagnosed with COVID-19,
 - (b) are reasonably suspected to have COVID-19,
 - (c) have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or
 - (d) reside with or have been in close contact with persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are reasonably suspected to have COVID-19, or have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Symptomatic employees **must** stay home and cannot come to work until they are free of fever (CDC considers a fever to be 100.4 °F or greater using an oral thermometer), or signs of a fever, and any other symptoms of acute respiratory illness for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees who have been told they must be isolated or quarantined are prohibited from work on-premises until cleared by DPH or a medical professional, however remote work or telework may be authorized.

- 2) All employees **must** check themselves for a fever each day before reporting to the worksite using a reliable personal thermometer. If a fever is apparent, then the employee must notify their supervisor and stay home.
- 3) All employees **must** frequently hand wash with warm water and soap or use hand sanitizer including when entering and leaving the worksite.
- 4) All employees **must** follow cough and sneeze hygiene guidelines (cough/sneeze into bent elbow or tissue).

5) All employees **must** endeavor to maintain 6 feet of space between co-workers and other persons at all times per State and CDC guidelines and recommendations for social distancing (the exception being healthcare workers using appropriate PPE).

6) All employees **must** wear a face covering when working within 6 feet of co-workers or the public.

Kent County's day-to-day operations continue with essential employees reporting for duty each day as scheduled. Critical hourly employees may not work overtime unless specifically authorized by the County Administrator and total timesheet recorded time should not exceed 35/40 hours per work week (unless physically worked time/overtime has been authorized). Employees must continue to take at least a 30-minute lunch break and two short 15-minute breaks if reporting in person or working continuously (without interruption) via technology.

Employees must track all time physically worked during the pandemic response for possible reimbursement by the Federal government. In addition, all time spent physically teleworking must be recorded on a timesheet with project completion milestones documented and reported regularly to supervisors.

If you have any questions, please forward them through the proper Chain of Command. Upon resolution, the answer will be shared with all Department Heads for communication to affected staff.

Please stay safe & healthy!

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