

## COVID paid leave expired 12/31. Indoor mask mandate in effect!

On December 31, 2020, the Emergency Paid Sick Leave provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) expired.

As a result, employees are no longer eligible for up to 80-hours of paid leave without reduction of accrued leave time. Employees out of work for a COVID-19 related reason such as symptoms; positive test; exposure or close contact to someone testing positive, with symptoms, or in close contact with another such person; screening question failure; Division of Public Health directive; quarantine/isolation order; school or childcare issues related to COVID-19; etc. must use accrued sick leave.



Under such circumstances, employees must continue to promptly submit the EPSL request form (*available on the Employee Portal*) to the Personnel Office for tracking purposes along with test results and any correspondence from the Division of Public Health or a medical professional. Employees must also continue to immediately report COVID-19 symptoms, potential exposures, and close contact with symptomatic persons or those testing positive to their department head and the Personnel Director.

Employees directed to remain home should not return to the workplace for any reason until authorized/directed to do so. Employees are responsible for maintaining regular contact with their Department Head or appropriate supervisor during COVID related isolation or quarantine and after the initial call, update the Personnel Director if health conditions change. Each exposure is assessed individually based upon the specific information provided by the employee and DPH guidance.

COVID-19 testing is widely available at pop-up testing sites and the Personnel Office will email those sites to all employees at the beginning of each week. It is unlikely the County will be able to host such event, since DPH is now focused on vaccinations. Availability is determined by the State and as employees become eligible for the vaccine, that information will be shared with County staff.

Per Delaware Governor John Carney's emergency declaration modification, all Kent County employees must wear a face covering indoors at all times even when socially distanced and sitting at one's work desk. The order does exclude private type office spaces if the individual is by herself/himself, but does not apply to open environment cubicles. Persons occupying private offices are required to don a face mask if anyone enters the space.

After consulting with Levy Court, County Administrator Michael Petit de Mange has issued protocols outlining procedures in response to potential COVID-19 exposures

(see below). Employees need to continue to seriously consider their personal actions outside of work and at home in order to avoid possible infection of others – especially in the workplace.

Employees should consider making it a part of the daily routine to put on your mask when you depart your home for work and do not remove it except momentarily to eat or drink (away from others) during the day until returning home at the end of the work day.

Communication with employees has been constant - posters have been in place and information regularly shared with staff for several months. As a reminder:

DO NOT REPORT FOR WORK if you answer “YES” to any of these questions:

- *Are you presently ill?*
- *Have you had any illness in the past 14 days, to include Fever, Coughing, Shortness of Breath, or other Flu like Symptoms?*
- *Have you been instructed by a healthcare professional to self-quarantine?*
- *Have you travelled out of the country in the last 14 days?*
- *Have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19?*

If you answer “YES” to any of the above questions,

- Promptly get a COVID-19 test. Promptly means that day or the next day at the latest.
- Promptly contact your Supervisor/Department Head & Personnel Director.
- Do not return to work until you get a negative test result.
- If positive, do not return to work until cleared by DPH or medical professional, promptly contact your Supervisor/Department Head & Personnel Director.
- Submit a copy of the test results & Emergency Paid Sick Leave form.

If you are unsure if you have been in “close contact” with a COVID-19 positive person or someone that may be experiencing symptoms or you are unsure of your particular situation, you should contact your Department Head and/or Personnel Director. You will be asked a series of questions and instructed to get tested.

The CDC defines “close contact” as *someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic clients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the*

*patient is isolated.* The CDC has further expanded how it defines “close contact” of someone with COVID-19, as *someone who spends 15 minutes or more within six feet of a person with COVID-19 over a period of 24 hours.*

**Kent County’s COVID-19 prevention procedures continue to be as follows:**

1. Employees **must** continue to maintain social distancing (6-feet) at all times and now wear a face covering at all times, including in County vehicles.

2. Employees **must** continue to regularly wash their hands with warm soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your face or your mask. Do not shake hands. Avoid yelling. Properly dispose of any used personal protection equipment.

3. Employees **must** report to their department head or designated co-worker to be checked for a fever (99.5 degrees F or higher) upon arrival at the beginning of EACH WORK DAY using a handheld infrared thermometer. If no fever is indicated & questions answered with a negative response, Administrative Complex employees will receive a color coded wrist band that must be worn while on duty according to the day of the week (think rainbow color spectrum):

- **Monday = RED**
- **Tuesday = ORANGE**
- **Wednesday = YELLOW**
- **Thursday = GREEN**
- **Friday = BLUE**

4. Employees **must** enter the Administrative Complex via the employee entrance located at the rear of building or the west door by the Clerk of the Peace office. Employees should, if possible, avoid public entrances at all times. Those requiring access thru the front handicapped entrance should endeavor to avoid contact with visitors standing/waiting in the Complex lobby area.

5. Employees **must** follow all COVID-19 safety requirements including social distancing & face coverings and should not be offended when expected/asked by a co-worker to do so. Employees failing to follow the safety requirements are subject to discipline up to and including termination. Please report any observed violations to your department head or the Personnel Director.

6. Employees may be required to work longer/shortened or flexible work schedules to limit unnecessary interaction. An alternative/flexible schedule may be directed by the department head with approval in advance by the County Administrator.

In Delaware, COVID-19 testing is free or covered by insurance at approved testing facilities.

Employees with questions regarding COVID-19 testing should consult the Division of Public Health website: <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov>

Specific to urgent care centers, if a DVHT member presents with symptoms and is seen by a physician and the claim is coded as being physician ordered, the test would be covered. If the member visits the urgent care center and requests a test without the physician consultation, it would not be covered. Be sure to ask the urgent care center if COVID-19 testing is free of charge, as it may not be covered.

Walgreens Pharmacy now requires COVID-19 test pre-registration available at <https://www.picktime.com/DECOVID19test>. Pop-up testing sites typically do not require referral or pre-registration, but it is encouraged where available.

Several area labs offer same day testing with a doctor's referral, but no appointment.

Please keep in mind there is a high demand for all testing, therefore employees/DVHT members may experience delays in scheduling testing and/or receiving results. Be sure to ask the lab if COVID-19 testing is free of charge and/or covered by Aetna, as it may not be covered.

***Please stay safe & healthy!***

*(posted 01/13/21)*



## COVID 19 Exposure Response Protocol

### Possible Exposures:

#### Cold/Flu-like Symptoms ; Suspected Close Contact ; Potential Exposure

- **Employees with Cold/Flu-like Symptoms**
  - STAY HOME/DO NOT ENTER THE WORKPLACE
  - If Symptoms develop while at work GO HOME IMMEDIATELY
  - Get Tested Promptly
  - Contact Personnel Director by phone for close contacts interview
  - Quarantine and Return only after Negative Test Result OR
    - Until cleared to return by Medical Professional/DPH
  - Submit copy of Negative Test Results to Personnel Office
  - Submit COVID 19 Leave Form to Personnel Office
  
- **Non-Symptomatic – Suspected “Close Contact”(See Definition – Page 2)**
  - STAY HOME/DO NOT ENTER THE WORKPLACE
  - If informed of a Positive Close Contact while at work GO HOME IMMEDIATELY
  - Get Tested Promptly
  - Contact Personnel Director by phone for close contacts interview to:
    - Determine Level of Exposure
  - Personnel Director to consult DE Division of Public Health to:
    - Assess Risk of Exposure Level in Workplace
  - Quarantine and Return only after conclusion of Quarantine Period, or Negative Test Result, or until cleared to return by Medical Professional/DPH
  - If Non-Symptomatic Employee is Quarantined, Employee shall:
    - Contact Director/Supervisor Immediately for Remote Work Assignments
  - Submit copy of Negative Test Results to Personnel Office
  - Submit COVID 19 Leave Form to Personnel Office

- **Non-Symptomatic – Potential Exposure (Not Close Contact)**
  - LEAVE THE WORKPLACE
  - Get Tested Promptly
  - Contact Personnel Director by phone for Interview to:
    - Determine Level of Exposure Risk
  - Personnel Director to consult DE Division of Public Health to:
    - Assess Risk of Exposure Level in Workplace
    - Determine Return to Workplace or Quarantine
  - Return to Work or Quarantine as directed
  - If Non-Symptomatic Employee is Quarantined, Employee shall:
    - Contact Director/Supervisor Immediately for Remote Work Assignments
    - Return to normal Work Schedule when cleared by Negative Test
  - Submit Negative Test Results to Personnel Office
  - Submit COVID 19 Leave Form to Personnel Office

**“Close contact”** is defined by CDC as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic clients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

The CDC has expanded how it defines close contacts of someone with COVID-19. Until this point, the CDC had defined a close contact as someone who spent 15 or more consecutive minutes within six feet of someone with COVID-19. According to the new definition, a close contact is someone who spends 15 minutes or more within six feet of a person with COVID-19 over a period of 24 hours.

*NOTE: Due to the evolving understanding of COVID 19 and associated response guidance, the protocol set forth herein may be revised and/or updated from time to time as situational awareness warrants and new information becomes available.*