

ETSU Student, Faculty, and Staff Return to Work or School Protocol

Purpose:

Coronavirus Disease-19 is a disease caused by the strain of coronavirus Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)-CoV-2 that can produce mild to very severe illness and manifests in a wide range of symptoms.

The primary goal of this protocol is to maintain the safety and health of all ETSU faculty, staff, and learners.

This protocol applies to all undergraduate and graduate students at ETSU, including students in clinical disciplines, as well as to faculty and staff at ETSU who do not work in clinical environments. **Please note that students of any kind are not considered Essential Healthcare Workers**, unless a specific exception is made by the student's dean.

Quillen College of Medicine students should follow the protocol entitled QCOM Student Return to School Protocol.

Residents and Fellows should follow the protocol entitled ETSU Health Resident and Fellow Return to Work protocol.

Employees who work in a clinical environment within ETSU Health should follow the protocol entitled ETSU Health Clinical Employee Return to Work protocol.

If you are unsure whether you are considered an Essential Healthcare Worker or which protocol to follow, please contact your supervisor.

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, do not report to work or class.

If suspected COVID-19 illness or concern for exposure and testing is desired:

- Call one of the following:
 - University Health Center at 423-439-4225 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) or after-hours at 1-888-915-7299
 - Washington County Health Department at 423-975-2200
 - Personal primary care provider
- Seek emergency medical care immediately if experiencing severe symptoms, such as any of the following:
 - Trouble breathing
 - Persistent chest pain or pressure
 - Confusion
 - Inability to awaken or stay awake
 - Bluish lips
 - Any symptoms that are severe or personally concerning

Return to Work or Class Protocol

1. Confirmed COVID – 19 Illness with Symptoms:

Must be excluded from all work or school activities until:

- At least 10 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*
- **AND** At least 24 hours have passed *since last fever* without the use of fever-reducing medications
- **AND** Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

It is the responsibility of the student or employee to monitor temperature and symptoms at least twice daily.

People who have tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again. People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

2. Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19 but have not had any Symptoms (Asymptomatic):

Must be excluded from all work or school activities until:

- At least 10 days have passed since date of first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test
- **AND** have not subsequently developed symptoms since the positive test
- **IF** symptoms develop, please follow the above protocol for **Confirmed COVID-19 Illness with Symptoms**

If an alternate diagnosis is determined for the symptoms, criteria for return to work or school should be based on that diagnosis.

Any questions regarding testing or symptoms should be directed to University Health, or to the student's or employee's personal medical provider.

People who have tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again. People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

3. Potential Exposure to COVID-19 (also known as “close contact” for unvaccinated persons:

“Potential Exposure” (also known as “close contact”) is [defined](#) as being *within 6 feet for more than 15 total minutes within the last 24 hours* of a person who has had a confirmed positive test COVID-19. This includes exposure with the infected person going back 48 hours prior to the time the positive test was collected, OR 48 hours prior to the time the positive contact showed symptoms, whichever is earlier.

Must be excluded from all work or school activities:

- Quarantine at home for 10 days after last exposure and continue to monitor symptoms for 14 days after last exposure.
- Quarantine may end after 10 days ONLY if the exposed person is completely asymptomatic.
- If symptoms develop, self-isolate and consider getting a test for COVID.
- Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet from others at all times
- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again. People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

4. Potential exposure to COVID-19 (also known as “close contact”) for vaccinated persons:

- Vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:
 - Are fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine)
 - Are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series
 - Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure

4. **Household Contacts**

A household contact is an individual who shares any living spaces with someone who has a confirmed positive case of COVID-10. This includes bedrooms, bathrooms, living rooms, kitchens, etc.

- Non-vaccinated household contacts must be quarantined for 10 days after the case has completed their (minimum) 10-day isolation period (whether the case is symptomatic or not).
- If a household contact develops symptoms of COVID-19, they become a case. They should begin isolation as a case and consider getting tested.
- If a non-vaccinated household contact is able to separate themselves from the confirmed positive case, they must quarantine for 10 days after their last exposure, and continue to monitor symptoms for 14 days after the last exposure.
- A non-vaccinated household contact may be released from quarantine after 10 days only if he or she remains asymptomatic for the entire 10 days after the last exposure. Monitoring for symptoms must continue for 14 days after the last exposure.
- For more information, see [here](#).

Questions? Call the University Health Center at 423-439-4225 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) or after-hours at 1-888-915-7299, the Washington County Health Department at 423-975-2200, or Ballad Nurse Connect at 1-833-822-5523.

Updated 02/11/2021

References:

1. <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/CloseContactGuidance.pdf>
2. <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/CaseGuidance.pdf>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>
4. <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/Isolation-QuarantineRelease.pdf>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>
6. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
7. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>

February 11, 2021
ETSU (Main Campus)