COVID-19 Policy – Revised effective March 4, 2022

2022 Division of Human Resources

Purpose:
This policy establishes procedures for supporting employees who may be exposed to, infected with, or vaccinated against COVID-19. The goal of this policy is to maintain a safe and healthy workplace, protect the privacy of infected and exposed persons, and let all employees know their rights in discharging leave and remote work options related to this disease.

Agency and Employee Responsibilities:

1. The State’s decisions involving persons who have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to COVID-19 shall be based on current guidance and well-informed medical judgments from the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

2. Executive Branch agencies will cooperate with RIDOH and the Department of Administration’s Division of Human Resources in the event an employee reports potential exposure to COVID-19.

3. All employees have a responsibility to prevent the spread of COVID-19. To that end, when an employee meets one of the criteria below, they need to follow proper protocol outlined in this policy:
   a. Have come into close contact (less than six feet for 15 minutes or more within a 24-hour period) with a person with a confirmed, suspect, or probable case of COVID-19;
   b. Have recently returned from travel anywhere outside the 50 United States or U.S. territories;
   c. Have recently travelled within the 50 United States or U.S. territories for non-work-related travel by any mode of transportation (airplane, bus, train, car, etc.); and/or
   d. Have been infected with COVID-19, or are presenting with any signs of illness consistent with COVID-19, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. For more information go to symptoms of COVID-19 on the CDC's website.
4. After being named a close contact or after travel, an employee should quarantine unless they are exempt. They are exempt from quarantine if they are up to date with their vaccines, meaning they are age 18 or older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters when eligible, OR if they are age 5 to 17 and have completed the primary series of a COVID-19 vaccine OR they had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days. Please refer to Section I for quarantine procedures.

5. The State respects the right to privacy of any employee who is directly exposed to or infected with COVID-19. Information about the risk to employees related to COVID-19 will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health consequences to co-workers, individuals, and others while complying with state and federal privacy and confidentiality laws.

6. The State will not tolerate any discrimination against and/or harassment of an employee as a result of an employee’s contraction of or exposure to COVID-19. Any discrimination against and/or harassment of an employee may result in disciplinary action.

7. As of 5:01 pm on March 4, 2022, employees are not required to wear a mask while in a state facility. Additional considerations and guidance are as follows:

- While mask wearing is optional, any employee may choose to continue to wear a mask based on their own individual needs.
- As per CDC guidance, individuals who are at any level of risk should consult their medical provider in consideration of wearing a mask.
- The Department of Health strongly recommends that immunocompromised or employees with underlying health conditions should consult with their medical provider in consideration of wearing a mask while in a state facility.
- The Department of Health strongly recommends that employees who are not up to date on their vaccines, should continue to wear a mask while in a state facility. An employee is up to date if they have received all CDC recommended doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and have received a booster, or if they have completed the primary series of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine in the last five months or they completed the primary series of the J&J/Jansen vaccine in the past two months. If an employee is moderately or severely immunocompromised, they should receive and additional dose as well as a booster and consult their primary care physician.
- Employees who are returning to the workplace following a COVID-19 infection or close contact must follow the masking requirements as detailed in the Isolation, Quarantine and Travel Procedures section below.
- It should be noted that the masking requirements for State health care workers, providers and facilities that fall under the Rhode Island Department of Health’s regulation 216-RICR-20-15-8 and the COVID-19 Vaccine Policy for Licensed Health Care Workers, Providers and Facilities will remain in effect until further notice. An exception to this masking requirement is the Rhode Island State Health Laboratories – since employees of the Laboratory are not patient facing, they are not required to wear a mask while in the Laboratory as of March 4th at 5:01 pm.

8. Employees out of work due to a mandatory quarantine period as a result of traveling on work-related business or due to a work-related exposure are eligible for paid administrative leave. Non-
work-related exposure resulting in mandatory quarantine will be covered by available leave options. For further information review the Personnel Rules covering the following types of leave:

- Sick leave
- Family sick leave
- Annual leave (vacation)
- Compensatory leave
- Leave without pay
- Medical leave without pay

9. Upon receiving a positive diagnosis of having COVID-19, employees must:

   i. Immediately leave the workplace, and/or remain out of the workplace for the duration of their isolation period (see RIDOH Guidelines for Isolation by Population).

   ii. Notify their immediate supervisor that they are unable to report to work. This notification should be made by speaking directly to the supervisor. If that is not possible, the employee may leave a voice or text message or email explaining why they are unable to report to work and a contact number where the employee can be reached. Understanding that the employee’s medical condition may not allow them to contact their supervisor, the Division of Human Resources will make every effort to reach the employee’s emergency contact if the employee has an unexplained absence from work.

   iii. Provide a medical report from a licensed healthcare provider or COVID-19 test results to the Human Resources Disability Management Unit. The Human Resources Disability Management Unit will provide the employee with appropriate documents as necessary, based on the information received from the physician to support the employee during their recovery.

10. Supervisors should report instances of absences due to COVID-19 to the agency director or COVID-19 agency liaison and Human Resources Disability Management Unit as soon as possible. A Rapid Response Team call will then be initiated if necessary.

11. Where telework is a viable work option and approval is granted in accordance with the Teleworking Policy, an employee may temporarily work from home during a quarantine or isolation period. While teleworking, an employee does not need to discharge time.

12. An employee who is restricted from work because of illness due to COVID-19 may return to work upon recovery following RIDOH’s Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Quarantine and Isolation Guidance to end isolation and with approval of the Human Resources Disability Management Unit. An employee will not be allowed to return to work until such time as the approval is provided.

13. All currently available forms of leave may be considered in the event an employee is out of work due to their own illness, the illness of a family member with a communicable disease. For further information, review the Personnel Rules covering the types of leave in #8 above.
14. Note for healthcare workers: Please refer to your agency’s guidance regarding proper protocols.

15. Note for Department of Corrections staff: Please refer to your agency’s guidance regarding proper protocols.

1. **Isolation, Quarantine and Travel Procedures**

1. The charts below provide procedures for employees who have or think they have COVID-19 (Isolation), come into close contact with a COVID-19 individual (Quarantine), as well as those employees who have travelled domestically, internationally, and cruise ship travel. In addition to the detailed procedures in the charts below, employees should note the following:

   i. The definition of a close contact means being within six feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

   ii. Healthcare workers must refer to their agency’s guidance regarding proper protocols for their agency and/or position.

   iii. If any of the below situations apply to you, you must contact your supervisor and the Human Resources Disability Management Unit (DMU) at 401-574-8401. You should also contact DMU if you have any questions or concerns on the applicability of the procedures listed below.

   iv. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that individuals who are not up-to-date with their vaccinations delay domestic travel until they are fully vaccinated.
## Isolation and Post-Infection Procedures

*For those who have or think they have COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status*

For Symptomatic Cases: Isolation starts on the first day of symptoms (day 0)

For Asymptomatic Cases: Isolation starts on the day of a positive (day 0)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Symptomatic (not immunocompromised) | • Stay home and isolate for at least 5 days until:  
  o At least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and;  
  o At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without fever-reducing medications, and;  
  o Symptoms have improved.  
• If all the above apply, you may return to the workplace on day 6. A high-quality mask must be worn on days 6 - 10. |
| Symptomatic (moderately or severely immunocompromised) or had severe illness. | • Stay at home and isolate until:  
  o At least 10 days and up to 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and;  
  o At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without fever-reducing medications, and;  
  o Symptoms have improved, and;  
  o You have consulted with your healthcare provider.  
• If all the above apply, the earliest you may return to the workplace is on day 11. Talk to your healthcare provider about wearing a high-quality mask upon returning to the workplace. |
| Asymptomatic (not immunocompromised) | • If you remain asymptomatic, you may discontinue isolation when at least 5 days have passed since the date of the first positive diagnostic test.  
• You may return to the workplace on day 6, but you must continue to watch for symptoms. If symptoms develop, stay home and get a test.  
• A high-quality mask must be worn on days 6 - 10. |
| Asymptomatic (moderately to severely immunocompromised) | • If you remain asymptomatic, your isolation may be discontinued when at least 10 days and up to 20 days have passed since the date of their first positive diagnostic test in consultation with your healthcare provider.  
• If all the above apply, the earliest you may return to the workplace is on day 11. Talk to your healthcare provider about wearing a high-quality mask upon returning to the workplace. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarantine Procedures for Those Up to Date with Vaccination</th>
<th>Quarantine Procedures for Those Who are Not Up to Date with Vaccination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>You do not need to quarantine if . . .</strong></td>
<td><strong>You are not exempt from quarantine if . . .</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are age 18 or older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, including <em>boosters</em> when eligible</td>
<td>You are 18 or older and completed the primary series of recommended vaccine but have not received a recommended booster shot when eligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are age 5 to 17 and have completed the primary series of a COVID-19 vaccine</td>
<td>You are not vaccinated or have not completed a primary vaccine series.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (you tested positive using a lab-based antigen or PCR test; excludes home-based tests).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You do not need to quarantine and you can return to the workplace.</td>
<td>• You must quarantine for at least 5 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You should observe precautions for 10 days after last exposure and watch for COVID-19 symptoms.</td>
<td>• Test on day 5 if possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be sure to wear a high-quality mask for 10 days around others</td>
<td>• If you have no symptom, you may return to the workplace on days 6, but you must continue to watch for symptoms. If symptoms develop, stay home and get a test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Test on day 5, if possible.</td>
<td>• <strong>A high-quality mask</strong> must be worn on days 6 - 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If symptoms develop, stay home and get a test.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Household contacts with on-going exposure**

If you are exempt from quarantine (vaccinations are up to date):
- Follow precautions as described in the “You do not need to quarantine” while household member is in isolation. Continue with precautions for 10 days after the person with COVID-19 finishes isolation.

If you are not exempt from quarantine (your vaccinations are not up to date):
- Quarantine at home as soon as the person with COVID-19 starts to isolate
- Continue to quarantine at home for 5 days after the person with COVID-19 finishes isolation
- After day 5 and through day 10, observe precautions as described in the “You are not exempt from quarantine”.

Department of Administration - Enterprise Policy
## Domestic Travel Procedures

*Based on RIDOH and CDC Guidance, this section is for recently returned from travel anywhere inside the 50 United States or the U.S. territories*

| If you have not been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have not been infected with COVID-19 within the past 90 days... | • Get tested 3-5 days after travel.  
• Self-quarantine for 7 full days, even if test is negative.  
• If you choose not to get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days upon return from travel. |
| --- | --- |
| If you have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have been infected with COVID-19 within the past 90 days... | • You are not required to quarantine if you are asymptomatic upon arrival in Rhode Island.  
• Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms.  
• If symptoms develop, you should isolate and get tested. |

## International Travel Procedure

*Based on RIDOH and CDC Guidance, this section is for recently returned from travel anywhere outside the 50 United States or the U.S. territories*

| If you have not been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have not been infected with COVID-19 within the past 90 days... | • Get tested 3-5 days after full travel.  
• Self-quarantine for 7 full days, even if test is negative.  
• If you choose not to get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days upon return from travel. |
| --- | --- |
| If you have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have been infected with COVID-19 within the past 90 days... | • You are not required to quarantine if you are asymptomatic upon arrival in Rhode Island.  
• Get tested 3-5 days after return from travel.  
• Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms.  
• If symptoms develop, you should isolate and get tested. |
II. Travel Approval Requirements During COVID-19 Event

All state-funded international travel remains suspended until further notice. The Department of Administration, in consultation with RIDOH and its partners, will reassess this suspension at the end of March 2022. The following exceptions to the travel suspension are allowable with the signed permission of the Personnel Administrator:

- Travel deemed critical to maintaining operations of government;
- Travel related to COVID-19 management and public health efforts;
- Court-ordered travel; and
- Travel deemed necessary for public health and safety.

III. Special Note on Collective Bargaining Agreements

Provisions of collective bargaining agreements, with respect to all paid leave options available to employees, should be consulted and this policy should be administered consistent with said provisions.

Director of Administration

Signature

Date
March 10, 2022