COVID-19: Employee Guidance

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University Coronavirus Updates

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Personal Preparedness
All faculty and staff are urged to take basic preventative measures to prepare themselves and their families to avoid exposure to or infection by the virus causing COVID-19.

Faculty and staff who can work remotely are expected to do so, until notified otherwise. See Essential Services and Remote Work for more information on essential services.

Contact the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program at 607-255-2673 or ENI Confidential Counseling Services at 800-327-2255 for help with feelings of stress or anxiety about these events.

Overview of Pay Practices

Review the Guidelines for Pay Practices that apply to staff and faculty if they are quarantined or isolated due to illness while the campus is open. The guidelines have been updated in light of the March 20 “New York State on PAUSE” executive order with details for supervisors and non-exempt staff on recording time. These guidelines will be updated as needed or in the event of a change to campus operating status.

Sponsored Funds

Policies in place for all university employees, such as paid time for quarantine, are applicable to employees funded by sponsored awards. We anticipate that these costs will be allowable on sponsored awards. Departments and principal investigators may contact Sponsored Financial Services (sfs-help@cornell.edu) if there are further questions regarding expense allowability in the event of this infectious disease-related emergency.

Health and Personal Leave

Up to 10 Health and Personal (HAP) days* (pro-rated as appropriate for part-time staff) have been added to the banks of our regular full and part-time, exempt and non-exempt staff, including benefits-eligible temporary staff, who are not currently at their maximum. These days can be used for personal health situations or to care for children or other dependents. The supplemental days are intended to support those individuals who are new or have low balances and need to use time to take care of their kids or if they are sick. The days were added to all staff balances on a one-time basis to minimize administrative burden and increase the expediency of this solution. Please contact your human resources representative with questions.

*or Sick Leave days for staff whose collective bargaining agreements contain Sick Leave provisions

[Accordion]

**When were the additional 10 HAP (or sick) days added to balances in Workday? And will they expire?**

An update to balances in Workday was completed on March 17, 2020. They have been added to your bank, up to the maximum, and will not expire.

**If I currently have a balance of 90 days, but plan to use HAP in the coming weeks, will the additional days be granted at a later time?**

No. This was a one-time action. If an employee was currently at, or reached, the maximum via this one-time addition of HAP days, no additional time over the max will be added now or at a later date.

**Can an employee be asked to use these hours to supplement their available hours/work?**

The 10 additional HAP days are intended to support individuals who need time to take care of their kids or themselves if they are sick. These days are not intended to be used by employees due to a lack of hours or work responsibilities. If an employee would like to voluntarily decrease their hours and use HAP time to receive full pay, this option can be afforded. Please contact your human resources representative with questions.
Essential Services and Remote Work

On March 20, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that 100 percent of non-essential workers in businesses statewide must stay home amid concerns of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) spread. Cornell is still operating in an open status.

Utilization of remote work is required for employees in all cases except where specifically allowed as an essential service.

Supervisors and employees are expected to utilize social distancing and follow the CDC personal hygiene guidelines if working on campus for essential services.

*NEW* Which areas are considered essential services at Cornell?

Cornell remains open with students who cannot return home remaining on our Ithaca campus and requiring essential services.

Critical research activities and animal care needs remain, which, while limited to essential activities, require ongoing support.

Education is considered an essential service, and faculty must be able to continue to receive the critical support they need to move to virtual instruction in two weeks.

- Faculty and IT personnel can only utilize campus offices or classrooms for the preparation and delivery of virtual instruction if they get an exemption from deans, who will be consulting with the provost. Exemptions will be limited to extraordinary circumstances. Those faculty and staff who do not get approval must conduct virtual instruction from home.
- Those conducting critical research should continue this research utilizing university labs.
- Staff who will support (e.g., dining, housing, Cornell Health) those students who remain in on-campus housing have been notified, or will be notified in the next 24 hours, if they need to report. Staff who have questions should contact their supervisor.
- For our custodial, maintenance, facilities, security and public safety workers, New York state recognizes that universities must maintain the minimum number of personnel necessary to maintain safe and clean dining and living spaces, critical research environments and core campus utilities such as water, HVAC, electricity, roads and the like.

*UPDATED* I was going to teach my class from my office or classroom, can I still come to campus?

While education is considered an essential service, the governor’s order does make clear the need to do this work from home, unless university facilities are absolutely required. Faculty and IT personnel can only utilize campus offices or classrooms for the preparation and delivery of virtual instruction if they get an exemption from deans, who will be consulting with the provost. Exemptions will be limited to extraordinary circumstances. Those faculty and staff who do not get approval must conduct virtual instruction from home.

*UPDATED* Do I have to work remotely, or can I come to campus?

For those of you who had planned to come to campus, for even a part of the workday, that will no longer be an option unless your situation is specified above.

See Which areas are considered essential services at Cornell?.

[/accordion]
Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Well employees are considered able to work, even if they have been in contact with or are caring for someone who is ill with an ordinary respiratory illness — in which case, typical preventive measures are recommended for them as caregivers.

While affording for maximum flexibility, well employees may be asked to report on site if they are essential, unless they have been:

- Caring for someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19, in which case their local health department will require that they self-quarantine.
- In a country with a CDC Level 2 or 3 Travel Health Notice in the last 14 days.
- In the same household as someone who is quarantined.

Well employees will be expected to work remotely if possible.

Reference: “I am quarantined, am I able/expected to work remotely?” and “If a family member I live with, or care for, is quarantined, should I still come to work?”

*NEW* How is Cornell keeping employees safe who cannot work remote?

Following the "New York State on PAUSE" executive order, effective March 22, only those that have been specifically informed they are to work on-site are allowed to do so. Everyone else must stay home and work remotely, where possible. Cornell expects employees to adhere to the CDC’s preventative hygiene guidance. When these measures are practiced with diligence, they are an effective means for minimizing the spread of the disease. In addition, employees should consult with their manager for specific protocols that may be in place for certain jobs.

- If you are feeling ill, please stay at home.
- Practice social distancing by maintaining at least 6 feet of distance from coworkers, peers and students.
- Avoid touching your face, mouth or eyes.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water is not available.
- Periodically clean high touch-point surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, electronics and dispenser handles.
- If you become ill at work, contact your supervisor to inform them, avoid others and go home.

*NEW* How is Cornell supporting employees whose work cannot be done remotely?

On March 20, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that 100 percent of non-essential workers in businesses statewide must stay home to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. The university is committed to this effort and have taken the following steps:

- Cornell has taken immediate action to further decrease the density of campus, moving all non-essential services to remote work if possible, and is requiring individuals that must work on campus to adhere to social distancing in all situations where practical.
- Cornell is asking supervisors to consider alternate work arrangements, when possible, that can be done remotely and is working on a process to reassign employees to other areas or types of work.
- At this time, if a supervisor has no available work for an employee to complete remotely, the supervisor is expected to approve continuing pay for the employee at their current rate of pay and regular scheduled hours/effort, without requiring the use of vacation or health and personal leave accruals.
- Because some K-12 schools have closed, HR is permitting the use of Health and Personal (HAP) leave for staff to use for childcare even though their child is not sick. This is an exception to standard policy.
- Up to 10 Health and Personal (HAP) days* (pro-rated as appropriate for part-time staff) have been added to the banks of our regular full and part-time, exempt and non-exempt staff, including benefits-eligible temporary staff, who are not currently at their maximum. These days can be used for personal health situations or to care for children or other dependents.
  *or Sick Leave days for staff whose collective bargaining agreements contain Sick Leave provisions
- If you find yourself out of work to care for someone in your family, New York State Paid Family Leave is available to staff; see If a family member I live with, or care for, is quarantined, should I still come to work?
- Coverage is now available for telemedicine through our health plans. More information can be found on the Community.
*NEW* I work in an essential service area, and I am expected to come to campus for work. But I’m worried because I’m at a higher risk. What are my options?

Employees providing essential services (see, Which areas are considered essential services at Cornell?) who are at increased risk for complications from COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions are urged to consult their physician about steps they can take to protect their health and speak with their supervisor about their concerns.

You might be able to be assigned a temporary change in job location, hours, assignment or duties, or alternate work that can be done remotely.

If your work may not be accomplished remotely, and you are not instructed to stay out of the workplace by your doctor, you may use health and personal leave or vacation accruals if you wish to stay out of the workplace entirely.

If local Human Resources needs assistance in evaluating the medical information related to these temporary requests for changes in work site location or job duties, they may consult with Medical Leaves Administration. In some situations, the formal Disability Accommodation process may be applicable.

I have been exposed or if someone in my family has been exposed to the coronavirus, who do I need to notify?

For your safety and the safety of your co-workers it is important that you speak to your primary care physician or someone at the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department) so they can manage your situation appropriately.

If you’re going to be unable to work, in keeping with current policy, you must speak with your supervisor.

If your doctor or the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department) or other authorized agency provides you with medical documentation, please forward that information to Medical Leaves Administration.

See also What do I need to tell my supervisor if I am quarantined by the health department? and I am quarantined, am I able/expected to work remotely?

I don’t feel well, but I think I can still work. What do I do?

Essential employees who are not feeling well should stay home. If you come to work, your manager may send you home if they are concerned about the appropriateness of your being in the workplace. Please cooperate with managers who are taking on this uncomfortable responsibility for community well-being. If you are sick or aren’t feeling well, the most important thing is for you to take care of yourself so that you feel better and stay away from others so that your illness doesn’t spread. See also, Guidelines for Pay Practices.

Essential employees who have symptoms of respiratory illness should stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever, and any other symptoms, for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g., cough suppressants). A fever is defined as a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius taken by an oral thermometer.

All employees with concerns or questions about their illness should contact their personal health care provider or the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department) to manage their situation appropriately.

See also What do I need to tell my supervisor if I am quarantined by the health department? and I am quarantined, am I able/expected to work remotely?

I felt fine when I came to work but then fell ill. What do I do?

You should immediately separate yourself from other employees, inform your supervisor that you aren’t well and go home. If you have symptoms that you are concerned about, contact your primary care physician or the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department).
Your department should consider special cleaning of your workspace.

**My colleague fell ill in the office and then was isolated. Do I need to be isolated or quarantined?**

The Tompkins County Health Department (or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department) will decide on quarantine or isolation by individuals and households.

**I work outside Tompkins County or outside New York state. Do I follow the Cornell guidelines or those of the county/state I work and live in?**

Employees who work outside Tompkins County or New York state should monitor guidance offered by their local or state health department to understand any local restrictions. Employees should also connect with supervisors and Human Resources partners if they are in an affected area, experience any symptoms, or have to undergo quarantine.

**If I get sick, how will my health bills be handled?**

COVID-19 expenses would be submitted under traditional health care coverage, including prescriptions and other treatment. All health care plan provisions, including medical necessity, in-network vs. out-of-network coverage, deductibles, co-payments, and out-of-pocket expenses will apply as with any claims submission.

**My child’s school or child care is closed? What options do I have?**

**Remote Work**

The Cornell Flexibility In the Workplace Policy states that remote work cannot be a substitute for ongoing child care needs. In light of COVID-19, remote work may occur while dependents are present if their school or child care is closed and alternative care is unavailable, under the following guidelines:

- Cornell is not responsible or liable for the health and safety of your dependents while you are working remotely, or for your health and safety while you are delivering care to your dependents. It is up to the employee to determine whether work can be conducted safely.
- If a dependent is ill and requires ongoing attention, and you are not able to perform work if requested, employees may need to use Health and Personal (HAP) time away from work, as needed. HAP guidelines are being relaxed during this period to also accommodate well children who are home due to school and childcare closures. Nonacademic employees may also be covered for NY Paid Family leave, which provides paid leave to care for a covered family member’s illness. Please visit [https://hr.cornell.edu/new-york-state-paid-family-leave](https://hr.cornell.edu/new-york-state-paid-family-leave) for more information.
- Employees are expected to determine what they can reasonably accomplish while dependents are under their care (whether healthy or ill), and the amount of time they expect to be able to work.

**Alternative Child Care**

If your child is healthy and you are seeking a care provider, you may use these resources to locate care, though options are limited. Also, consider joining a Cornell Parenting e-List or Newsletter for updates and connecting with other families who have care concerns.

- **Care@Work by Care.com** – Cornell provides benefits-eligible employees and retirees with a free membership to Care@Work to help you locate babysitters, pet sitters/walkers, elder/adult care providers, and individuals to run errands. You may post a job or search the directory for a care provider. Providers are not endorsed by Cornell.
- **Child Development Council of Tompkins & Cortland County (other Counties)** – advises area families on child care options. Ithaca – 607-273-0259, Cortland – 607-753-0106
- **Cornell Work/Life Consultant** – may advise you on work/life issues, especially related to caregiving. Phone, virtual, and email consultations available worklife@cornell.edu or 607-255-1917.

See also **Community Resources**.

**My children’s school is closed, can I bring my children on-site to be with me while I work?**
The presence and care of children at a university worksite creates significant safety and liability considerations for the university. While the care of infants and children at the worksite is not permitted (Visitors at the Worksites policy), supervisors are encouraged to be flexible in arranging work schedules, granting time off, and/or permitting remote work.

**Will the Cornell Child Care Center (CCCC) remain open?**

The Tompkins County Health Department directed the Cornell Child Care Center (and all community centers) to close effective through at least April 13. Parents were communicated with. The Health Department is allowing the CCCC to serve families who have a parent that is considered “essential personnel” according to the NYS definition, which is health care professional or emergency responder. The center followed up with families that had a parent within either of those categories (15 children total). Several of the families are opting to remain at home, however. Please follow up with Michelle Artibee (mla64) if you have questions.

[accordion]

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**Quarantine or Isolation**

Isolation and quarantine are research-based public health practices used to stop or limit the spread of communicable disease.

**FAQs**

[accordion]

**What do I need to tell my supervisor if I am quarantined by the health department?**

You are not required to tell your supervisor that you are quarantined.

However, if you are unable to work, in keeping with current policy, you are expected to notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

If your doctor or the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department) or other authorized agency provides you with medical documentation, please forward that information to Medical Leaves Administration.

During a period of quarantine, the employee is considered to be well and therefore will be expected to work remotely if their job responsibilities permit it. For this reason, it will be important for you to communicate with your supervisor to ensure mutual agreement regarding the expectations and deliverables during the arrangement.

**NEW* If an employee shares that they are quarantined or isolated, what do I do, and what information can I share with others?**

The employee may choose to self-disclose medical information with anyone of their choosing, but that still does not allow supervisors/managers, HR, university leadership, or colleagues to re-release or discuss that information to or with others.

As a supervisor,

- If someone is going to be absent from or unable to work, you may share an estimated time for them to return to work if one is known.
- If employees are asking you about a colleague, remind them that we have a policy of assisting any employee who encounters difficulty in the workplace and that we respect our employees’ privacy.
- If an employee provides medical documentation to you, please forward that information to Medical Leaves Administration.

If you have specific questions you are welcome to contact Medical Leaves Administration at 255-1177.

Please also be aware that any information regarding a medical condition or diagnosis, medical plan enrollment or medical
HIPAA has strict rules about an employer’s representatives and whether they have a ‘need to know’ this coverage information in their position/role and the allowed usage of protected information they do receive. While an employee may voluntarily share information about their health plan enrollment, coverage level, family members covered, etc., this is not information that a manager/supervisor can inquire into. For discussions of health care needs, enrollment/coverage needs, claims issues, etc., please refer the employee to the HR Services and Transitions Center at 607-255-3936.

*NEW* If a colleague is diagnosed with a confirmed case, how will I know if I’m at risk?

If someone is diagnosed with a confirmed case, the Tompkins County Health Department (or if a remote employee, the local health department) works to make sure those who have been exposed are contacted. The employee may choose to self-disclose medical information to anyone of their choosing, but that still does not allow supervisors/managers, HR, university leadership, or colleagues to re-release or discuss that information to or with that employee’s colleagues.

I am quarantined, am I able/expected to work remotely?

During a period of quarantine, the employee is considered to be well and therefore will be expected to work remotely if their job responsibilities permit it. See also, Guidelines for Pay Practices.

If an individual who is quarantined develops symptoms, they should contact the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department) to manage their situation appropriately.

I am in isolation. Can I work?

No. You are in isolation because you are not well and showing symptoms. It is important that you focus on your own well-being and not work during the period of isolation.

When an individual is isolated, do members of the household need to isolate or quarantine as well?

If an individual is isolated, their household family members would likely be required to quarantine. If you or other family members show symptoms, then you or others may be isolated as well. The Tompkins County Health Department or, for remote employees, the appropriate local health department, makes decisions about isolation and quarantine.

If a family member I live with, or care for, is quarantined, am I still expected to work?

Please exercise caution and remain at home. You should talk with your supervisor as soon as possible about if you will be able to fulfill your job responsibilities remotely.

Due to the uncertain nature of this illness, nonacademic staff may be able to access New York Paid Family Leave (NYPFL) for the duration of the family member’s quarantine and claim their time off as NYPFL if they meet both of these requirements:

- A family member is quarantined under a directive from a recognized public health official (Tompkins County Health Department, other local county health departments, Cornell Health, etc.), and
- that family member is regularly dependent upon them for care.

Such leave is subject to all the other regular definitions of NYPFL. Please visit Cornell’s NYPFL site for more information. You may supplement NYSPFL with HAP or vacation time.

Those who are not caring for the quarantined family member (and therefore cannot claim the time off as NYPFL) and whose work does not permit them to work from home should contact their supervisor to explore the possibility of an alternate work assignment that can be done remotely.

See also Community Resources.

Can child care centers refuse to serve children of quarantined or isolated employees?
Yes. Childcare centers will decide based on what they deem most appropriate to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in their facilities.

*NEW!* If I am quarantined, or cannot travel to my doctor, can I still receive medical care?

**Endowed Health Plans**

Aetna began coverage for telemedicine, including tele-therapy in 2020. You should consult with your medical or mental health provider to see if telephonic or tele-video services would be an option for you. Normal co-payments apply, similar to in-network and out-of-network office visits.

**Endowed Prescription Coverage**

OptumRx is closely monitoring CDC guidance, as well as Federal, State and Local government requirements. Currently, OptumRx will allow members to refill their maintenance medications **early** to ensure they have an uninterrupted supply of medication during the COVID-19 threat. Early refill may not be available for controlled substances. You may also wish to check with your provider to determine if 90-day mail order prescriptions will meet your needs.

**Contract College Health Plans**

**Empire Plan**

Telehealth services are covered under the Empire Plan. Empire does not maintain a list of providers who have agreed to telehealth, but if a member speaks to their provider and if they offer telehealth services, the normal in-network or out-of-network reimbursement would apply, i.e. normal deductible, co-pays, co-insurance and reasonable and customary allowances (if out-of-network).

**HMO-Blue CNY**

HMO members will pay a $10 copay when utilizing MD Live, our Telemedicine Partner. Instructions on how to register and schedule a visit can be found at https://www.excellusbcbs.com/find-a-doctor/telemedicine

**MVP**

Members will pay a $25 copay for the visit when utilizing myVisitNow, our Telemedicine Partner. $25 copay for visit. To register, log in at https://myvisitnow.com/landing.htm, and choose My Account.

**Contract College Prescription Coverage**

**Empire Plan**

Empire Plan has implemented early refill overrides and/or extended-day supply requirements on 30-day prescription maintenance medications consistent with the CDC recommendation to have a 1-month supply of medication on hand. Member cost sharing will apply as normal.

**HMO-Blue CNY**

*(Same as Empire Plan)*

**MVP**

Members will be able to obtain an early refill on a 30-day supply of maintenance medications at an in-network pharmacy,
regardless of whether the state the member resides in has called a state of emergency. Members should speak with their pharmacist to enter the applicable emergency supply override code into their dispensing systems to trigger the early refill override. Members with a mail-order benefit taking maintenance medications are encouraged to take advantage of receiving a 90-day supply of medication through the CVS Caremark Mail Order pharmacy mailed directly to their home.

NY State Legislation on Paid Leave for mandatory or precautionary quarantine

On March 18, Governor Cuomo signed a bill to guarantee paid leave for employees while they are on a mandatory or precautionary quarantine order due to COVID-19. This legislation covers all full and part time employees, including temporary and casual employees, who are required to quarantine or isolate by the state of New York, the department of health, local board of health, or any government entity duly authorized to issue such order due to COVID-19.

NEW* If I am able to work remotely – I do not have symptoms or have not been diagnosed, can I refuse to do so and still be placed on paid leave?

No. If you are asymptomatic or haven’t yet been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are physically able to work through remote access or other similar means, you are to continue to work. If you develop symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 while working remotely during your quarantine, please speak with your supervisor about a change to paid leave status.

NEW* If I choose to travel for personal reasons to a country with a level 2 or 3 restriction, upon my return the CDC says I must quarantine. Will I be placed on paid leave?

No. The legislation does not require paid leave when an employee knowingly travels for personal reasons to a level 2 or 3 country. You may work remotely if agreed to by your supervisor or, if not, you will need to use your HAP/Vacation balance.

NEW* If my quarantine goes beyond 14 days, will I continue on paid leave?

No. The legislation requires paid leave for 14 days. If your quarantine continues beyond 14 days then you will work with Medical Leaves Administration to move to short term disability or New York Paid Family Leave as appropriate.

NEW* My doctor has taken me out of work and required me to self-quarantine (as documented in the out of work note), am I eligible for paid leave?

Although not required by the legislation, Cornell, in an effort to stop the spread of the virus, has determined that we will approve placement on paid leave, for a maximum of 14 days, if a doctor orders the quarantine and duly documents that order in the out of work note.

NEW* A Cornell supervisor told me that I should stay home after recent travel (not to a country with a level 2 or 3 travel restriction). Will I get paid?

If possible, you will be required to work remotely. If that is not possible, due to the type of work and no alternate work can be assigned, then you will be placed on paid leave.

NEW* I don’t feel well but my doctor, or the health department, hasn’t told me to self-quarantine can I go on paid leave?

If you aren’t feeling well you should stay home. You will be expected to use your HAP or vacation accruals unless you have been told to quarantine by an appropriate authority.
Travel

Visit the Cornell University Coronavirus website for updates. FAQs related to Travel Restrictions & Registration Requirements address questions such as "Are students, faculty, and staff allowed to travel domestically?"

I am scheduled to travel for business within the United States. Should I still go?

Please visit the Cornell University Coronavirus website for the latest updates on travel guidance.

I don't want to go on my business trip due to my concerns. Will the university require me to travel?

With few exceptions, the university will not require employees to travel. Talk with your supervisor about your concerns.

If I cancel my business trip, will the university reimburse me for travel expenses and cancellation fees?

Expenses related to business travel will be reimbursed if the university or you, after consultation with your supervisor, cancel your business trip. Travelers and travel arrangers are asked to minimize losses by promptly canceling arrangements and seeking credits or refunds wherever possible. If you have any questions please contact your business service center, or, if related to grants or contracts, Sponsored Financial Services.

Visitors, Conferences, Events

Visit the Cornell University Coronavirus website for updates.

Business Continuity Considerations

Guidance for Managers and Supervisors

Remote Work

On March 20, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that 100 percent of non-essential workers in businesses statewide must stay home amid concerns of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) spread.

Utilization of remote work is required for employees in all cases except where specifically allowed and identified as an essential service.

Use the Remote Work Guide for Departments and Managers to assist in making remote work arrangements.

Essential On-campus Services

Cornell is a continuously operating residential university and some employees must work on campus to provide services that are essential to residential life, campus health and safety, critical research, and/or or education. If you are unclear if you are
to report to work on-site, contact your supervisor.

Supervisors and employees are expected to utilize social distancing if working on campus for essential services.

**Employee Attendance**

Managers and supervisors, including faculty who supervise staff, must not pressure others to come to work if they are ill or need to stay at home to care for ill dependents. Conversely, if essential employees are well, they should not be pressured to stay away from work for reasons such as their ethnic or racial background, or place of residence.

Employees who are caregivers for a sick family member are to exercise caution and stay home if possible. At this time, if an employee is well, they should be allowed to come to work. (see also: **If a family member I live with, or care for, is quarantined, should I still come to work?**).

Local or state health departments, or in some cases primary care physicians, will determine when an employee is required to stay out of work, and in the absence of that guidance, employees should come to work when they are well. If an employee’s doctor provides them with medical documentation, please ask the employee to forward that information to Medical Leaves Administration.

If someone is sick, they should focus on taking care of themselves and not be asked to work from home. Supervisors should be sure that employees are aware of [CDC prevention guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).

Given Cornell’s commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all, managers and supervisors (with the support and involvement of local HR members as needed) should ask employees who are exhibiting symptoms of respiratory illness to go home and stay home until 24 hours after they are free of symptoms.

A doctor’s note or documentation of dependent care responsibilities will not be required from employees when using HAP in these instances, except when employees are returning from long-term disability or a workers’ compensation-related absence.

**Volunteer Service**

Regular full- and part-time academic and nonacademic employees who are trained and registered as emergency responders with the Red Cross or other similar organizations may be granted up to five days paid leave per calendar year for time away from work needed to provide volunteer services emergency response. More information can be found in the emergency responder section of [University Policy 6.9 Time Away from Work](https://policies.cornell.edu/content/university-policy-6.9-time-away-from-work).

**Operating Status**

Faculty and staff may have concerns about measures that may need to be taken by Cornell in the event of widespread local, regional or national transmission of COVID-19. The university has extensive and thorough emergency procedures and is committed to doing everything it can to ensure the health and safety of our community. Because this is a rapidly changing situation, Cornell is prepared to enact a range of preventative measures based on guidance from state and local health officials, including a partial or full closure of campus if necessary to protect public health.

Please be sure to check for changes to the university operating status at [https://emergency.cornell.edu/](https://emergency.cornell.edu/) as the definitive source for timely information about Cornell’s operating status.