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## Quarantine & Isolation

### Definitions

#### What is quarantine?

Quarantine means separating a healthy person or group of healthy people away from others due to exposure to a contagious disease like COVID-19.

#### What is isolation?

Isolation means separating a sick person with a contagious disease like COVID-19 away from others. For more information visit the [Tompkins County Health Department website](#).

### Quarantine

Employees who are quarantined by the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for employees outside of Tompkins County or NY state, the appropriate local health department), another authorized agency, or their primary care physician, and are symptomatic, may choose to work remotely if their job responsibilities may be performed remotely. If the employee is asymptomatic, they will be expected to work remotely if their duties make remote work possible. If their job responsibilities do not allow for them to work remotely, they will be placed on paid leave for a maximum of 14 calendar days.

Employees will not be required to use accruals during the paid leave. If not cleared to return to work after 14 calendar days, the employee should consult with Medical Leaves Administration to move to short-term disability leave, New York Paid Family Leave, or another type of leave as appropriate.

### Vaccinated Individuals

Consistent with [CDC guidance](#) asymptomatic individuals who are fully vaccinated (see below) against COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they have been around someone who has COVID-19. All employees are to utilize Cornell's Proof of Vaccination tool to provide documentation when they are fully vaccinated and provide evidence of full vaccination to the local Health Department if contacted due to a potential exposure. Final decisions regarding the need to quarantine are made by the local Health Department.

#### People are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

If it has been less than 2 weeks since your final dose you are not fully protected.

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### Quarantine Exception - Approval to Return to Work Prior to Completion of Quarantine

Cornell has not generally employed the term "essential employee." During the pandemic and NY Pause, certain groups of employees met the [New York State essential worker definitions](#) and continued to report to work on campus to support student, physical plant and safety operations, animal health, services to New York State and biomedical research needs even though others were not permitted to work on campus. For the interests of community health and safety the University

has implemented a central review and approval process to determine if an employee, working in one of those service areas, will be approved to return to campus prior to the completion of the COVID-19 quarantine period.

### Procedures for Requesting Approval/Exception

Cornell is committed to robust public health measures to mitigate the transmission and spread of COVID-19 in the Cornell community and greater Ithaca area. As such, even though NYS regulations permit an exception to a ten (10) day quarantine for employees determined to be “essential”, Cornell University is implementing the following protocol to limit student, staff and faculty exposure.

Some cases may be considered for an individualized approach that shall be determined in consultation with local unit VP/Dean or designee, local HR, Cornell Health Occupational Medicine, central HR, EHS, to perform an expedited review process to avoid disruption of critical services.

1. Local Health Department orders employee to quarantine; order is communicated by employee to local HR who will [follow the process outlined in Guidance for HR Representatives and Supervisors For COVID-19 Positive, Quarantined, or Isolated Employees](#)
2. Local HR, in collaboration with the supervisor/unit manager, determines if a request under this process is appropriate, to permit the employee to return to work on campus prior to the completion of the quarantine period

□ **Note:** Until a final determination is made following the steps below, the employee must comply with the quarantine order and stay out of work until otherwise directed

3. Local unit VP/Dean, or designee, reviews and determines, understanding the potential risks, if it is appropriate to seek university approval to permit an employee or employees to return to work prior to the completion of the quarantine period.
4. Central Review Team (local unit VP/Dean or designee, local HR, Cornell Health Occupational Medicine, central HR, EHS) convenes to review the request and considers where the employee (or group of employees) works, their individual roles, interactions with the campus community, the operational impact of an absence, the reason for the quarantine and other factors as appropriate to determine if they meet Cornell COVID-19 criteria to be:
  - a. Confirmed as an employee eligible for consideration under this process
  - b. Permitted to return to work prior to completing the 10-day quarantine period
5. The Central Review Team’s deliberations will be forwarded to the President and Provost for approval.
6. If confirmed as qualifying for this process and permitted to return to work the employee will be directed as follows:
  - a. In most circumstances, employees will **stay out of work at least 6 days from** last known exposure,
  - b. Complete, and receive negative results from: 2 diagnostic tests from the date of last known exposure
    - i. 1st test 4 days after last known exposure
    - ii. 2nd test 6 days after last known exposure
  - c. If both test results are negative, and the employee is asymptomatic, they may then be permitted to return to work
  - d. Complete surveillance testing each day they are scheduled to work during the quarantine period
  - e. Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 each day they are scheduled to work and follow NYS and CDC guidelines for essential employees returning to work during quarantine (e.g. take your temperature before work, wear a face mask at all times, practice social distancing in the work-place as work duties permit). If symptomatic, do not go to the workplace and instead contact your primary care provider.

### [HR Reps/Managers: Employee Quarantine/Isolation Guidance](#)

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## Isolation

Employees who are placed in isolation by the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for employees outside of Tompkins County or NY state, the appropriate local health department) or other authorized agency, must remain out of the workplace for a maximum of 14 calendar days. If the employee is asymptomatic, they will be expected to work remotely if their duties make remote work possible. If the employee is symptomatic but able to continue working remotely, they may choose to do so. Employees who are unable to work remotely, due to the nature of their work or their symptoms, will be placed on paid leave and will not be required to use accruals during this time. If not cleared to return to work after 14 calendar days, the employee should consult with Medical Leaves Administration to move to short-term disability leave, New York Paid Family Leave, or another type of leave as appropriate.

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## What To Do If Notified Of A Positive Test Or Quarantine/Isolation Order

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 or is ordered to quarantine or isolate by the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for employees outside of Tompkins County or NY state, the appropriate local health department), another authorized agency, or their primary care physician, they must immediately notify their local HR representative of the positive test or order to quarantine and alert their supervisor that they are unable to work. Employees are not required to tell their supervisor any medical diagnosis. However, if an employee is unable to work, in keeping with current policy, the employee is expected to notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible.

***Note:** The employee may self-disclose medical information with anyone of their choosing; however, ADA does not permit employers, regardless of how the information was obtained, to disclose an employee's medical information to an employee's colleagues, customers, or vendors. Employers can generally inform colleagues, customers, or vendors that an "employee has tested positive for COVID-19" or that an employee "has been exposed to COVID-19." The employee(s) should not be identified and identifying information should not be provided. Employers may and should report a positive test result to public health officials.*

It is important for supervisors and human resources representatives to know how to report (1) employees who have confirmed cases of COVID-19 and (2) employees whom have been ordered to isolate or quarantine based on known or suspected exposure to the virus. Employees, supervisors and human resources representatives are responsible for reporting employees with confirmed COVID-19 test results through appropriate channels. For specific information on the process for handling confirmed cases and orders of isolation/quarantine go to [Guidance for Human Resources Representatives and Supervisors for COVID-19 Positive, Quarantined, or Isolated Employees](#). This internal reporting protocol is designed to protect the privacy of affected employees while at the same time, permitting Cornell to implement proper space disinfection and other safety measures.

[HR Reps/Managers: Employee Quarantine/Isolation Guidance](#)

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## Frequently Asked Questions

[Accordion]

### **If an employee who is approved to be on campus has a household member (spouse, parent, child, etc.) who tests positive, is the employee permitted to come to campus?**

The local Health Department will lead the contact tracing effort and direct all contacts (as they identify) to quarantine and/or seek testing as directed. If ordered to quarantine, the employee would not be permitted to be on campus until released from the quarantine. Additionally, employees who work on campus must complete Daily Check before they come onto campus. They should answer all questions truthfully. The Daily Check questions include questions related to household illness. If they turn red, they will have a telehealth visit with a CMC medical provider (at no charge to the employee) and must follow the medical guidance provided.

If they are able to work remotely during quarantine they are expected to do so. If unable to work remotely they will be placed on paid leave.

### **If an employee who is approved to be on campus has a household member (spouse, parent, child, etc.) who is directed to quarantine by the local Health Department, is the employee permitted to come to campus?**

The local Health department will lead the contact tracing effort and direct all contacts (as they identify) to quarantine and/or seek testing as directed. If ordered to quarantine, the employee would not be permitted to be on campus until released from the quarantine. Additionally, employees who work on campus must complete Daily Check before they come onto campus. They should answer all questions truthfully. The Daily Check questions include questions related to household illness. If they turn red, they will have a telehealth visit with a CMC medical provider (at no charge to the employee) and must follow the medical guidance provided.

If they are able to work remotely during quarantine they are expected to do so. If unable to work re- motely they will be placed on paid leave.

**If an employee who is approved to be on campus has a household member (spouse, parent, child, etc.) *who is taken out of work, school or day care by their doctor* due to concerns related to COVID symptoms, is the employee able to come to campus?**

Employees who work on campus must complete Daily Check before they come onto campus. They should answer all questions truthfully. The Daily Check questions include questions related to household illness. If they turn red, they will have a telehealth visit with a CMC medical provider (at no charge to the employee) and must follow the medical guidance provided.

If they are instructed not to proceed to campus after the telehealth visit, if able to work remotely, they are expected to do so until they are cleared to return to work. If unable to work remotely, they will be placed on paid leave.

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See also: [Quarantine FAQ on the Cornell COVID-19 website](#)