Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resource Guide

Our priority is the safety and well-being of our employees, their families and customers. If a situation arises, all proper notifications will be given to employees who may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 consistent with directions and recommendations from the Florida Department of Health.

We are here to help you navigate COVID-19 in the workplace.

www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus
Supervisors

Direct employees to resources at www.pinellascounty.org/hr/coronavirus. This is a fluid situation, and we recommend frequent references to this site for updated information.

Communicate regularly with your employees. Be flexible, but consistent. Remain calm and measured.

Discuss individual issues with your department leadership, Human Resources or the County Attorney’s Office, as appropriate.

What can I do as a supervisor for my employees during this time?
You are integral to enforcing proper preventative measures (see CDC recommendations for handwashing and employer guidance). Also:

- It’s vital that you provide necessary information, resources, and support to employees who are at work, at home working or sick, or away on leave.
- To help reduce stress and stay connected, consider allowing employees time to get together briefly (10 or 15 minutes, virtually or with social distancing) to relax, connect, not talk about work, etc.

What if I have additional questions?
Contact Human Resources Employee Relations at employee.relations@pinellascounty.org or (727) 464-3506. All phone lines and emails are continually monitored and responded to as quickly as possible.

Scenarios/Exposure

What protective strategies can employees use now?
Preventative measures, such as:

- Staying home when sick
- Washing hands frequently
- Practicing social distancing
- Cleaning commonly touched surfaces with disinfectant
- Staying updated on the latest accurate information and recommendations
- Remaining calm

These are the best ways to protect yourself and others. See the CDC Disinfection Recommendations.

What happens if an employee is sick at work?
Send them home, deploy disinfectant measures on high touch surfaces.

Employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. fever, cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or who become sick during the day should avoid unnecessary contact with other employees and customers, be sent home immediately and the employee should consult with their health care provider.
What if an employee hears about a coworker that may be sick with COVID-19?
If an employee has information about a possible infection, the employee should share the information privately with management only so that proper steps can be taken and to avoid causing anxiety among other staff.

What if an employee believes they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, but the employee is not experiencing related symptoms?

➢ If an asymptomatic employee believes they may have come in contact with an infected person, should contact the Florida Department of Health to discuss their potential risk factors and obtain direction about any further steps that should be taken. They should contact their supervisor if recommended by DOH and advise them of the situation. Employees are discouraged from making announcement of a possible infection to large groups of employees.

➢ If an asymptomatic employee calls their supervisor and notifies them that they are required to stay home to self isolate because they were a contact of a confirmed case, the contacts they had at work are considered “contacts of a contact” and therefore would not meet the current eligibility for testing. These “contacts of a contact” are not required to be in quarantine and should be permitted to continue to work, following recommendations for social distancing as appropriate.

➢ If an asymptomatic employee is notified by a local health department that they are a contact of a confirmed case, they will be required to be under mandatory quarantine or precautionary quarantine in their home, depending on if contact was close or proximate respectively, following the guidelines provided by the CDC.

What if an employee has been exposed to a family member who may be infected but hasn’t been confirmed?
Any spouse, child(ren) or other household members, assuming both they and the individual under quarantine are asymptomatic, are considered a “contact of a contact” and therefore are not required to be in quarantine. They can go to work or engage in other activities following for social distancing protocols as appropriate. As always, check CDC guidelines.

Telework

Is telecommuting an option?
Telecommuting, video chat meetings, conference calling and the use of technological tools that enable remote work can be great ways to maintain operations while limiting exposure between employees.

Such options may not be feasible for many positions within the County due to the nature of the job or type of work performed.

Whether to allow telecommuting is the decision of each Appointing Authority. As such, Appointing Authorities that want to allow, or require, telecommuting should be clear about expectations for those arrangements and consistently apply appropriate policies in effect. View the BTS Remote Work Guidance (login to SharePoint required). More resources are available on
our website such as 10 Tips for Working Effectively at Home and Well-being Ideas for Remote Employees.

Absence, Leave and the Families First Coronavirus Act

How should supervisors respond to an employee’s request for time off due to COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms or illness?
Employee requests for time off due to COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms or illness should be granted and tracked along with other requests and absences. Any employee displaying flu and flu-like symptoms should not come to work. Per our current policy, this is considered scheduled leave since flu-related absences are currently treated as scheduled leave. With the Families First Act, employees are able to take advantage of the emergency paid sick leave.

Should supervisors require doctor’s notes for absences related to COVID-19?
No. In accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), doctor’s notes shall not be required from employees for flu and flu-like illnesses (including COVID-19). The same applies if an employee stays at home to take care of a household family member who is experiencing COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms or illness. Employees may be required to provide a medical note to return to work after taking Emergency Paid Sick Leave. Check with your supervisor to understand your obligations.

What is the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act?
This Act is a federal law that, among other things, provides free COVID-19 testing, Emergency Paid Sick Leave relating to COVID-19, and an expansion of the current Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA). View the Families First Coronavirus Response Act FAQs.

What are the options regarding paid leave?
Beginning April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, for eligible employees:
- **Emergency Paid Sick Leave (NEW)** – Effective April 1, 2020, this is a new type of leave provided in accordance with federal law. Review the Families First Coronavirus Response Act FAQs for specific info, but basically this provides full-time employees up to 80 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave if unable to work due to COVID-19 illness or childcare issues due to school closures.
- **Emergency Family & Medical Leave Expansion (NEW)** – Review the Families First Coronavirus Response Act FAQs for specific information.
- **A Friend in Need (AFIN)** – See Policy #12. This is a voluntary program through which an eligible employee may choose to assist eligible fellow employees in times of need by permitting person-to-person leave donation as defined within the policy. NOTE: A Friend in Need Program is available for an employee who is sick or needs to care for a sick family member but NOT to an employee who needs to take care of well children due to school being closed.
- **Administrative leave with pay** – See Personnel Rule 4 which provides Appointing Authorities the ability to grant administrative leave with pay if such leave is in the best interests of the organization.
Leave without pay - See Personnel Rule 4 which provides the option of leave without pay after all forms of accumulated or gained leave have been exhausted (with noted exceptions).

**Traveling**

**What if my employee travels?**
Follow the [CDC travel recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/) and directions from the Florida Department of Health on what to do if an employee has recently traveled and wants to return to work. Please check this information before making a decision as recommendations may change quickly. Consult with Employee Relations at employee.relations@pinellascounty.org or (727) 464-3506 with any questions or concerns.

**Temporary Employees**

**What about temporary employees from Personnel Solutions Plus (PSP)?**
Temporary contract workers were notified via PSP about our practices of staying home if sick, using good hygiene and that they will be sent home if sick. You, as a supervisor, should also emphasize these practices to all employees including temporary contract workers. Some PSP employees continue to work – either remotely or in the office. Please contact jobs@pinellascounty.org if you have questions.
Scenario Flowcharts

**Employees** who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should:

- Remain home
- Notify their supervisor. (Employee may be entitled to Emergency Paid Sick Leave.)
- Monitor their health
- Follow [CDC recommended precautions](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html) and comply with medical orders, including instructions for self-isolation or quarantine

Should the employee begin to experience symptoms, or test positive for COVID-19, then the **Supervisor** should inform others of the possible exposure and the **employees** should self-monitor their health. The supervisor’s disclosure should only include necessary information and should maintain the employee’s confidentiality, including identity.

**The employee** should:

- Contact their healthcare provider.
- Contact the Florida Department of Health ([866] 779-6121 | [COVID-19@flhealth.gov](https://www.floridahealth.com)) to discuss their potential risk factors and obtain direction about any further steps that should be taken.
- Contact their supervisor immediately and advise them of the situation. (Employee may be entitled to Emergency Paid Sick Leave.)
- Not make an announcement of a possible infection to large groups of employees.

If an asymptomatic employee notifies their supervisor that they are required to stay home in quarantine because they were a contact of a confirmed case, the **contacts they had at work are considered “contacts of a contact”** who, if they have questions about testing or quarantine/self-isolation, should contact their healthcare provider.
**An employee brings a concern to management about another employee appearing to be sick at work.**

**Management should:**
- Take information regarding what the employee has observed, take concerns seriously and look into the matter.
- Observe the employee who is suspected of being sick to determine validity of the complaint.
- If the suspected employee is showing symptoms of COVID-19, management should speak to the employee to determine if they are feeling well.
  - If it is determined the employee is not well, they should be sent home by management. (Employee may be entitled to Emergency Paid Sick Leave.)
  - If the employee is not exhibiting signs of illness, no action should be taken.
- Information should be relayed to the complaining employee that the matter was looked into and has been addressed appropriately.

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**The employee should:**
- Speak with supervisor or manager in a safe, quiet area, or on the telephone about the situation.
- Not make announcements of a possible infection to large groups of employees.
- Follow supervisor or management’s direction about leaving the worksite.
- Call healthcare provider or the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) hotline to discuss situation and obtain medical advice. The FDOH, COVID-19 Call Center is available 24/7 at (866) 779-6121 or email COVID19@flhealth.gov.
- Follow appropriate healthcare provider directions.
- Stay away from others and practice social distancing and good personal hygiene in accordance with current recommendations (https://floridahealthcovid19.gov) and healthcare provider’s instructions.
- If employee tests positive for COVID-19, follow procedures for this scenario.

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**What if an employee begins to experience COVID-19 symptoms, i.e. fever, cough, or shortness of breath, while at work?**

**Supervisors or designee should:**
- Treat the situation as if the suspected case is a confirmed case for purposes of sending home potentially infected employees. Do not identify by name the infected employee or you could risk a violation of confidentiality laws.
- Let your affected workers know that an employee has not tested positive for the virus but has been exhibiting symptoms.
- Contact building maintenance and request a deep cleaning of your affected workspace(s).

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**An employee has a suspected but unconfirmed case of COVID-19.**
Management should:

- Inform coworkers of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality of the employee, including their identity.
- Close the office (or spaces the infected employee occupied) and have areas cleaned where the employee may have had contact.
- The fellow employees should self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) and contact their healthcare provider with any concerns.

ADDITIONALLY:

- Employees should speak with management about concerns.
- Employees may seek further guidance by calling the Department of Health.


Supervisors or designee should:

- Politely deal with the customer by saying “We are concerned, given what is going on with the coronavirus. Please take my business card with you outside and call the number indicated for assistance with your service needs.”
- Clean any surface touched by the customer.

ADDITIONALLY:

- Posters should already be placed outside entrance.
- Cleaning should be occurring frequently throughout the day.
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles and hand sanitizers for all. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained.