

## COVID-19 (2019 Novel Coronavirus)

# Information for Employers

As more information is becoming available about COVID-19, it is important to take precautions to help prevent further spread of the virus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have provided strategies that employers can take to help prevent the spread of the virus.

### What can employers do if an employee is sick?

- If an employee has symptoms of acute upper respiratory illness (i.e. coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath), encourage them to stay home from work. If the employee has had a fever, signs of a fever, or other flu-like symptoms within 24 hours, they should stay home.
- Ensure your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance.
- Talk with companies that provide your business with temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home, and encourage them to develop non-punishing leave policies.
- Do not require a doctor's note for employees who are sick as doctors and healthcare facilities may be experiencing a higher-than-normal volume of patients and may not be able to provide documentation in a timely manner.
- Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member.



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Prepared by  
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### What if an employee is sick at the office?

Separate all employees with symptoms of acute upper respiratory illness from other employees and send them home immediately.

### How can I help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in my workplace?

- Emphasize the importance of employees covering coughs and sneezes with their elbow or shoulder.
- Ensure employees know to wash their hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Encourage employees to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol when they are unable to wash their hands.
- Provide hand sanitizer and tissues for employees.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning of all frequently touched surfaces (workstations, countertops, doorknobs, etc.)
  - Provide disposable wipes for employees
- When possible, allow employees to work remotely.

### Should I cancel my employees' travel?

Advise employees before traveling to take certain steps.

- Check CDC.gov for the latest travel recommendations
- Advise employees to check for any symptoms before travel and notify their employer if they are ill.
- Ensure employees know that if they become sick while traveling, they should notify their employer immediately and contact a healthcare provider.
- Ensure employees know the company's policy for obtaining medical care outside the country.

### What else should I tell my employees?

Employees who are well but have a family member diagnosed with COVID-19 should notify their employer so proper precautions can be taken.

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure in the workplace but maintain their employee's confidentiality.

Maintain open lines of communication with your employees and keep them apprised of new and updated information. Ensure your employees know there is no need to panic.

Information for this document came from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

#### Reference

Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), February 2020. (2020, February 26). Retrieved March 3, 2020, from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>