

Human Resources Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19

Last Revision: 3/30/20

Employee Support Center – 919-350-7838 (HR & Occ Health); the Center will be staffed 8AM-5PM Monday through Friday; one person will be on-call after these hours – if you get voice mail, please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

STAFF SUPPORT

During this stressful time for staff, what resources are available to staff who need emotional support or have questions?

- An Employee Support Center has been established in the Incident Command Center. You are very valuable to us; responding to your needs/questions and helping you manage stress is a high priority for WakeMed; to assist you, the following resources are available:
 - ❖ Employee Support Center (HR & Occ Health Reps are located in Incident Command Center) – direct phone number 919-350-7838
 - ❖ Employee Assistance Program - 1-800-326-3864
 - ❖ Spiritual Care Department – 984-289-3432; jegilmore@wakemed.org
 - ❖ Behavioral Health services for those covered by the BCBS WakeMed Insurance Plan
 - ❖ Supervisor/manager is a great resource as well, and in many cases would be your best first resource for questions related to staffing/schedules

Who makes the decision to close my department and what happens to me if I am flexed off?

- Department management must contact the Incident Command Center at 919-350-8055 to discuss impact, options and make decisions. The Labor Pool will assess options for staff to work in other locations if services close.
- If you are flexed off, your manager or charge person, should:
 - ❖ If nursing, notify the Clinical Administrator who will contact Staffing Resources of your availability to work elsewhere.
 - ❖ If you are non-nursing, your manager should notify Staffing Resources at reassignment@wakemed.org; Staffing Resources will work with Employee Support Center of your availability to work elsewhere.
 - ❖ We may be able to reassign you.
- You will need to use PDO or take the time off without pay if no work is available. If work is not available, you may be eligible for COVID-19 Employee Emergency Fund assistance (EEF COVID-19 application is located on the WakeMed Intranet on the Benefits Page).

EMPLOYEE SCREENING

- Employees should not come to work, but should call the Employee Support Center at 919-350-3878 for assessment and notify their manager (in accordance with departmental call-out procedures) if they have any of the following symptoms, alone or in combination:
 - ❖ Fever greater than 100
 - ❖ New cough that is not allergy-related
 - ❖ New shortness of breath
 - ❖ New sore throat that is not allergy-related
- Signs/messages with the same expectation will be placed at:
 - ❖ all employee parking lots
 - ❖ all timeclocks
 - ❖ all computer login screens
 - ❖ other locations as they are identified

I am returning to work from FMLA or other medical absence. Do I have to come to Occupational Health (OHSS) to be cleared?

- To ensure social distancing, you should not go to the Occ Health Department.
- If you are returning to work from a COVID-19 related health condition, call the Employee Support Center at 919-350-7838 to be cleared prior to return to work.
- If you are returning to work from other medical absences (ex. - maternity leave, GI illness, flu, etc.) email your phone number and your Physician Release Form to Occ Health at OccupationalHealth@wakemed.org or fax them to 919-350-7874. An Occ Health staff member will follow up with you.

SCHOOL CLOSURES & OTHER ATTENDANCE QUESTIONS

Do I have to work if day cares and schools close?

- Employees are expected to work normal schedules. If your position allows, discuss remote working options and/or alternative schedules with your manager.
- Managers may contact the Employee Support Center to discuss remote working options given the nature of department operations.
- Some options for staff to consider for child care; please be careful and vet the resources carefully to ensure your child's safety:
 - ❖ Wake Co Schools have indicated they are working on an option for care; explore availability
 - ❖ Friends/family/neighbors
 - ❖ Parents/care providers of your child's friends
 - ❖ Others who may be home from work/school due to work restrictions
 - ❖ High school/college students who are home

- ❖ Teachers who are home
- ❖ Switch off with spouse/partner
- ❖ YMCA is opening new childcare sites with hours 6:30am – 7:30pm in Raleigh (919-604-7517), Durham (919-815-4281) and Chapel Hill (919-452-4191) for childcare – for information go to www.ymcatriangle.org/essential ; up to age 12
- ❖ Kinder Care: 1(866)337-3105 8 a.m. – 11 p.m. M-F; and 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. Sat & Sun – up to age 12 at some sites
- ❖ Guidepost Montessori – guidepostmontessori.com/programs/emergency-care
- ❖ Kids R Kids Childcare Center in Cary – 919-795-7882 – contact is Julie Moyer; offering 50% discount
- ❖ My Girl Friday (Nanny Service with 24/7 availability) 919-813-9533
- ❖ North Carolina Childcare Resource Assistance – 1-888-600-1685
 - Will connect staff with childcare options up to age 12
- ❖ Child Care Services Association – referral service that is free to the public
 - 1. Email: Referral@childcareservices.org
 - 2. Online Search: www.childcareservices.org/findcare
 - 3. Phone: 1-855-327-5933 (someone will call them back)
 - 4. Form Request: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/childcarereferralrequest>
- ❖ Care.com and theselectsitters.com - services that provide child sitters (there may be other services like this)
- ❖ Temporary agencies
- ❖ Switch off with coworkers who also need care
- ❖ Partner with coworkers to hire someone to care for kids
- ❖ Childcare centers
- ❖ YMCA (discussion regarding establishment of regional centers underway)
- ❖ Boys & Girls club programs
- ❖ Church childcare programs
- ❖ Before/After school programs that may be expanded
- ❖ Discuss alternative schedules and options with your manager

What are my options if I cannot afford alternative child care?

- You may be eligible for assistance from the Employee Emergency Fund; or you may be able to access payment for PDO in your bank of time. Please contact the Employee Support Center to discuss options.

What happens if I need to call out of work for an unscheduled absence unrelated to COVID-19?

- Because WakeMed and our patients need us more than ever during this difficult time, you are strongly encouraged to cover your assigned shift unless you are sick. At this time, normal policies will apply regarding attendance and absences.

Can I request PDO during this period of time while we are addressing issues related to COVID-19?

- While you may request PDO, please recognize that staff may be needed to ensure we continue to provide the highest quality services, therefore your request may be denied. In some cases, if your absence cannot be accommodated, you may be asked to even cancel PDO that was previously approved.

In many situations, Departments have reduced workloads and therefore staff may be encourage to request PDO.

STAFF WITH SYMPTOMS/POSSIBLE EXPOSURES

What should I do if I am experiencing fever greater than 100, a new cough, shortness of breath or a new sore throat?

- Stay home and seek immediate medical advice from:
 - ❖ The Employee Respiratory Diagnostic Center – call 919-350-7838 for assessment and possible testing through the Raleigh Campus site set up for employees only
 - ❖ Your primary care physician
 - ❖ Request a virtual urgent care visit (through MyChart App, WakeMed All Access App, or WakeMed website)

Do I have to use PDO if I believe I have been exposed to COVID-19 while at work and test positive for the virus?

- If you test positive for COVID-19 you must immediately notify Occupational Health at occupationalhealth@wakemed.org. You will be contacted by an Occupational Health representative. You will need to stay out of work for at least 7 days from the onset of symptoms and 72 hours from your last fever >100. You may be eligible for regular pay without using your PDO for the scheduled hours you miss during the first 7 calendar days of your absence (up to 40 hours). If additional time is needed, you will use PDO (if available) or take the time off without pay. Upon readiness to return to work, you must email Occupational Health at the above-stated email address to receive approval to return.

What happens if I think I may have been exposed to COVID-19 or have heard that another WakeMed employee may have been exposed and that employee is currently working?

- As long as you are asymptomatic you may continue to work, but watch for symptoms.

What should I do if I have contact with someone who is known to have had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case?

- In this situation, you are not considered to be personally exposed. You may continue to work, but watch for symptoms.

What should I do if I have a health condition that would prohibit me from working safely in my current position/environment due to potential exposure?

- Please complete a COVID-19 Request for Accommodations Form (under COVID-19 Resources on WakeMed Intranet) and return it to employeerelations@wakemed.org. An Employee Relations representative will contact you to discuss your situation; additional information may be needed from your healthcare provider?

WORK RESPONSIBILITIES

Do I have to take care of a patient with or suspected of having COVID-19?

- The expectation is that you perform your duties as usual, following established protocols, using appropriate PPE and all other normal methods of infection prevention.
- If you have a special circumstance, please discuss it with your manager. If you feel that you are immunocompromised and it may be unsafe for you to work, you should also discuss the situation with your physician and follow their guidance.

TRAVEL

If I have business related travel planned, may I still go?

- All business-related travel should cease until at least 5/18/20. At that time we will reassess.

What should I do if I have an international or domestic trip planned?

- Based on CDC recommendations, we strongly suggest that staff reconsider travel plans. At this time we are not self-isolating staff who return from high risk areas, but this situation continues to change rapidly. If you travel and return from a high risk area, you could be required to self-isolate for at least 14 days. Before traveling, please discuss with your manager to ensure that your department could accommodate an extended leave if required upon your return.
- In general, you will be required to use PDO or take leave without pay for any time away from work. Each situation will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Exempt employees may have to be handled differently (under FLSA requirements) if they are required to take time off under self-isolation; please consult with the Employee Support Center regarding exempt employee absences.

WORK RESTRICTIONS

What happens if I am put under work restrictions or excluded for work for a period of time as advised by WakeMed or Health Department?

- Occupational Health and/or the Health Department will provide very specific guidance, instructions and frequent follow up with any individual placed on work restrictions and instructed to stay at home; you will be instructed when you can return to work.

STAFF EDUCATION

Are classes through Nursing Education and Organizational Development being held?

- Nonessential training classes will be cancelled for the following 2 weeks starting 3/18/20; you will receive an email notification if you are scheduled for a class that is cancelled.

Will there be changes or delays with New Employee Orientation?

- New Employee Orientation will continue as scheduled for now, with social distancing standards in place. Human Resources is exploring options for virtual orientation in the event it is needed.

MISCELLANEOUS

Can I schedule an interview with a job candidate needing to travel to NC?

- We are encouraging virtual interviewing via Webex where possible. If not and position is essential, we may still schedule travel as long as the individual is not coming from an area of widespread illness. [For information on using Webex, please see the "How To" page on MyWakeMed.](#) Travel is not advised, and option could change at any time.

Are Nursing & Allied Health Students from our affiliated programs continuing their clinical and precepted rotations at WakeMed?

- At this time, yes, but we are in close communication with our affiliated programs and monitoring changes to their school processes and WakeMed recommendations. The decision has been made that no Nursing or Allied Health student/faculty can enter rooms that are on droplet/airborne isolation and schools are being notified of this update. If any questions related to students/faculty, please contact Harriet Stephenson at 919-350-6997.

What can we expect from WakeMed Volunteers serving in our hospitals?

- The decision has been made to suspend most of our volunteer service programs; many volunteers are in a high risk category and are already requesting a leave of absence; Volunteer Services is working as quickly as possible to notify impacted managers.

Do I need to use special washing techniques with my work clothes?

- No, your normal washing method should be sufficient. You might consider disrobing immediately upon arrival at home and putting your clothes directly in the washing machine if that would make you feel safer.