



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

**MEMORANDUM
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER**

TO: All State Agencies and Authorities
FROM: Director of State Operations and Infrastructure, Kelly Cummings
DATE: March 15, 2020
SUBJECT: Employee Testing and Evaluation Protocols for COVID-19

Effective March 16, 2020 at 12:00PM, all state agencies and authorities must abide by the following protocols for employees who report symptoms of illness associated with the COVID-19 virus. Any symptomatic employee should not report to work. As the number of suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 increases, all New York State employees must monitor themselves for possible symptoms, such as:

- fever,
- cough,
- shortness of breath, or
- respiratory infection/distress.

Any employee experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19 shall immediately report symptoms to their supervisor and the agency/authority's human resources (HR) personnel.

The supervisor and HR official will immediately direct the employee to leave work, if they are currently at work, or stay home, if they are not at work, and self-quarantine as a precaution. The supervisor shall request and record the latest contact information for the employee, including home or mobile telephone numbers, so that HR personnel can reach them for follow up information. If the employee is experiencing severe symptoms and requires urgent medical attention, the supervisor should call 911 and notify the dispatcher that the distressed employee may have COVID-19 symptoms, so that emergency medical service responders may use appropriate precautions.

The HR official will deploy facility maintenance personnel to clean and disinfect the suspected employee's work area, including their desk, chair, telephone, desktop and computer equipment. Facility maintenance staff should also clean the nearby common areas, including but not limited to door handles/push plates, light switches, elevator buttons, door

handles/push plates, break room tables and chairs, as well as kitchen and restroom faucets. Additional cleaning guidance can be found at www.ny.gov/coronavirus.

The HR official will remotely contact the employee via their contact information to (1) inquire about current symptoms, (2) verify that they have precautionarily quarantined, and (3) direct the employee to call a health care provider and seek testing. The employee should first contact their primary health care practitioner to see if they are available and able to collect a sample for testing. If not, the employee should contact the **New York State COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-364-3065** to be referred to a regional testing site that can collect and submit a sample for testing. The employee must notify HR of the test results as soon as they are received. Test results will be verified by the New York State Department of Health (DOH).

The HR official will also ask the employee about their potential contact and interactions with other employees of the agency/authority. People who have been in close contact with a symptomatic employee are at a greater risk of contracting COVID-19, if the employee tests positive. As a precaution while the employee awaits test results, HR – in consultation with DOH – will identify the employees who may have been in close, sustained contact with the employee after they became ill. These close professional contacts will be notified by HR of their potential exposure and directed to self-quarantine. Professional contacts shall remain quarantined until the symptomatic employee’s test results are received, and HR provides further notice. (*See* “Guidance on the Contacts of a Close or Proximate Contact of a Confirmed or Suspected Case of COVID-19” at www.ny.gov/coronavirus.)

The HR official will provide information on both the suspected employee and potential professional contacts to the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations (GOER) and DOH. GOER can be reached at 518-474-6988 and will advise on appropriate policies and procedures depending on the specific circumstances of the situation, as well as track suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 within state agencies and authorities. **DOH can be reached at 1-833-797-4968** and will contact the employee to verify and complete contact tracing and notify the employee’s local health department. If the test result is positive, the local health department may issue a mandatory quarantine and conduct additional tracing of the employee’s personal contacts (e.g. family).

If the test results for the employee are positive (+), HR official will immediately direct the employee to maintain their quarantine for fourteen (14) days and advise the professional contacts to maintain their quarantine and, if they become symptomatic, seek testing from their health care provider. HR will also notify the supervisor of the positive test result and send a notice to all employees who work within the nearby work location.

If the test results for the employee are negative (-), HR official will promptly direct the employee to return to work after they have recovered from their illness and direct the professional contacts under quarantine to resume their daily activities and return to work.

For your reference, please find a summary flowchart of the above process as Appendix A. Employees should contact their supervisor or HR office with questions or concerns. Agency personnel shall uphold the privacy of information shared by employees, in accordance with state and federal law. For the latest on COVID-19 response, visit www.ny.gov/coronavirus.

Thank you for your attention and implementation of this protocol during this difficult time.

Appendix A: Summary Flowchart of the Employee Testing and Evaluation Guidance.

