



COVID-19 Update

Friday, March 13, 2020

This is the first **COVID-19 Update** for NYC Health + Hospitals employees. Employees will receive this communication regularly to keep you informed with the latest guidelines and practices, and other timely information in this rapidly evolving environment.

Every NYC Health + Hospitals employee plays an essential role in helping New Yorkers through this crisis. We urge you to stay informed, engaged and take precautions to stay healthy. The demand for our services will continue to grow and New Yorkers will depend on us more than ever.

As we have been expecting, we now have our first confirmed patients who tested positive for COVID-19. The number of patients remains relatively small but we expect that number to change in a few weeks.

COVID-19 Symptoms and Knowing When To Stay Home

If you have muscle aches, cough, fatigue and low-grade fever, do not come to work. Please contact your physician, your supervisor and your facility Occupational Health Services (OHS). Central Office employees should reach out to Human Resources. Employees who are asked to remain isolated, quarantined or under self-monitoring in accordance with the CDC, will be paid without charge to personal leave balances for up to fourteen (14) scheduled work days while they are home. Employees must provide medical documentation to OHS that they have met the conditions for isolation, quarantine, or home self-monitoring as outlined by CDC standards. [Review the Leave Policy here.](#)

Working from Home

At a time of a public health crisis, patients need us more than ever. It is important to maintain our high standards of care and our doors open to care for all without exception. All direct patient care departments are carefully reviewing and considering several strategies to help maintain safe staffing levels while being sensitive to the needs of our workforce. These strategies include staggering shifts, changing shifts, compressed work week, telecommuting and more. A new and temporary telecommuting policy will be finalized by Monday, March 16 for staff whose responsibilities can be performed outside traditional office settings. Look for Monday's COVID-19 Update for more details.

New Clinical Guidance Tip Sheets and Video

[Tip Sheets and training videos](#) related to COVID-19 patient care are now available to NYC Health + Hospitals providers. This online library of training and education materials for health care professionals includes a short video on how to utilize decision support modules to guide ED surge that are embedded into our H2O electronic medical record system. It also includes guidance for other departments. The H2O Academy will continue to grow this library as the need for more guidance arises.

Internal Meetings and Events

In an effort to minimize large employee gatherings and reduce anxiety, please make every effort to keep in-person meeting attendance to a minimum. At meetings, people should spread out as much as possible to avoid close contact. While certain meetings are mission critical, please offer the option of a WebEx or conference call to meetings that involve more than 20 people. To limit unnecessary travel, events that involve international or out of town participants should be postponed or changed to a web-based format.

New Visitors Policy

Our visitor policies for hospitals, EDs, ambulatory care clinics, Gotham Health sites and nursing homes have been revised to protect our patients, visitors and staff. [Review the policy details here.](#)

Other resources:

[NYC Health + Hospitals COVID-19 Guidance & Resources](#)

[NYC Department of Health](#)

[Centers for Disease Control](#)

Our Special Pathogens and Emergency Response colleagues are available to answer your questions. Send to: COVID-19Readiness@nychc.org

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