

IVCCD Employee Communication about Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Issued March 17, 2020, 5:30 p.m.

This communication is intended for our regular full and part-time benefit eligible staff. Student workers, adjuncts, continuing education instructors, and other hourly timesheet employees should seek information and guidance directly from their supervisors regarding work expectations until further guidance is issued.

This rapidly changing health scenario requires continuous evaluation and monitoring. **Please note that any information contained in this communication may change in the future based on updates from local, state and national experts who are working to mitigate the spread of the virus.**

IVCCD's website will contain information at this link:

- <https://www.iavalley.edu/about-the-district/covid-19-updates>

Other resources include:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- Iowa Department of Public Health: <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing

It is important to note that these symptoms are similar to many common respiratory illnesses, including seasonal influenza. Having these symptoms does not mean that you have COVID-19. Current estimates suggest that symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as many as 14 days after exposure to the virus.

What should I do if I develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19?

To limit the potential for exposure to other people, if you have a fever and a cough, **do not** come to work. Take the following actions:

- Notify your supervisor that you are ill and will not be able to work
- Isolate yourself to keep from potentially exposing other people
- Seek medical advice from your primary care medical provider (but please call ahead first)
- Request leave in Paycor. If you don't have access to Paycor, email your supervisor requesting the supervisor enter the leave request **AND** send an email to HRPayroll@iavalley.edu with the leave request type and amount. Supervisors should work with JoAnn Kruger if assistance is needed with entering leave requests.

What should I do if I think I have been exposed to or infected with COVID-19?

- Alert your healthcare provider immediately if you think you may be infected with COVID-19, including if you have been exposed to someone with the virus and have signs/symptoms of infection.

- If you do not have a regular healthcare provider, you can contact First Nurse anywhere in Iowa at 800-524-6877.
- It is important for you to **call ahead** before visiting your doctor. If you are experiencing symptoms, you should tell your healthcare provider about any recent travel to areas where COVID-19 is spreading, if you have had close contact with someone who lives in or has traveled to an outbreak area, or have had close contact with another person who has been infected. **Follow your healthcare provider's advice.**
- Refer to the prior question regarding leave requirements.

If I am not sick nor have I been exposed should I continue to report to work at my usual work location?

Yes. IVCCD is currently continuing normal daily operations and all employees should continue to report to work at their usual work location and scheduled time unless they have made other arrangements with their supervisor.

- Faculty and campus directives for classes at ECC, IVG and MCC were released on March 16. Faculty members who are teaching via Zoom do not have to report to campus, but access to offices and work spaces remain available to these faculty. Faculty who have lab or other campus related requirements will receive additional guidance from provosts as it is developed. Please follow academic leadership guidance on reporting your class delivery plans to your academic dean.
- IVCCD will closely monitor federal and state guidance as the situation continues to evolve, and will provide more information if circumstances change. All departments have been asked to establish plans for continuity of operations, but special attention will be given to essential District functions.

What should I do if I encounter someone who is obviously sick?

As is best practice with other respiratory illnesses such as seasonal influenza, maintaining a reasonable distance (approximately six feet away) from the sick person is a starting point. Also:

- Do not shake hands or make other physical contact.
- Suggest the individual use a tissue and ask the person to cover their mouth and nose if they should need to cough or sneeze.
- Clean the areas of your work station that the person has touched after the person has left.
- The meeting should be rescheduled to a time when the person is feeling better or the business can be conducted by phone or email. Do not hesitate to offer this suggestion.
- If you believe an employee is ill and should not be working and the employee has not informed his/her supervisor, you should do so in order to reduce the risk to others in the workplace.

Can I work from home in order to continue operations?

We are working on additional guidance related to this. Information will be made available in a separate communication.

Could an IVCCD campus close as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak?

IVCCD will closely monitor federal and state guidance as the situation continues to evolve, and will provide more information as circumstances change. All departments have been asked to establish plans for continuity of operations, but special attention will be given to essential District functions.

If I am nervous to continue to report to work on campus and risk being exposed to this virus, what measures are being taken in order to ensure I am safe?

Employee and student safety are paramount to IVCCD. The District has assembled a team that is dedicated to supporting a safe campus by closely monitoring the situation, coordinating and sharing information with local and state authorities, and monitoring federal and state guidance. Each response team member is working on requirements and expectations for his/her assigned area. This includes: credit class continuation plans, non-credit class continuation/cancellations, communications, housing/food service, employee and student policies, attendance/absence/travel tracking, health guidance for employees and students, athletics, campus events, cleaning considerations and plans, and IT considerations. As circumstances or recommendations change, this information will be communicated in a timely manner.

Details related to the campus cleaning protocol will be posted to the COVID-19 SharePoint site in the coming days.

We realize this is a time of uncertainty and concern, and that can cause stress. We encourage you to continue to take care of your well-being and utilize resources available, such as this link from the Iowa Department of Public Health: [How to Cope with Anxiety about Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

Please also remember to practice good infection control strategies:

- Cover your nose and mouth with tissues when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue in the trash after use.
- Wash hands often for 20 seconds with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth to avoid spreading germs.
- Improve your immune system by getting enough rest (eight hours is ideal), exercising regularly, and eating healthy.
- Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with sick people.
- Instead of contact such as handshakes, give a wave to avoid spreading germs.

When can I return to work if I have had COVID-19?

- You will be given specific instructions by your healthcare provider and/or local public health clinicians based on the most current CDC and IDPH guidance. Please understand that this guidance continues to evolve and may change several times over the next few weeks and months.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if my child's school/day care is closed due to an incident of COVID-19 and my child is not sick. I have no other childcare arrangements. Can I bring the child to work with me?

Bringing a child to work is not allowed because it is contrary to our efforts to support social distancing. Paid or unpaid leave may be available if you must stay home with your child.

Can my supervisor make a temporary change to my job assignments in order to continue the primary (essential) functions during a communicable disease outbreak?

Yes, your supervisor has the right to temporarily reassign employees to work outside their usual classifications/responsibilities to the extent they are qualified and can safely perform the work. While this situation may not be ideal – both for employees and their home departments – it is important that we are all willing to adjust our “normal” work in the event of an emergency.

Reassignment may include deploying employees with certain necessary skill sets outside their regular scope of work. Depending on the circumstances, IVCCD will notify employees who are reassigned to essential functions, as well as when and where they should report to work. We have no plans to do this at the moment, but given the shifting environment it is possible.

Can my supervisor make a temporary change to my assigned shift and/or assigned work schedule during a communicable disease outbreak?

Yes. Your supervisor may temporarily adjust employees' work schedules to meet operational demands, based on business needs and circumstances, so that IVCCD can appropriately respond to the situation. These adjustments may be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon operational considerations. Your supervisor should work closely with you to discuss any changes to your assigned shift and/or work schedule and any questions or concerns you may have with the changes.

Can my supervisor require me to work or remain at work during a public health emergency?

Generally, IVCCD will work to balance the preferences of employees with guidance from CDC and IDPH, and the need to maintain business continuity. Your supervisor retains the right to schedule work and assign duties to employees. If an employee is unable to report to work as scheduled due to illness or injury, the supervisor should follow the standard departmental procedure regarding medical documentation for requested sick leave or FMLA (if a qualifying event arises).

A healthy employee may ask to leave work early or stay home (see leave guidance). The supervisor can determine if this request can be accommodated based on department or unit needs. Every effort will be made to approve requested leaves while maintaining essential services. At this point we do not have plans to restrict leave for individuals who are not ill, but given the shifting environment it is possible. We would also make an effort to cover essential services with volunteers first.

What types of leave are available during this time?

The following options are available depending upon the nature of the job responsibilities and the extent of the illness (please note that not all options will be available in all situations):

- Use accrued paid leave as appropriate and per board policy (vacation-non-faculty, sick, personal-faculty)
- Make up the work during the same work week with supervisory approval
- Request to work a different schedule with supervisory approval
- Request leave without pay per board policy 435
- See below exception to current board policy on using sick leave beyond the amount available

What would happen to my pay if I have no sick leave or vacation available and need to be off work?

Unpaid leave may be requested consistent with board policy 435. See below exception to current board policy on using sick leave beyond the amount available. We are also closely watching the federal/state legislation that may provide additional assistance to workers.

Will I be allowed to use leave beyond the amount available in my balance?

Employees who have vacation or sick leave balances available may request use of that paid time off at their discretion. A one-time exception will be allowed if an employee exhausts all leave for a COVID-19 related absence. Employees may use an additional 80 hours of sick leave, causing the balance to go negative. This

will be “paid back” through a payroll adjustment on July 15 using an appropriate combination of future vacation accruals through June 30, using the 120-hour sick leave addition (80 hours of employee and 40 hours of family) added on the July 15 payroll and/or using any available vacation balance on the July 15 payroll. If end of employment is pending and a negative balance remains, the employee will sign an agreement allowing IVCCD to make the adjustment to their final paycheck.

We are watching potential legislation on both the federal and state level that would influence how IVCCD would approach the information contained in this guideline.

Can my approved vacation time off request be canceled?

Yes, your supervisor may reconsider the approved vacation time off request based on operational needs, and particularly during times of emergency. At this time we have no plans to do this, but given the shifting environment it is possible.

Can I be sent home if I am sick? Only for flu-related illnesses? What if I don't think I have a flu-related illness?

IVCCD is required to maintain a safe and healthy environment, and has broad discretion over when and where an employee is to work. For this reason, employees may be sent home if they are sick.

In addition, employees are encouraged to practice basic preventative measures (practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing, covering your nose and mouth with your sleeve if you cough or sneeze, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands).

Are healthy employees allowed to stay home to avoid possible exposure/infection?

IVCCD leave policies direct what a healthy employee should do if he/she chooses to stay home to avoid possible exposure.

What should I do if I have an underlying health condition or am immunosuppressed and want or need to stay home?

Your health is a top priority. You should consult with your healthcare provider in this situation, then notify your supervisor if your doctor recommends you not report to work. Employees not reporting to work should follow leave policies outlined on p. 4.

If I have recently traveled, do I need to be cleared by my doctor before returning to work?

That decision needs to be made through consultation with your healthcare provider or the Iowa Department of Public Health.

What travel restrictions are in place?

- Drive in separate vehicles when traveling for essential District business needs due to social distancing guidelines.
- No international travel thru June 30, 2020.
- No non-essential out-of-state travel until May 30, 2020. If an employee would like an out-of-state trip reviewed for consideration as “essential,” the Unit Head will determine the first level of review; the Chancellor will determine the second level of review. The NJCAA has halted recruiting travel at this time. If the NJCAA guidance changes we will revisit with the most current information available to us.
- All in-state travel should be discussed and approved by your appropriate unit head until April 13, 2020. Due to changing conditions, this date is subject to review and adjustment.

- **Personal travel within the U.S.** – IVCCD is not restricting personal travel; however, we strongly urge employees to use extreme caution and judgment. Please check the [state and territorial health department websites for the latest information](#).

What happens if my child is sick?

We encourage parents, families, and caregivers to have a plan to stay home when their child is sick and consider alternate care options in order to limit the spread of illness to others. We understand during this limited period, employees may be balancing sick family members and work. Please work closely with your supervisor for these situations.

Can I continue to work out at the Dale Howard or MCC Student Activity Center?

At the moment, these facilities remain open for *residential students only*. The hours will be based on our ability to staff and to maintain a clean environment. Until further notice, under no circumstance should an employee use the facility for working out as it violates the governor's mandate and no one is allowed to use the facilities outside of the posted hours.

I am on the IVCCD employee health plan. Are there any changes to coverage or direction I need to know related to COVID-19?

Yes, Wellmark has decided to implement the following steps to help IVCCD employees and their families:

- **Waiving prior authorization processes.** Wellmark will waive prior authorization processes for covered services related to COVID-19 to ensure patients receive the right care at the right time and location.
- **Covering diagnostic tests for COVID-19.** Members will have no cost-share for appropriate testing to establish the diagnosis of COVID-19.
- **Increasing access to prescription medications.** Wellmark prescription drug benefit plans allow for early refill (up to 30 days of medication). Consider the use of your 90-day retail and mail order benefits for maintenance drugs. Wellmark also will ensure formulary flexibility if there are medication shortages or other access issues. Members will not be liable for any additional charges if they receive a non-formulary medication as a result of a shortage of their current medication.
- **Offering virtual healthcare visits and 24/7 help.** Take advantage of virtual visits — a covered benefit for most Wellmark members when they use an in-network healthcare provider or Doctor On Demand® — to avoid the spread of germs. Members also have access to Wellmark's BeWell 24/7SM service that connects them to real people who can help with a variety of health-related concerns 24/7.

If you have concerns about whether or not you or a family member is at high risk for getting sick, please visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) page on Higher Risk & Special Populations](#).

Wellmark will continue to use the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [Iowa Department of Public Health](#) (IDPH), and [South Dakota Health Department](#) as their official sources of information. For the latest U.S. impacts of COVID-19, please see the data reported by the [CDC](#).

To learn more about Wellmark's response to coronavirus, please visit [Wellmark.com/coronavirus](#).