



NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COVID-19 Information and Frequently Asked Questions - Staff

Updated: August 26, 2021

The information detailed in this document is intended to provide guidance for staff. It is important to note that this is a fluid situation and so this document will be regularly updated and modified. It is expected that all employees revisit frequently for the latest updates and information. This document will be kept on the Human Capital Services webpage.

Question: What should I do if I am symptomatic?

Any time that any staff experience COVID like symptoms, even if vaccinated, staff are required to not report to work, enter their absence in AESOP and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to:

- Your immediate supervisor AND
- Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND
- Maria Marcucilli (mmarcucilli@newbedfordschools.org)

If staff begin to experience symptoms while at work they should inform a supervisor immediately and leave the building.

As always, HCS will advise on next steps. Staff that are experiencing COVID like symptoms are not permitted to report to on-site work unless HCS receives:

1. Proof of a negative COVID exam OR
2. A medical note stating you can report to work

Question: What are COVID 19 Symptoms?

Please see the [COVID Symptom Graphic](#)

Question: What should I do if someone I am close with and/or a household member is symptomatic but I feel fine?

If you are fully vaccinated, and have provided proof of vaccination to HCS you need to self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. If at any point you develop symptoms do not report to work, enter your absence in AESOP and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to:

- Your immediate supervisor AND
- Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND
- Maria Marcucilli (mmarcucilli@newbedfordschools.org)

If you are fully vaccinated and have NOT provided proof of vaccination to HCS please send a photo of your vaccination card to Mary Gomes at mrgomes@newbedfordschools.org and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. If at any point you develop symptoms do not report to work, enter your absence in AESOP and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to:

- Your immediate supervisor AND
- Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND
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- Your immediate supervisor AND
- Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND
- Maria Marcucilli (mmarcucilli@newbedfordschools.org)

As always, HCS will advise on next steps.

Question: I am a close contact to a COVID positive person, but I am fully vaccinated. What do I do?

If you are fully vaccinated, and have provided proof of vaccination to HCS you need to self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. If at any point you develop symptoms do not report to work, enter your absence in AESOP and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to:

- Your immediate supervisor AND
- Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND
- Maria Marcucilli (mmarcucilli@newbedfordschools.org)

If you are fully vaccinated and have NOT provided proof of vaccination to HCS please send a photo of your vaccination card to Mary Gomes at mrgomes@newbedfordschools.org and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. If at any point you develop symptoms do not report to work, enter your absence in AESOP and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to:

- Your immediate supervisor AND
- Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND
- Maria Marcucilli (mmarcucilli@newbedfordschools.org)

Question: I am a close contact to a COVID positive person, and am not fully vaccinated. What do I do?

Do not report to work, enter your absence in AESOP and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to:

- Your immediate supervisor AND
- Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND
- Maria Marcucilli (mmarcucilli@newbedfordschools.org)

HCS will advise on next steps.

Question: What should I do if I get COVID symptoms directly after getting the vaccine?

Staff that experience COVID like symptoms, even if vaccinated, must follow the same protocols as listed above. Staff can opt to be proactive when scheduling their vaccine and decide to schedule a rapid test too as a precaution. This way if the staff member does experience side effects synonymous with COVID symptoms, they have the negative results on hand that clears them to return to work.

Question: If I test COVID 19 positive, do I need a negative test to return to work?

No, once you have tested positive you are able to return to work once:

1. 10-day isolation period has ended; AND
2. You have not experienced a fever for 24 hours; AND
3. Symptoms have improved (with exception to loss of taste/smell); AND
4. HCS has confirmed you are cleared to report to work.

Question: If I am symptomatic what type of test can I get?

HCS can accept both PCR and Rapid Test results. However, PCR tests can permit staff to return to work sooner if they are a close contact depending on day of testing. COVID testing is available at numerous locations, such as but not limited to:

[Beacon Testing](#)

[MA Stop the Spread COVID testing webpage](#)

[CVS Website](#)

[Walgreens](#)

[AFC Urgent Care](#)

Question: Do I have to send HCS proof that I have been vaccinated?

No, providing proof of vaccination is completely voluntary. However, once we have proof of vaccination for staff it allows HCS to respond to inquiries regarding travel and close contact quarantine faster and with more accurate information. Proof of vaccination (such as a picture of your vaccination card) can be emailed to Mary Gomes at mrghomes@newbedfordschools.org. Any proof of vaccination received will be stored in the employee's confidential medical file.

Question: How will I get paid if I'm out of work for COVID related reason (symptomatic, positive, close contact)?

1. You may be eligible for a temporary state benefit, Massachusetts Emergency Paid Sick Leave (MAEPSLA). Every employee has been provided with 5 days of emergency leave to use in response to COVID if remote work is not available. The maximum paid leave time is \$850. This paid sick leave is effective May 28, 2021, and until September 30, 2021 or the exhaustion of the \$75 M in programs funds, whichever is earlier. Please note, Massachusetts Emergency Paid Sick Leave does NOT come out of your sick balance.

2. If you had exhausted MAESPLA, or MAEPSLA is insufficient to cover your absence, or MAEPSLA has ended, you will use accrued paid time off (Sick, Personal, Vacation – if applicable) to cover your absence.
3. If you do not have accrued paid time off or do not have enough to cover your absence the remaining time will be unpaid.
4. Remote work will likely not be available in most instances as students will be learning in person.

Question: I am feeling anxious and stressed about COVID-19. Is there support for me?

1. We all have times when we worry. During these unprecedented times it is only natural that we may need someone to talk with now and then, or a referral to a reliable resource. The District provides a free Employee Assistance Program (EAP) called All One Health.
2. All employees and their family can access All One Health EAP for confidential consultation or support anytime, day or night.
3. EAP clients can continue to either email the office or call (508) 990-0777 to set up an appointment. An EAP counselor will respond in a timely manner and offer a phone or video options. Each caller will receive reassurance of the confidential nature of this contact. Any instructions will be given to the caller at the time of their call.

If you have specific employee/employer questions, please contact your supervisor or Human Capital Services at (508) 997-4511 ext. 14353.
