

Policy on Infectious Disease Outbreak Control

Purpose

To take proactive steps to protect the workplace in the event of an infectious disease outbreak and ensure that all essential services are continuously provided.

Policy

Note: Employees, contract staff, and volunteers shall be referred to as “staff” or “staff member” in this policy.

Catholic Community Service (CCS) will take proactive steps to protect the workplace in the event of an infectious disease outbreak such as Covid-19, MRSA, or TB. It is the goal of CCS during any such time period to strive to operate effectively and ensure that all essential services are continuously provided, and that staff are safe within the workplace.

CCS is committed to monitoring the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as well as Federal and State guidance among others to provide authoritative information about the nature and spread of infectious diseases including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an illness or outbreak.

Preventing the Spread of Infection in the Workplace

CCS will ensure a clean workplace including the regular cleaning of objects and areas that are frequently used such as bathrooms, breakrooms, conference rooms, vehicles, door handles and railings. Senior management will monitor and coordinate events around an infectious disease outbreak, as well as to create work rules that could be implemented to promote safety through infection control.

We ask all staff to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of infectious disease in the workplace. The best strategy is frequent hand

washing with warm, soapy water; covering your mouth whenever you sneeze or cough; and discarding used tissues in wastebaskets. We will also provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers throughout the workplace and in common areas.

Unless otherwise notified, our normal attendance and leave policies will remain in place. Individuals who believe they may face particular challenges reporting to work during an infectious disease outbreak should take steps to develop any necessary contingency plans. For example, staff might want to arrange for alternative sources of childcare should schools close and/or speak with supervisors about the potential to work from home temporarily or on an alternative work schedule. *NOTE: Alternate work schedules and work sites must be approved in advance and documented with HR.*

Limiting Travel

During an infectious disease outbreak, all nonessential travel should be avoided during an outbreak. Staff members who travel as an essential part of their job should consult with management on appropriate actions.

Staff should avoid crowded public transportation when possible. Alternative scheduling options will be provided on a case-by-case basis. Contact your supervisor for more information.

Telecommuting

Telework requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. While not all positions will be eligible, all requests for temporary telecommuting should be submitted to your supervisor for consideration. Staff should refer to CCS's Telecommuting Policy for more information.

Staying Home When Ill

Many times, with the best of intentions, staff report to work even though they feel ill. We provide paid personal leave to compensate employees who are unable to work due to illness.

During an infectious disease outbreak, it is critical that staffs do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing symptoms of the infectious disease. Senior Management will provide to staff a list of symptoms for the current outbreak. Staffs who report to work ill will be sent home in accordance with these health guidelines.

Requests for Medical Information and/or Documentation

If you are out sick or show symptoms of being ill, it may become necessary to request information from you and/or your health care provider. In general, we will request medical information to confirm your need to be absent, to show whether and how an absence relates to the infection, and to know that it is appropriate for you to return to work. As always, we expect and appreciate your cooperation if and when medical information is sought.

Confidentiality of Medical Information

Our policy is to treat any medical information as a confidential medical record. In furtherance of this policy, any disclosure of medical information is in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel, and government officials as required by law.

Social Distancing Guidelines for Workplace Infectious Disease Outbreaks

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, CCS may implement these social distancing guidelines to minimize the spread of the disease among the staff.

During the workday, staff are requested to:

1. Avoid meeting people face-to-face. Staff are encouraged to use the telephone, online conferencing, e-mail or instant messaging to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building.

2. If a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable, minimize the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least six to ten feet from each other if possible; avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands.
3. Avoid any unnecessary travel. Cancel or postpone nonessential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions.
4. Do not congregate in work rooms, breakrooms, copier rooms or other areas where people socialize.
5. Bring lunch and eat at your desk or away from others (avoid crowded restaurants).
6. Encourage members and others to request information and orders via phone and e-mail in order to minimize person-to-person contact. Have the orders, materials and information ready for fast pick-up or delivery.

Outside activities

Staff might be encouraged to the extent possible to:

1. Avoid public transportation (walk, cycle, drive a car instead) or go early or late to avoid rush-hour crowding on public transportation.
2. Avoid recreational or other leisure classes, meetings, activities, etc., where staff may come into contact with contagious people.

Staff Direct Exposed or Symptomatic with Infectious Disease

Note: All exposure and illness must be kept confidential between the staff member, supervisor, Program Director and HR.

Direct Exposure

Staff who has been notified of direct exposure of an infectious disease should follow these guidelines:

1. Immediately notify their supervisor and not report to work.

2. The staff member should stay home and follow directives of local, state, or federal officials.
 - a. If a test is required, negative results– a staff member may return to work after a negative test result is received.
 - b. If a test is required, positive result – follow the guidelines under symptomatic/positive of infectious disease below.
 - c. If a test is not required & the staff member must isolate or follow other guidelines – the staff member may return to work only after the isolation period has concluded or as directed by government or medical officials.
3. The staff member’s general work area should be disinfected using proper PPE to limit possible exposure to other staff.

Symptomatic/Positive of Infectious Disease

A staff member who shows symptoms of the infectious disease should follow these guidelines:

1. Immediately notify their supervisor.
2. The staff member should go home if at work, or not report to work if already at home.
3. If the staff member is symptomatic:
 - a. The staff member should be tested for the infectious disease.
 - b. While waiting for test results follow the staff member should follow the directions of medical personnel or local, state, or federal officials.
 - c. If negative test results are received the staff member should not return to work until released by medical personnel or until the key symptoms of the infectious disease have been gone for at least three days. A return to work note should be provided to the staff member’s supervisor and HR. At that time the return to work process will be started as documented below.
 - d. If positive test results are received the staff member should not return to work until released by medical personnel. A return to work note should be provided to the staff member’s supervisor and HR. At that time the return to work process will be started as documented below.

4. In both cases the staff member's work area should be disinfected using proper PPE to limit exposure to other staff.
5. If the staff member tests positive, any staff who have been in contact with the infected individual must begin to follow CCS's direct exposure procedure listed above. Additional disinfecting should be done in the area in which the staff member worked. CCS will work with Public Health to notify other staff that may have been in direct contact with the infected individual. If the staff member came into contact with clients of CCS, the Program Director will work with local and state officials to notify clients of possible exposure.

CCS may create supplemental procedures for specific infectious disease as needed.

Return to Work

After having received clearance to return to work from local, state, or government officials and/or a medical professional the staff member should notify their supervisor and provide written documentation if available. The supervisor, division Director and HR Director will evaluate the situation using the most current standards and documentation in order to release the staff member back to work.

Scope

All CCS Employees, Contractors and Volunteers