
Montefiore follows the New York State Department of Health's Health Advisory: Updated protocols for personnel in healthcare and other direct care settings to return to work following COVID-19 exposure or infection.

MMC OHS can be contacted at 718-920-5406. The call center is open from 8:00AM-10:30PM, 7 days a week. Limited overnight coverage is available. Associates are advised to call OHS to report symptoms concerning for COVID19, to inquire about COVID19 testing and to be cleared to return to work after sick leave.

All associates missing work due to potential COVID19 infections should call OHS.

Healthcare workforce recommendations:

a) Given the high prevalence of COVID19 in NYS and NYC, associates with any of the following symptoms should be considered for possible COVID19 illness:
   Fever >100.0F, muscle aches, severe fatigue, persistent or unusual headache, upper respiratory symptoms, sore throat, dry cough, shortness of breath, chest pressure, diarrhea, chills or loss of smell/taste. Individual presentations can vary, and associates should call MMC OHS to discuss their symptoms.

b) Associates with suspected COVID19 infections will be instructed by OHS to stay out of work until they meet ALL of the following criteria: 1) It has been 7 days from the onset of symptoms 2) They have been fever free for 72 hours without fever reducing medications 3) Their symptoms are substantially improved. Some associates may be cleared to work with mild residual symptoms, but this will be done on a case by case basis and only with guidance from OHS.

c) Montefiore offers diagnostic (PCR/Nasal Swab) COVID19 testing to all associates. This remains a priority for the institution.

d) Positive diagnostic (PCR/Nasal Swab) test results in associates who have symptoms of COVID19 support the clinical diagnosis but will not affect the date of return. The date of return will be determined by clinical symptoms.

e) Associates with negative diagnostic test results are eligible to return to work if they have been fever free for 72 hours (without fever reducing medications) and are feeling well even if it is prior to 7 days from the onset of symptoms. All associates who have had symptoms of possible COVID19 must wear a surgical mask to complete a minimum of 14 days from the onset of symptoms. *Note: as of 3/31/20 all associates are currently asked to wear masks at all times for our universal masking policy, so this is redundant.

f) Associates who never had symptoms of COVID19 and have a positive diagnostic (PCR/Nasal Swab) test, will be advised to remain out of work for 7 days from the first positive test. If they develop symptoms during that time, the return to work date will be based on the first day of symptoms.
g) Some associates who have been cleared to return to work after COVID-19 illness may choose to repeat a diagnostic (PCR/Nasal Swab) test. Associates who have been cleared to work based on the criteria listed above who continue to have a **positive** diagnostic (PCR/Nasal Swab) test are still eligible to work. All associates will continue to wear a face mask at all times as per Montefiore’s universal masking policy.

h) To the extent that it is possible, associates with a recent history of COVID-19 illness (including those that continue to have a positive diagnostic (PCR/Nasal Swab) test after returning to work) should be preferentially assigned to patients at lower risk for severe complications of COVID-19. However, as stated by the Department of Health in a health advisory last updated March 31, 2020, “As the pandemic grows, all staff will need to be assigned to treat all patients regardless of risk level.”

i) SARS-CoV-2 antibody test results **DO NOT** alter or influence decisions around an associate’s eligibility to work.

**FOR EVERYONE’S SAFETY, MMC HAS A UNIVERSAL MASKING POLICY. ALL ASSOCIATES MUST WEAR A SURGICAL MASK IN ALL LOCATIONS OF THE HOSPITAL AND AMBULATORY SITES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

Associates should:
- Maintain 6 feet of distance between associates whenever possible
- Practice frequent hand hygiene—especially after contact with elevator buttons, doors, other individuals, and before and after eating
- Avoid congregating in office suites
- Avoid congregating in cafeteria, lounges, parking lot, outdoor spaces of MMC
- Avoid congregating at the start and end of work shifts (when “punching in and out”)

OHS/ID Collaborative Statement 4.30.20