

# **WILLIS ISD**



**EMPLOYEE RETURN TO WORK**

**AND**

**COVID-19 PROTOCOL TRAINING**

**HANDBOOK**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

- This handbook is part of the Willis Independent School District's employee training and guidance on re-entry into the workplace.
- The safety and well-being of all staff, students, and visitors is a top priority for Willis ISD.
- The information and requirements noted in this handbook are all governed by the Federal Government, the CDC, the Governor of the State of Texas, district attorneys, and the Texas Education Agency.
- Staff members will notice various changes in the functionality and dynamic of the workplace upon returning to work. You may notice visual aids which will provide guidance for new practices and protocols as required by governing guidelines. In addition, you will see more frequent sanitizing of public and work areas, more access to sanitizing stations, and various means to avoid unnecessary congregations of personnel.
- Our goal is to provide measures in which we all work together to ensure all employees and students feel safe to effectively navigate the complexities of the current standards provided by health officials at the local, state, and federal levels. In an effort to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, it is essential for all staff to adhere to our new guidelines outlined in this handbook. We are dedicated to staying up to date on all information related to COVID-19 and how it affects our district, staff, and students as we do our part in supporting the nation's call to help stop the spread of the virus within our community.

**Please keep in mind that the information provided in this handbook is subject to change as guidance concerning the COVID-19 virus is regularly updated.**

## **GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEE SELF-SCREENING**

### **Prior to reporting to work**

- In compliance with TEA requirements, each staff member must self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. This is to include employees taking their own temperature, as well as monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms at the bottom of the page.
- In addition, each employee will complete a Facility Access Acknowledgement Form upon arrival.

### **Symptoms of Possible COVID-19**

- Temperature equal to or greater than 100.0 F.
- Chills
- Shaking or exaggerated shivering
- Close contact with a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Feverish feeling
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Significant muscle pain or ache
- Congestion or runny nose
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat



## REQUIREMENTS

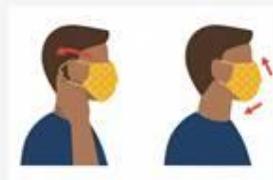
### Masks

- Per the Texas Education Agency, schools and school personnel are to comply with the governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks.
- Masks should be worn upon entering a building, in all common areas such as hallways and restrooms, and when speaking with anyone else.
- Remember, you can spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
- The masks are meant to not only protect you, but to protect others you may encounter.
- A mask is not a substitute for social distancing, and should be done in conjunction with it.
- **Masks should be properly worn to cover the nose, mouth, and chin and conform to your face so there is no chance of droplets entering or leaving.**

**If you are in your office or room alone, you may remove your mask.**

#### Wear your Mask Correctly

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- CDC does not recommend use of masks or cloth masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent



#### Wear a Mask to Protect Others

- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth to help protect others in case you're infected with COVID-19 but don't have symptoms
- Wear a mask in public settings when around people who don't live in your household, especially when it may be difficult for you to stay six feet apart
- Wear a mask correctly for maximum protection
- **Don't** put the mask around your neck or up on your forehead
- **Don't** touch the mask, and, if you do, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer to disinfect

## Gloves

- Gloves are optional.

## Handwashing

- If you choose to forego wearing gloves, you should comply with regular handwashing and use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content.
- Employees should wash or sanitize hands upon entering a building, classroom, after touching a surface that may be frequently touched by other people (door handles, stair rails, tables), and before touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

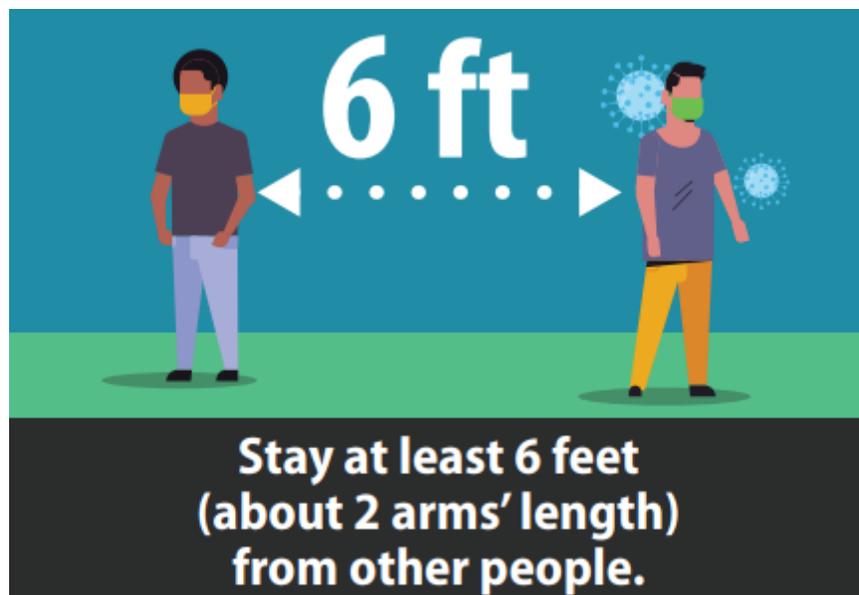


## Congregating

- Please avoid congregating when feasible. If not feasible, follow the mask protocol mentioned above from TEA and try to remain 6 feet apart from others.
- **Other congregating areas to avoid when possible – elevators, lunch breaks, restrooms.**

## Meetings

- As of today, our campuses will be closed to any visitor other than those the District deems as essential to school operations.
- Make every effort to continue scheduling meetings virtually.
- Per TEA requirements, parents and other adults who have essential business with the campus/department must follow virus prevention and mitigation practices.



**\*\*All of these done in conjunction with one another (especially masks, social distancing, and handwashing) are much better than doing each one alone. Taking all of these actions will greatly reduce your risks of getting or spreading the virus.**

## **TEA'S REQUIRED RESPONSES TO COVID-19 CONFIRMED/SUSPECTED CASES**

- Any individuals who **themselves** either: (a) are test-confirmed to have COVID-19: or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (previously listed) must stay home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus/department until the school system (**Human Resources**) screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for re-entry have been met.
- Employees must report to their supervisor and Human Resources (**936-890-3187**) if they themselves have COVID-19, COVID-19 symptoms, or if they have had close contact (defined later in this section) with an individual who is test-confirmed with COVID-19. If so, they must remain off campus until the incubation period has passed or the re-entry requirement below can be met.
- **In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19**, the individual may return when all three of the following criteria have been met:
  - ✓ At least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications), **AND**
  - ✓ The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **AND**
  - ✓ At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- **In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19** and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above. In addition, the individual would not qualify for Paid Emergency Leave (more to come on this later in the Handbook).
- If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above quarantine period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis, or (b) receive a negative test that they are free of COVID via acute

infection test at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19> or other site that comes back negative for COVID-19.

- If the individual has tested positive for COVID-19 and believes the test was a false positive, and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis, though for health privacy reasons the note does not need to indicate what the alternative diagnosis is, or (b) obtain two PCR acute infection tests (at a physician’s office, approved testing location, or other site) at least 24 hours apart that come back negative for COVID-19.

### **Close Contact**

- TEA refers to “close contact” with an individual who is test-confirmed to have COVID-19. Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as :
  - ✓ Being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield; or
  - ✓ Being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes throughout the course of the day, while not wearing a cloth mask,

\*Either defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset.\*
- Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset to ten days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are test-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 10 days following the confirming test.

## **Close Contact Quarantine Protocol**

As of December 2, 2020, the CDC amended their guidance to allow two shorter options for the stay at-home period. Based on current CDC guidance, Willis ISD will apply the following stay-at-home periods to those individuals who are identified as close contacts, **if there is an absence of any COVID-19 symptoms**, and in the absence of specific control orders issued by their local health authority regarding the identified individuals. Specifically, the stay at-home period can be:

- **10 days** after the last close contact, so long as they continue to monitor themselves daily for symptoms and take appropriate precautions through day 14
- Employees can shorten to **7 days** after the last close contact, **after receiving a negative test result (administered at least 5 days after the last close contact)**, so long as they continue to monitor themselves daily for symptoms and take appropriate precautions through day 14.
- If symptomatic, or you become symptomatic, see Page 8.

If individuals return to school from these shorter stay-at-home windows, they should regularly monitor themselves for symptoms to ensure they remain symptom-free and take appropriate precautions (e.g., more consistent mask usage) for the duration of the 14-day incubation period.

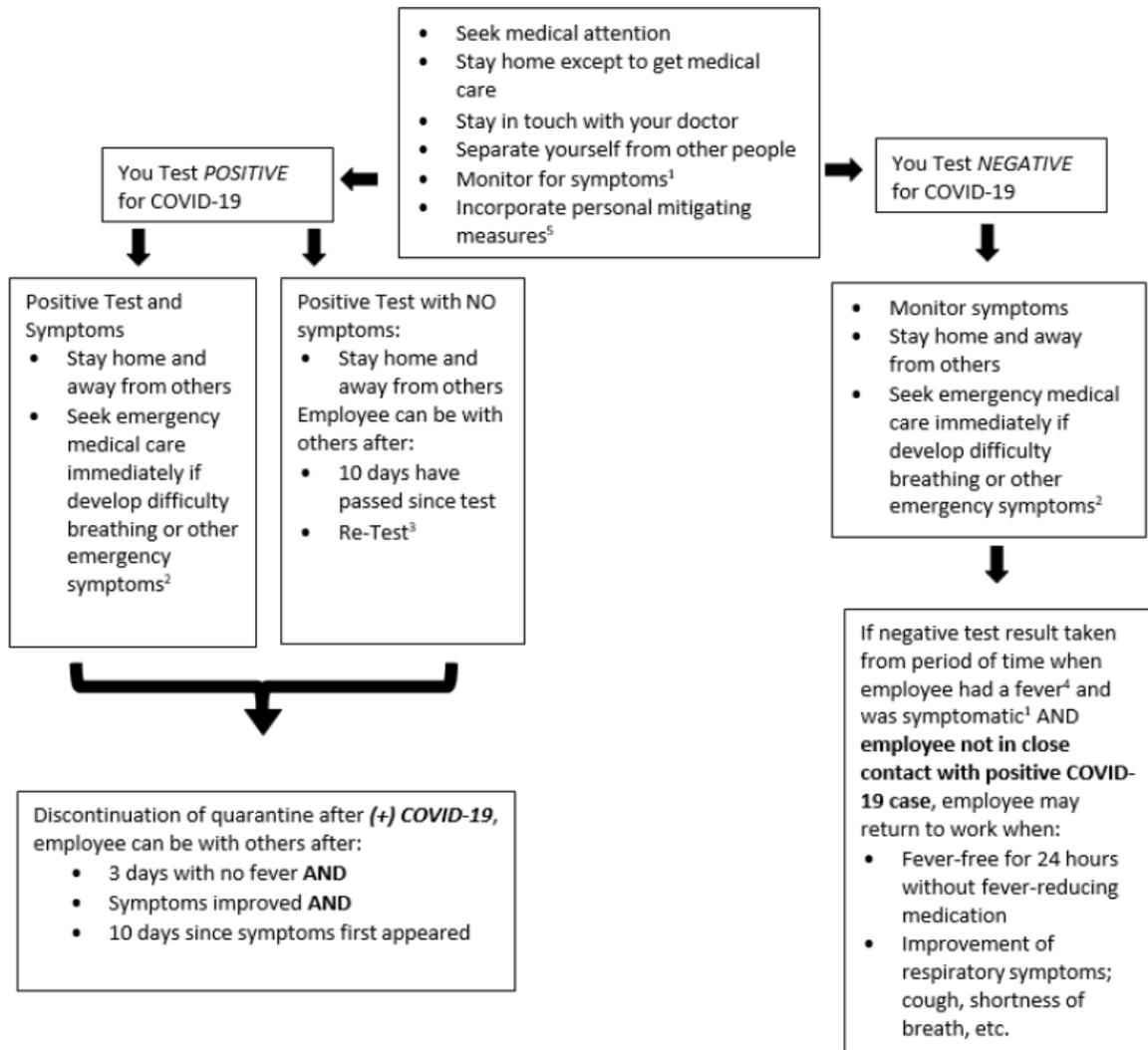
### **REPORTING PROTOCOL**

- The employee is to immediately inform their supervisor if they tested positive or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Note \*this information is confidential and should not be shared with anyone else with the exception of the aforementioned persons.
- **The employee must also immediately contact Human Resources.**
- In addition, the direct supervisors must follow up by immediately notify the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Operations.

- Human Resources will provide the employee with possible available leave benefits including Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL), Expanded Family and Medical Leave (EFML), Family and Medical Leave (FML), and state/local personal and sick leave.
- Human Resources will reiterate the quarantine and requirements for fitness for duty to return to work.

## COVID-19 Flow Chart

If you are sick with COVID-19, or think you might have it (fever of 100.0 F or higher, cough, or other symptoms), notify your supervisor and Human Resources (**936-890-3187**) immediately. Follow guidance from Human Resources and follow the chart below:



## Staffing

Per TEA, employees of school systems, like employees of any organization, must continue to meet the work expectations set by their employers, subject to any employment contract terms. This does not mean we will not and are not taking employee's health and safety first and foremost, as well as students. We will be smart and work to make the environment as safe as possible for everyone.

### **EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE – COVID-19 SITUATIONS ONLY**

- Emergency Paid Sick Leave is not available unless you are advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns about COVID-19, or you are seeking a medical diagnosis due to COVID-19 symptoms.
- Any employee who meets the guidelines for needing to self-isolate or quarantine can be eligible for no more than a total of 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave through the Families First Corona Response Act.
- **Currently, this federal sick leave expires December 31, 2020.**
- Any employee, who has to care for an individual in his/her home due to COVID-19 reasons, including temporary closure of schools, can be eligible for Extended FML benefits of up to 2/3 of the employee's daily rate. **This federal leave expires December 31, 2020.**

### **WILLIS ISD'S EXTENSION OF THE EMERGENCY PAID SICK LEAVE**

At a Special Board meeting on December 17, 2020, the Board passed a resolution extending the Federal Emergency Paid Sick Leave portion of the FFCRA. Below are the District's qualifications for using this Extended EPSL.

- Locally granted leave will be paid leave for qualifying individuals.
- This resolution extends the Federal Emergency Paid Sick Leave, and is not an addition to it. There are still only up to 80 hours. Previously used EPSL will count toward those 80 hours.
- Qualifying conditions include a positive COVID-19 test, employees required to quarantine due to **close contact exposure at work**, and/or exhibiting **symptoms of COVID-19 that are confirmed COVID-19 caused**. District quarantine guidelines used by TEA, CDC, and local health officials are still in effect for each of these three categories **(See the WILLIS ISD EMPLOYEE RETURN TO WORK AND COVID-19 PROTOCOL TRAINING HANDBOOK FOR MORE DETAILS)**

- If the employee does not meet the conditions above, but are required to quarantine, the leave must be taken out of the employee's leave bank(s).
- The Neutral Absence provision will be modified for Sick Leave Days that are verified to be COVID-19 related.
- The Board Resolution does not include the extension of the Federal Extended Family Medical Leave.
- If federal leave becomes available after January 1, 2021, the leave provided in this resolution will expire at that time, and the district will follow the federal guidelines.

### **OTHER STEPS BEING TAKEN TO KEEP YOU SAFE WHILE AT WORK**

Campuses and Departments will put into practice ways to handle the following, to list a few:

- Screening of all visitors
- Close off areas that are heavily used by an individual with a lab-confirmed case until the surfaces in those areas can be disinfected.
- Hand sanitizing stations within the buildings and classrooms.
- More frequent cleaning practices, as well as providing classroom teachers access to disinfecting products to use frequently on desks and other classroom surfaces.
- Immediately separate any student who shows symptoms.
- When feasible, maintain spaces for proper social distancing.
- Provide remote instruction for students that have symptoms or are lab-confirmed positive until re-entry conditions for students are met.
- Minimize large gatherings of students and/or teachers.
- Minimize exposure during lunch, dismissal, class change, etc.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Below are some examples of situations and /or frequently asked questions regarding paid/unpaid leave for COVID-19. As the number of cases increase, we are finding that each situation is unique. **In any COVID-19 situation, please call Human Resources immediately (936-890-3187).**

Questions	Traditional FMLA	Extended FMLA	Emergency Paid Sick Leave	Can I Work
I have a cough, fever, and I'm self-isolating. Do I qualify for paid leave?	<b>No.</b> Unless you receive inpatient care, are under continuing care and received prescription treatment, it does not qualify.	<b>No</b>	<b>No.</b> Unless you are advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns about COVID-19, or seeking medical diagnosis due to COVID-19.	<b>No.</b> Not until all three conditions met 1. At least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever reducing medications. 2. The individual has an improvement in symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) 3. At least 10 calendar days have passed since first symptoms appeared.  OR 1. obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis, or 2. receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart
I've been diagnosed with COVID-19 and my doctor told me to remain in self-isolation for 14 days. Do I qualify for paid leave?	<b>No;</b> see above	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes.</b> You may qualify because you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are quarantined or isolated under a doctor's recommendation.	<b>No.</b> Must meet all top three conditions noted above.
My child's school has suspended classes for a period of time. Do I qualify for any leave?	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes.</b> You qualify because this leave is specifically to care for a son or daughter under 18 because their school or place of care has been closed due to public health emergency as long as your caregiver (co-parent or guardian) is not available. All forms of leave runs concurrently. You will only receive 2/3 pay.	<b>Yes.</b> You qualify because the leave is to care for your child because the school/class/ place of care have been closed due to COVID-19. You will be asked to provide documentation of the quarantine order from the district.	<b>Discussion with HR,</b> but possibly depending on the nature of your assignment, type of closure (entire school or classroom), exposure questions, etc.
I've been hospitalized for COVID-19. Do I qualify for leave?	<b>Yes.</b> Your own inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility is considered to qualify you.	<b>No</b>	<b>Presumably, yes.</b> EPSL applies to individuals who seek a diagnosis after experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19.	<b>No.</b> Must meet all top three conditions noted above.
My mother-in-law has been hospitalized with COVID-19. Do I qualify for leave?	<b>No.</b> Traditional FMLA does not extend to in-laws	<b>No</b>	<b>Probably Not.</b> This scenario involves hospitalization rather than a doctor's recommendation for isolation.	<b>Discussion with HR, but probably.</b> CDC says to monitor for symptoms, wear masks, social distance, and wash hands. We would have to discuss types of exposure.

Questions	Traditional FMLA	Extended FMLA	Emergency Paid Sick Leave	Can I Work
My spouse/child/parent that lives in my home is showing signs of COVID-19.	No	No	<b>Maybe.</b> If there is a positive test result or seeking medical diagnosis.	<b>Discussion with HR, but probably.</b> CDC says to monitor for symptoms, wear masks, social distance, and wash hands. <b>Positive test results in household would change the above answer to no.</b>
My spouse/child/parent that lives in my home was told they were potentially exposed to COVID-19.	No	No	<b>Maybe.</b> If there is a positive test result or seeking medical diagnosis.	<b>Discussion with HR, but probably.</b> CDC says to monitor for symptoms, wear masks, social distance, and wash hands. <b>Positive test in results in household would change the above answer to no.</b>
My classroom / school have been sent home to quarantine. Am I allowed to work? What if I get symptoms?	No	No	<b>Probably</b> if district-initiated. <b>No</b> on getting symptoms unless you are advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns about COVID-19, or seeking medical diagnosis due to COVID-19.	Your immediate supervisor will give you instructions regarding working remotely, depending on the nature of your position. Our Innovation, Teaching, and Learning Department has a plan for that contingency. We would have to discuss the situation more in-depth if there are symptoms or positive test results.

**\*If you have questions, please call Human Resources at 936-890-3187.**