

PRIMECARE MEDICAL, INC.
PRIMECARE MEDICAL OF WEST VIRGINIA, INC.
PRIMECARE MEDICAL OF NEW YORK, INC.
Professional Care Medical Practice P.C.
Professional Care Dental Services P.C.
Personalcare Registered Professional Nursing P.C.

**Re: Protocol for Health Care Personnel Returning to Work Following
COVID-19 Exposure or Infection**

Effective Date: April 1, 2020

Revised: July 09, 2020

Reference: CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure to COVID-19, Issued March 7, 2020; NYSDOH Bureau of Healthcare Associated Infections, *Health Advisory: Updated Protocols for Personnel in Healthcare and Other Direct Care Settings to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection*, Issued March 28, 2020; NYS DOH, *Health Advisory: Revised Protocols for Personnel in Healthcare and Other Direct Care Settings to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection*, Issued July 3, 2020; State of New York Executive Order No. 205, issued June 24, 2020; NYS DOH Office of the Commissioner, *Interim Guidance for Quarantine Restrictions on Travelers Arriving in New York State Following Out of State Travel*, Issued June 24, 2020

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- I. INTRODUCTION:** This will serve as PCM's protocol and procedures to be followed by health care personnel (HCP) who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19, or have traveled in the past 14 days. This Protocol will also set forth the policy for HCP with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, including when they are to report back to work.

 - II. PURPOSE:** To ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that we maintain adequate staffing during the COVID-19 pandemic to address the needs of our patients. Given the nature of the current pandemic, it is almost a certainty that every individual in the Country will be exposed to someone who is positive for COVID-19. To quarantine every health care worker found in this situation would needlessly and severely reduce staffing. Decisions regarding an employee's ability to return to work following travel, potential exposure to COVID-19 and/or infection will be made on a case-by-case basis, guided by the procedures and protocols set forth in this Policy as well as those of the facility at which the employee works.

III. PROCEDURE:

A. Employee Personal Travel and Vacation

1. As cities and states across the nation are lifting stay-at-home orders and beginning the process of “reopening,” PCM recognizes that employees are eager to plan vacations and engage in personal travel.
2. PCM cautions its employees who may be considering travel, either domestic or international, to give strong consideration to the risks associated with personal travel.
3. In addition to the serious health risks currently associated with travel, employees may also risk being stranded in a foreign country due to travel restrictions or being quarantined upon their return. Many state and local governments have also implemented their own travel restrictions and requirements for individuals returning from travel to identified “hot spots,” both internationally and throughout the United States.
4. Employees should consult the COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Country bulletin on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) homepage for information regarding international travel, as well as their respective state and local government resources for up-to-date information on travel restrictions at the state and local government-level.
 - i. ***New York Employees.*** Be advised that, under New York state law, employees who travel to states designated as high risk by the State or countries with a Level 2 or Level 3 Travel Health Notice by the CDC are not eligible for paid sick leave benefits under New York’s COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Act.
 - a. A current list of these states designated as “high risk” is clearly posted on the New York State Department of Health website:
<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>
 - b. For a list of countries with a Level 2 or 3 Travel Health Notice, employees should consult the “COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Country” on the CDC’s website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html>

5. Employees must also remain mindful of any additional travel restrictions and/or return-to-work requirements implemented by the facility at which they work. As always, PCM employees' entry to a facility is governed by facility administration.
6. If an employee voluntarily travels to a COVID-19 "hot spot" and is unable to return to work due to symptoms consistent with COVID-19, confirmed illness, and/or government-imposed travel restrictions, PCM reserves the right to deny any requests by the employee to use company-paid PTO, floating holidays, and/or advanced leave for this additional absence.

B. Travel to a State with Significant Degree of Community Spread

1. The latest available data indicates it is safe and appropriate for health care personnel who have traveled in the past 14 days, including to a state with a significant degree of community spread, to continue to work as long as all of the following criteria and conditions are met.
2. Employees who are not feeling well or having symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (i.e., fever, respiratory issues, head and body aches), whether exposed to someone COVID-positive or not, are to stay at home and contact their primary care physician.
3. An employee who has traveled to a state with a significant degree of community spread can, and is expected to, return to work **as long as they are asymptomatic.**
4. An employee who has traveled to a state with a significant degree of community spread, must comply with all of the following steps:
 - i. Obtain diagnostic testing for COVID-19 within twenty-four (24) hours of returning from travel;
 - a. PCM will administer the test and have it analyzed free of charge for the employee (as of the date this policy was issued, results have typically been available 24 hours after testing).
 - ii. self-monitor for temperature or other symptoms at least three times a day. While working, such monitoring shall occur at the beginning of each shift and every 8 hours thereafter;
 - iii. wear a surgical mask while working;

- iv. self-quarantine when not at work; and
 - v. when possible, the employee should not be assigned to patients with high-risk for complications from COVID-19 (e.g., severely immunocompromised, respiratory issues, elderly).
5. Any employee who develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should immediately stop working and isolate at home. All employees with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should immediately seek diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2.
- i. If COVID-19 testing is clinically indicated, PCM will administer the test and have it analyzed free of charge for the employee (as of the date this policy was issued, results have typically been available 24 hours after testing).
 - ii. The availability of this testing is dependent on PCM's supply of tests.

C. Exposure to Confirmed Case or International Travel.

1. Latest available data indicates it is safe and appropriate for an employee exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19, or who has traveled internationally in the past 14 days, to continue to work as long as the following criteria and conditions are met:
2. Employees who are not feeling well or having symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (i.e., fever, respiratory issues, head and body aches), whether exposed to someone COVID-positive or not, are to stay at home and contact their primary care physician.
 - i. If COVID-19 testing is clinically indicated, PCM will administer the test and have it analyzed free of charge for the employee (as of the date this policy was issued, results have typically been available 24 hours after testing).
 - ii. The availability of this testing is dependent on PCM's supply of tests.
3. An employee who has been exposed to someone known or suspected of having COVID-19 can, and expected to, continue to work **as long as they are asymptomatic.**

4. An employee exposed and asymptomatic must comply with all of the following steps:
 - i. wear a surgical mask while working for at least 14 days;
 - ii. self-monitor for temperature or other symptoms at least three times a day. While working, such monitoring shall occur at the beginning of each shift and every 8 hours thereafter;
 - iii. Self-quarantine when not at work; and
 - iv. when possible, the employee should not be assigned to patients with high-risk for complications from COVID-19 (e.g., severely immunocompromised, respiratory issues, elderly).
5. Once the employee has gone 14 days since the last high-risk exposure without developing symptoms, they may discontinue steps ii, iii, iv above.
6. Any employee who develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should immediately stop working and isolate at home, and contact their primary care physician.
 - i. If COVID-19 testing is clinically indicated, PCM will administer the test and have it analyzed free of charge for the employee (as of the date this policy was issued, results have typically been available 24 hours after testing).
 - ii. The availability of this testing is dependent on PCM's supply of tests.
7. All staff with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should be managed as if they have this infection regardless of the availability of test results.

D. Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19. Employees with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, should return to work if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The employee was isolated for at least seven (7) days after illness onset; must have been fever-free for at least seventy-two (72) hours without the use of fever-reducing medications; and must have other symptoms improving.

2. If an **asymptomatic employee** tests positive, they must maintain isolation for at least 7 days after the date of the positive test and, if they develop symptoms during that time, they must maintain isolation for at least 7 days after symptom onset and must have been fever-free at least 72 hours without fever reducing medications and with any other symptoms improving.
3. Staff who are recovering from COVID-19 must wear a facemask while working for at least fourteen (14) days after onset of illness.
4. When possible, the employee should not be assigned patients with at high-risk for complications from COVID-19 (e.g., severely immunocompromised, respiratory issues, elderly).
5. The employee should maintain self-isolation for an additional seven (7) days while not at work.