

Saint Joseph's College

Policy Guidebook

Human Resources

Section Name: The Work Environment

Section Number: 4.15

Effective Date: 4/1/2020

Revision Date: 3/9/2023

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Infectious Disease Control Policy

Purpose:

Saint Joseph's College is committed to providing a safe work environment for its employees. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the health and safety of our employees, students, visitors, and vendors. Everyone has a responsibility for safety in the workplace as part of the College core values of Community and Respect. By having a greater awareness of COVID-19 and performing our job duties and responsibilities in a safe manner, faculty, staff and student employees are directly contributing to providing a safe College campus.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness and considered to be contagious. Symptoms for this disease may include the following: fever, cough, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. Symptoms may change with new COVID-19 variants.

This policy aligns with The Occupational Safety Health Administration of 1970 (OSHA, Infectious Disease Control) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. The Centers for Disease Control ([CDC](https://www.cdc.gov)) provides a comprehensive website which includes new and current symptoms, protocols, and safety measures to reduce the risk of infection.

Applicable to: All Employees

Practice:

In light of COVID-19, Saint Joseph's College has adopted the following **recommendations** to minimize potential exposure of employees to COVID-19 in the workplace:

- Wear an appropriate face covering such as a well-fitting mask or shield when conditions warrant this practice
 - Managers may require employees in their areas to wear a face mask if they feel conditions warrant such actions
- Practice social distancing (maintaining a minimum of 6 feet distance from others)
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
 - Employees should always wash hands when they are visibly soiled and after removing any PPE
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of the elbow
- Conduct virtual meetings and trainings instead of in-person meetings when appropriate
- Support College and department protocols in place to minimize the potential risk of COVID-19 as instructed

Stay Home if a Positive Test Result is Received:

Employees should notify the Health & Wellness Center (healthcenter@sjcme.edu), their supervisor and Human Resources if they test positive for COVID-19. The Human Resources department will provide instructions regarding current work protocols (including isolation time) while employee is not at work on campus. Specific CDC practices will be followed to ensure the employee is aware and following activities related to their health and wellbeing.

- Employees who test positive will be required to isolate at home and test regularly
- Individuals may return to campus mask-free *as soon as they test negative* with no symptoms
- Employees must check in with the Health and Wellness Center or the Athletic Training staff for a confirmation test when they arrive back on campus
- **If the campus confirmation test is positive after the negative home test, employees may remain on campus and mask until 10 days past the initial COVID diagnosis**
- In the event that employees test positive through 7 days of home isolation, they may return and mask for 3 additional days on campus

Note: If an employee has severe COVID-19 or an immune disease, Saint Joseph's College will follow the guidance of a licensed healthcare provider regarding return to work.

Current Pandemic Response Team guidelines will be the mainstay for determining when an employee may return to work.

Close Contact Exposure While On Campus:

The College will inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 at the College. Employees will be encouraged to mask, advised to monitor for symptoms, and test accordingly.

The definition of a "close contact" can be found [here](#) on the CDC website.

Report Potential Exposure:

Employees should notify the Health & Wellness Center (healthcenter@sjcme.edu), their supervisor and Human Resources if they have been in contact with someone outside the SJC community who has a confirmed case of COVID-19, even if the employee is asymptomatic.

- That person will be encouraged to mask, advised to monitor for symptoms, and test accordingly.

Working from Home:

Depending upon an employee's position and responsibilities, the option to work from home, or telecommute, may be possible. Considerations to this include, but are not limited to, the use of technology in a specific role, the need to access paper files, documents, and perhaps a specific physical workspace to complete tasks, and the expectations of our constituents as it relates to the College's purpose and services. For example, while students live on or commute to campus, there is an expectation that meals will be prepared and served on campus and course instruction will be provided in a physical classroom setting. While the means of "delivery" of these activities may change, i.e., Hyflex instruction and minimal self-serve stations within food operations, the high-level service will remain with as little disruption and change as possible to our students.

At this time, employees should be following all guidance from public health officials, state and local governments and the College regarding work from home policies and requirements. The College will determine an appropriate course of action as it relates to applicable telecommute work arrangements.

Any employee participating in such an arrangement is required to complete a Telecommuting Acknowledgment and Agreement form.

Supervisors may modify job responsibilities, if possible, to enable employees to work from home. If a quarantine period is enacted, employees are expected, if able, to work from home if applicable based upon their specific position.

Face Masks:

The College will make masking in classrooms optional, and up to the discretion of individual faculty.

It is important to note that SJC is supportive and respectful of all students, faculty, or staff who choose to continue to wear a mask at any time for any reason. The CDC recommends continued masking and physical distancing for people with weakened immune systems. **SJC will remain a mask-positive campus.** If you feel more comfortable in a mask, please wear one. If you feel sick, put on a mask and go immediately to the Health and Wellness Center. If someone else asks you to put on a mask in their residence, office or classroom, please respect their personal circumstances by complying.

Even during low levels of community transmission in Cumberland County, there may be specific needs for some functions within a department to require the wearing of face masks for those employees who are fully vaccinated. This would be part of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements while engaged in work, such as the Food Service Division, Health & Wellness Center, etc. Examples of PPE include: gloves, hairnets, face masks, goggles, ear protection headphones, etc.

Acceptable Face Masks on Campus:

Heeding the latest guidance from public health authorities, **medical grade surgical masks** are required, and will be available at the Health and Wellness Center, all residence halls, and all campus offices. Medical masks should be changed regularly, as they do not prevent infection when they get wet or damaged.

For a face mask to be effective, place the mask over the nose and mouth and secure it under the chin. If a mask falls below the nose, it may be too large. Adjust the ear straps by tying small knots in the straps. The knots should not have a lot of extra "strap" to ensure the mask doesn't become too tight around the ears.

Face coverings such as cloth masks, neck gaiters, bandanas, and scarfs are not acceptable types of face masks, and, consequently, should not be worn on campus. The CDC does not currently recommend the use of face shields as a substitute for masks.

Recognizing that this decision impacts all members of our community, medical grade surgical masks and other PPE will be available to all students, faculty, and staff at no cost. The CDC recommends proper methods to put on and remove face masks. It is the responsibility of the employee to properly place, wear, remove, and dispose of masks in appropriate receptacles.

Face Mask Alternatives and Medical Accommodations:

Wearing a face mask may not be feasible in every situation on campus. For some people, because wearing a face mask may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, it may lead to a medical emergency, or result in a significant safety concern.

Whenever possible, the College will consider the appropriate alternatives to increase the possibility of wearing a face mask or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one. In

cases where individuals have a **need** to wear a face shield instead of a mask, these CDC considerations should be followed: use face shields that wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend below the chin; or use hooded face shields.

The College is committed to making reasonable accommodations to students and employees with known disabilities unless the accommodation would pose an undue hardship. Medical accommodations for students may be requested through the ADA office within the Academic Center for Excellence. For faculty and staff, medical accommodation requests can be requested through the Human Resources Office.

Applying for Positions:

Saint Joseph's College will not discriminate against any job applicant or employee based merely on the individual being diagnosed with COVID-19. However, the College reserves the right to exclude a person with COVID-19 from workplace facilities, programs and functions if the College finds that such restriction is necessary for the welfare of the person who has COVID-19 and/or the welfare of others within the workplace.

All employment decisions will be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning the disease, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has the disease, and a careful weighing of the identified risks.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

All medical information collected from individuals, test results, and any other information obtained as a result of testing, will be treated in accordance with applicable laws and policies on confidentiality and privacy.

Retaliation Prohibited:

Saint Joseph's College will not take adverse action against an employee for exercising their rights under applicable laws.