

COVID-19 Caregiver Exposure FAQs

Cleveland Clinic follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for safe workplaces to protect patients, employees, family members and the community from the spread of COVID-19 infection.

Review these FAQs and contact the Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline and other resources noted here if you have questions.

Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline numbers

Ohio caregivers call **216.445.8246**

Florida caregivers call **800.546.4149**

Nevada caregivers call **702.249.0198**

Caregiver Health and Exposure

I think I may have symptoms of COVID-19, or perhaps the flu (influenza.) I understand that the symptoms are similar. Who do I call if I think I may have influenza, coronavirus or another Influenza-like illness (ILI)?

You are correct—the symptoms for flu and COVID-19 are similar. Learn more about the similarities and the differences between the symptoms at this frequently updated [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Center \(CDC\) site](#).

Caregivers who experience ILI symptoms should call their Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline. Experts on the hotline will screen and assist caregivers with next steps to determine diagnosis and how to return to work safely.

What is an Influenza-like illness (ILI)?

Influenza-like illness (ILI), is a nonspecific acute respiratory illness of possible influenza or other viral illness causing a set of common symptoms. The flu and COVID-19 both present influenza-like illness (ILI).

You may not know whether you have the flu or COVID-19 since the general symptoms associated with the flu and COVID-19 are quite similar. Our Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline remains a key contact for answers to your questions about COVID-19 and the flu.

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How do I get tested for COVID-19?

If you are concerned you have COVID-19, call the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline to be screened. These clinicians will determine if COVID-19 testing is needed. They can evaluate you and determine if you meet the CDC guidelines for testing based on symptoms, travel and exposures. If you meet the criteria, you will be advised as to how to proceed with testing. Testing is limited to those with a physician order for testing.

Someone in my household was diagnosed with COVID-19. What should I do?

If someone in your household was diagnosed with COVID-19, please call the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline for further direction.

I was exposed to a patient with COVID-19 at work. What should I do?

First, we need to clarify the definition of exposure. Exposure occurs when:

- You have had close (6 feet or less) contact with a person with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes, and you were not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - You were not wearing a respirator or facemask
 - You were not wearing eye protection if the patient with COVID-19 was not wearing a face mask
 - You were not wearing all recommended PPE (i.e. gown, gloves, eye protection, respirator) while performing an aerosol generating procedure.
- If you cared for a patient with COVID-19, and you were wearing appropriate PPE, this is not considered an exposure.

If you were exposed at work, speak with your manager immediately.

Caregivers will be guided to call the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline for further direction.

Post exposure follow-up for caregivers:

- **Fully Vaccinated** caregivers can continue to work and should monitor themselves for symptoms. COVID-19 testing will be offered on Day 5 after exposure but it is not required.
- **Not Vaccinated** caregivers should not report to the workplace. They should call the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline to be advised how to proceed with immediate testing and another required testing on Day 5. If testing remains negative, the caregiver may return to work after Day 7.

Remember, call the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline with questions about exposure or symptoms.

See the **Attendance, Pay and Benefits** section below for information regarding COVID-19 related absences.

What travel restrictions exist for caregivers?

Cleveland Clinic follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for safe domestic and international travel to protect patients, employees, family members and the community from the spread of COVID-19 infection.

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Travel restrictions may vary based on whether you are fully vaccinated, not fully vaccinated, or unvaccinated. Caregivers are to call the Cleveland Clinic Caregiver COVID-19 Hotline upon returning to the U.S. for a health travel screening and testing if indicated.

Review these [FAQs](#).

COVID-19 vaccinations are encouraged for all Cleveland Clinic caregivers, contractors and vendors. Receiving the vaccine is a personal choice and not a mandate. Learn more about our [caregiver vaccine program](#).

Attendance, Pay and Benefits

My primary care provider put in an order for me to have a COVID-19 test, but I am scheduled to work. Will I be paid for taking off a day to be tested?

If you miss a scheduled day of work to take a COVID-19 test, that day should be noted in Kronos as Unscheduled Paid Time (UPT) while the test is pending. If the test result is positive, your manager should revise the Kronos record utilizing the Required Time Away (RqTA pay code). Absences due to negative COVID-19 test results remain UPT. If Paid Time Off (PTO) is not available, the time off may be recorded as Absence (ABS) or Exempt Unpaid (EXUNP):

- **ABS** — if non-exempt caregiver has no PTO available
- **EXUNP** — if exempt caregiver has no PTO available

If you test positive for COVID-19 you will continue to be paid at 100 percent of your normal salary for up to two (2) weeks for each confirmed positive case. Your manager would continue to use the RqTA pay code.

What if I am diagnosed with COVID-19?

When sick with COVID-19, you should continue to [isolate](#) and stay at home until you have recovered and Occupational Health has approved your return to work.

Once you are diagnosed with COVID-19, you are not expected to work remotely. You will also not receive attendance occurrences for absences.

Caregivers who need to be away from work after testing positive for COVID-19, should consult with their manager or Human Resources representative about how absences will be recorded in Kronos as RqTA, PTO or a medical leave of absence.

Caregivers may be subject to Attendance and Corrective Action policies if they do not return to work or provide a completed Medical Leave Request by the end of their paid medical absence.

These policies can be reviewed in the [Procedure and Policy Manual \(PPM\)](#) on the intranet.

- Caregivers who have questions about the medical leave process should contact the **ONE HR Service Center at 216.448.2247**.
- Managers who need more information about these changes should contact their HR business partner or generalist.

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How are my work duties handled during Cleveland Clinic-approved time away due to COVID-19?

You may be asked to work remotely during your time away. Telecommuting is determined by your manager and based on the availability of work as well as the accessibility of necessary systems.

Managers and/or timekeepers will be responsible for documenting the hours for non-exempt hourly caregivers in Kronos.

Will I earn PTO during Cleveland Clinic-approved time away due to COVID-19?

Benefit-eligible caregivers will accrue PTO while using PTO during an approved medical leave of absence.

My child's school/daycare has closed and I need to stay home.

If you miss scheduled shifts due to unforeseen school/daycare closures that impact your children as a result of COVID-19, you will not receive absence occurrences under the Attendance Policy if using scheduled PTO or taking an approved unpaid personal leave. If you are authorized to work from home, your manager and an HR representative will determine the terms of that arrangement consistent with the Telecommuting Standard Operating Procedure, and you will receive your regular pay and benefits. We understand that many caregiver families are still adjusting to a change of routine. Visit [Connecting Caregivers](#) for help finding family resources such as child and elder backup care. Some discounts are available for Cleveland Clinic caregivers.

Will I have to take PTO if I am required to self-quarantine?

You may be asked to work remotely, take PTO or other standard leaves of absence if you are required to self-quarantine.

Are caregivers' jobs protected during Cleveland Clinic-approved time away or recovery period?

COVID-19 may be a Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) qualifying serious health condition. Time away due to a positive COVID-19 diagnosis and recovery period may be counted as FMLA leave if the caregiver is eligible and if submitted documentation supports a serious health condition as defined by the FMLA. Employees that are not eligible for FMLA leave should apply for other standard leaves of absence if you are required to self-quarantine.

What information can a manager share with the team if one of their colleagues is not working in the office due to COVID-19 or was diagnosed with COVID-19?

Managers should not reveal the reason for a caregiver's absence. Managers may share that the team member is working from home or on a leave of absence.

What precautions are in place for new caregivers who have not yet started work? New Caregiver Orientation (Day 1) sessions are held virtually. New caregivers are expected to report to work on Day 2, unless otherwise instructed by their managers and/or recruiters. The Nursing Institute has also implemented additional precautions, to include social distancing, masking, cleaning protocols and increased webinar use.

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