COVID-19 Labor/HR Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Feeling Sick

I feel sick, should I report to work?

As per the standard HR Attendance Policy, staff who feel sick are being asked to stay home and use available PTO or sick leave balances. If it is necessary to take 3 or more days off for illness check in with your personal physician and contact EHS by phone. To be able to return to work staff must be without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications and able to control upper respiratory symptoms with over the counter medication.

Employee Health Services

MSH: (212) 824-7690
MSW: (212) 523-8530
MSM: (212) 523-1754
MSBI: (212) 420-2885
MSB: (718) 951-2903
MSQ: (718) 808-7725
42nd Street: (646) 605-4700

I feel sick, and I need to stay home. How will I be paid?

Staff who feel sick are being asked to stay home. Time will be charged to PTO or sick leave balances. If it is necessary to take 3 or more days off for illness check in with your personal physician and contact EHS by phone. To be able to return to work staff must be without fever for 24 hours without the
use of fever reducing medications and able to control upper respiratory symptoms with over the counter medication.

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Exposure at Work

I have been asked to self-quarantine, because of exposure at work, what happens now?

Any employee under mandatory quarantine by Federal, State, City or Community Health Authorities shall receive pay without charge to leave balances for the 14-day period of quarantine.

A staff member who is exposed through the performance of assigned work responsibilities and is required by EHS to self-quarantine will be paid without charge to leave balances for the 14-day period of quarantine.

Staff who are unable to work after the 14-day quarantine period, must call EHS on day 15 for guidance and apply for the appropriate leave of absence (e.g. FMLA, PFL). Staff must be cleared by EHS prior to return to work.
Are there restrictions on facial hair and the N95 respirators?

Yes. Close fitting respirators need to seal tightly to the face. Gaps in this face seal let the dirty air leak inside the N95 respirator. Even a day or two’s growth of stubble for some individuals can be enough to give significant leak paths for contaminants. Face seal leakage reduces the wearer’s protection.

Effective immediately facial hair must be trimmed so that masks and respirators can tightly seal to the face. Please consult the chart. Staff with religious or other concerns should discuss with their manager, in conjunction with Labor Relations.

Are there other tips on hand hygiene?

Wearing gloves often gives individuals a false sense of security and may actually put individuals at risk. If you need to wear gloves be sure to wash your hands after they are removed.

It is best to perform good hand hygiene – wash with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer often.

Staff will not get sick from handling papers and short encounters with masked patients.
If a patient is sick, they should be prompted to mask immediately. The source control (controlling the cough of the sick patient) is the most important thing we can do to keep everyone safe.

**What daily items should I keep clean?**

Be sure to clean high touch surfaces (keyboards and screens and phones) frequently. Any household cleaner with activity against the flu is fine. If you wear gloves while cleaning, be sure to wash your hands after they are removed.

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**Personal Travel**

**I have recently returned from international travel, what do I need to do?**

Staff members returning from a country designated as Level 2 or 3 by the CDC ([https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices)), will be required to check in with their manager and EHS by phone, and self-quarantine at home. If you have or will travel to these international locations please keep in mind that:

a. Staff who choose to travel to these countries after March 4, 2020 will be required to self-quarantine upon return and the time will be deducted from available PTO or vacation balances. If you do not have PTO or vacation time remaining in your banks, the time will be unpaid.


All staff on quarantine must check in with EHS upon return to the United States and before returning to work; and must follow any additional reporting requirements set forth by EHS. Faculty should also consult with their department Chair for department-specific policies, which are rapidly evolving.

**I have a conference coming up, should I cancel?**
Please consult the Travel Policy on the MSHS Intranet.

(https://mshs.policytech.com/docview/?docid=13780)

Work-related travel is prohibited to countries listed as Level 2 and Level 3 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices), unless and until they are removed from the Level 2/3 list.

Domestic travel within the United States and international travel to countries not on the CDC list has not been restricted. However, Faculty should also consult with their department Chair for department-specific policies, which are rapidly evolving.

Commuting to Work

I use mass transit to commute. Are there tips on how I can ride safely?

For those who use mass transit, practicing good hand hygiene is the best thing you can do to limit the spread of infection. Washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds is the preferred method to clean hands, but that can be impracticable when on the go. If you are unable to wash your hands, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before entering and after exiting subways, buses and trains. While riding, try not to touch your face. If you must use a phone or tablet, clean them frequently. If a bus or train is crowded, wait for the next one. When possible, avoid peak travel times. Discuss temporary work schedule modifications with your manager.

How can I access the MSHS Rideshare program?

Those staff members who wish to carpool to work may access the Rideshare program. - Car Pool. This online application permits staff to offer or accept an available ride to or from a MSHS location.

1. To get started, visit https://sinaicentral.mountsinai.org
2. Once logged on to Sinai Central, visit “Employee Self Service”
3. And then click on “Car Pool”

4. “Edit Profile.” The first thing you’ll need to do is to edit your profile. This is where you’ll provide the information that will connect you to other car poolers.
   a. Set your Ride Status. Are you seeking a ride or offering a ride?
   b. Update your Contact Info. Provide your mobile telephone number and email address.
   c. Schedule. Provide details on when you need to ride. Enter your work schedule and travel times and any other pertinent information.
   d. Address. Provide the location for pick up and drop off.

5. When your profile is up to date, click “Save your profile.”

6. Find a Ride. You can browse all available rides, check rides available in a certain zip code, or search for a specific ride. If you find a ride that works, reach out. Connect with the person through email or phone. Enjoy the ride!

7. Important things to keep in mind:
   a. Address information entered into Car Pool is kept separate from your Human Resources record. So changing your home address in Car Pool, will not update your Human Resources employee profile.
   b. The system does not keep track of your offline (email and phone) arrangements. It's up to you to inform your co-riders of any change in plans.

*Are there any options for staff to work remotely?*

Remote Work arrangements may be made available to employees working in positions that Mount Sinai first designates as appropriate for Remote Work. The designation that determines appropriateness for or Remote Work shall be based on the following: the individual employee is in good standing, the nature of the position, the specific functions it involves, the ability to measure the work, and operational need.

Mount Sinai does not guarantee that Remote Work will be available for any job, category of jobs, or for any specific employee. Remote work is subject to departmental approval and periodic review and must be part of a Remote Work Agreement requiring the achievement of specific goals and objectives.
Employees should discuss remote work arrangements with their manager, in conjunction with HR Labor Relations.

Staff not involved in direct patient care who are subject to quarantine and are well, and work in a position for which a remote work arrangement is an appropriate alternative may be required to do so.

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**Impacted Family Member**

*A person I live with has been asked to self-quarantine. Should I come to work?*

If your child or dependent household contact is under quarantine, do not report to work. Please remain at home for the duration of the quarantine. Share the communication from the DOH or school to your manager/supervisor. Check in with EHS by phone and also please do the following:

c. Talk to your manager about work at home options.

d. If working from home is not possible, staff will be paid without deduction to leave balances for the duration of the mandatory quarantine. Staff who subsequently become sick will use sick leave balances for the duration of their illness.

In advance of returning to work, be sure to check in with EHS.

If you live with a non-dependent household contact who is under quarantine and who does not have symptoms of respiratory illness, and you are also without symptoms, then you are able to work.
My child’s school was closed. What should I do?

All staff members are considered essential and should make best efforts to report to their regular assignment. If alternative arrangements cannot be made, staff should promptly reach out to their manager to discuss the following:

a. A temporary schedule modification (e.g. change of daily work hours, change of shift).

b. Working at home. This option will not be available to all staff members.

c. Using available PTO or vacation leave balances.
   1. If you wish to take absences unpaid without deduction to available leave balances, then you must discuss this immediately with your manager (i.e. within twenty-four hours of your first call out).

My child’s school has been closed and my child has been asked to self-quarantine. Should I come to work?

If your child or dependent household contact is under quarantine, do not report to work. Please remain at home for the duration of the quarantine. Share the communication from the DOH or school with your manager/supervisor. Check in with EHS by phone and also please do the following:

a. Talk to your manager about work at home options.

b. If working from home is not possible, staff will be paid without deduction to leave balances for the duration of the mandatory quarantine. Staff who subsequently become sick will use sick leave balances for the duration of their illness.

In advance of returning to work, be sure to check in with EHS.