Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Mount Sinai Health System’s (MSHS) 2019 Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) disease (COVID-19) Employee Health Services (EHS) monitoring and testing protocol and return to work policy.

Policy

Symptomatic employees are removed from work and must self-isolate (as outlined below under Procedure A). Employees should get a PCR test within 2 days of symptom onset and provide written test results to EHS as soon as possible after receipt to enable contact tracing in the event of a positive test. After the PCR test is resulted, appropriate leave time will be applied. Refusal to undergo PCR testing could impact leave or pay.

Asymptomatic employees who have been fully vaccinated or have been cleared to return work following a COVID-19 diagnosis in the last 90 days and had a high-risk workplace or high-risk community exposure may return to work immediately. Fully vaccinated employees must get a PCR test between days 3-5 and again 5-7 days after a high-risk exposure. They must use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as, a surgical mask, for 14 days in all work areas including non-clinical areas or at least until the PCR test results as negative. Partially vaccinated or unvaccinated employees cannot return to work and must self-quarantine for at least 10 days from the last exposure.

Unvaccinated employees whom the MSHS Exemption Committee has granted an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, or who have submitted an exemption request that is still pending, must test regularly for infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus as a condition of continued employment or matriculation. Weekly testing will be conducted through (EHS) at no cost to the individual.

Employees are required to report to EHS Covid-19 test results and vaccination status, as it relates to this policy.

Employee test results may be shared with the New York City Department of Health, the New York State Department of Health and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the MSHS workforce employees including, but not limited to: nurses, medical staff, trainees, students, volunteers, physician office staff, and other persons performing work for or at the MSHS.
Definitions

A. COVID-19 Symptoms

Symptoms of COVID-19 (updated by the CDC May 13, 2020) may include the following that are new onset and not explained by a pre-existing or another condition:

- Fever (temperature greater than 100° Fahrenheit)
- Chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New onset persistent cough
- Nasal congestion & runny nose not associated with allergies
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Generalized muscle and body aches

B. COVID-19 Testing

SARS-CoV-2 PCR Test: assesses if a person has the COVID-19 virus, and is performed through a swab put into a person’s nose or throat to collect a sample, or through collection of a saliva sample by a person spitting into a cup. The sample is sent to the lab to test if the SARS-CoV-2 is present. Results are usually available within 24-48 hours; Negative - a person is unlikely to have active COVID-19 infection, Positive - a person may have active COVID-19 infection.

C. Vaccination Status

Fully VACCINATED is defined as at least 2 weeks have passed after the following AND proof of COVID-19 vaccine has been submitted to and verified by EHS:

- The 2nd dose of a 2-dose vaccine series was administered (e.g. Pfizer or Moderna), OR
- The 1 dose of a 1-dose vaccine was administered (e.g. Johnson & Johnson)

Employees vaccinated outside of the United States, should submit proof of COVID-19 vaccine to EHS for verification.
Procedure

A. Symptomatic Employees

All employees are required to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms (as defined above under Definitions A); unvaccinated employees and symptomatic vaccinated employees must complete the daily symptom attestation prior to arriving at work.

Reporting: If an employee screens positive for any symptom, they MUST contact their supervisor immediately and not enter the workplace. Additionally, the employee MUST contact Employee Health Services (EHS) within 24 hours, via the online EHS COVID 19 Tool (https://redcap.mountsinai.org/redcap/surveys/index.php?s=NR7Y7DAWDW) or scan this QR code. (If an employee does not have internet access, they can call 212-844-1100, and a member of the EHS team will assist with the online registration process).

Work Status: Employees who are symptomatic with COVID-19 symptoms cannot return to work and must self-isolate for at least 10 days from symptom onset; and they have to be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications and symptoms are resolving before returning to work. All employees are advised to be diagnosed by the SARS-CoV-2 PCR test.

An employee MUST report their SARS-CoV-2 PCR test results to EHS within 24 hours of the employee’s receipt of the results

Symptomatic employees that have a negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR test and not considered a close contact of a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 case before developing symptoms, may return to work if they have been fever free for 24 hours and their symptoms are resolving. Employees not tested at a MSHS testing site must submit a negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR test result to EHS to receive clearance prior to the 10-day waiting period.

Symptomatic employees that have a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test cannot return to work for 10 days from the symptom onset; they should also be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications and the symptoms should have markedly improved.

COVID-19 Testing: Employees are eligible for SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing through EHS. Upon reporting the event, EHS will provide directions for testing. Test results will become part of an employee’s EHS record.

Return to Work: A negative PCR test is not required after isolation, however, EHS MUST clear all employees before returning to duty. Clearance to return to work is completed over the phone; EHS will call the employee when they are eligible to return to duty. Alternatively, employees can call 212-844-1100 on the 10th day after symptom onset.
The above guidance is subject to change based on local, state and federal health authority guidelines

B. High-Risk Workplace Exposure to a COVID-19 Patient

A high-risk workplace close contact exposure is defined as follows:

- The employee was not wearing a surgical mask and was within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes to a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient, co-worker, or visitor. OR
- The employee was not wearing both a surgical mask and appropriate eye protection, AND the laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient/co-worker/visitor was not wearing a face covering. OR
- The employee was not wearing the recommended Full PPE (N-95 respirator, eye protection, gown, and gloves) while involved in an aerosol generating procedure.

**Reporting:** All healthcare personnel MUST report a high-risk work exposure immediately after the event, including employees who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2 PCR test and/or antibodies). Employees are required to notify both their supervisor and EHS. EHS can be contacted via the online [EHS COVID 19 Tool](https://redcap.mountsinai.org/redcap/surveys/index.php?s=NR7Y7DAWDW) or by scanning this QR code. (If an employee does not have internet access, they can call 212-844-1100, and a member of the EHS team will assist with the online registration process).

**Work Status:** Asymptomatic employees with a high-risk work exposure:

a. Fully vaccinated employees (as defined above) may return to work immediately after the exposure, BUT MUST wear PPE and get a SARS-CoV-2 PCR test 3 to 5 days and again 5-7 days after the exposure (proof of vaccination status is required). Fully vaccinated employees may follow masking guidelines for nonclinical areas after negative PCR test results have been provided to EHS.

b. Partially or unvaccinated employees cannot return to work and must self-quarantine for at least 10 days from the last exposure. The employee is required to actively monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days; EHS will provide directions on the monitoring protocol at the time the incident is reported.

c. Post COVID-19 diagnosis (based on a SARS-CoV-2 PCR test): if the positive test has been within 3 months of the exposure the employee may immediately return to work after the exposure (proof of positive test results is required).
COVID-19 Monitoring, Testing & Return to Work Policy

Last Revised October 21, 2021

COVID-19 Testing: Employees are eligible for SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing through EHS. Testing directions are provided to the employee at the time of reporting the event. Test results will become part of an employee’s EHS record.

During an outbreak investigation, the testing frequency and schedule will depend on the Infection Prevention and EHS investigators and may vary among employees who are exposed.

Return to Work: A negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR test is not required after quarantine, however, EHS MUST clear all employees before returning to duty. Clearance to return to work is completed over the phone; EHS will call the employee when they are eligible to return to duty. Alternatively, employees can call 212-844-1100 on the 10th day after the exposure.

The above guidance is subject to change based on local, state and federal health authority guidelines

C. Asymptomatic Employees

COVID-19 Testing: Employees who have not developed COVID-19 symptoms are eligible to be scheduled for a SARS-CoV-2 PCR test through EHS once a month (unless otherwise outlined in this policy).

If an employee or student wants additional testing, they should contact their provider or a MSHS Primary Care Location (See Appendix A). Fees may apply to see a provider; however, there should not be any out-of-pocket expenses for the cost of the SARS-CoV-2 PCR.

Reporting: There are categories of asymptomatic employees that are required to report to EHS and isolate or quarantine1.

1. Asymptomatic Employee with a High-risk Community Exposure to COVID-19. High-risk community exposure is defined as follows:
   - A household member was diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspected of having COVID-19 in the last 10 days. OR
   - A close contact in the community with a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 (e.g., less than 6 feet for 10 minutes or more) in the last 10 days.

2. Asymptomatic employees that have a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test.

Regardless of testing location, an employee MUST report positive test results to EHS within 24 hours of the employee’s receipt of the results.

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1 Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick; Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. 
Asymptomatic employees that have a negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR test result do not need to report the result to EHS.

Asymptomatic fully vaccinated employees who have had a high-risk community exposure (as defined above) must report the exposure to EHS. Asymptomatic employees who have a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test (not previously reported to EHS), need to report to EHS by completing the online EHS COVID-19 Tool (https://redcap.mountsinai.org/redcap/surveys/index.php?s=NR7Y7DAWDW) or by scanning this QR code. (If an employee does not have internet access, they can call 212-844-1100, and a member of the EHS team will assist them with the online registration process.)

**Work Status:**

1. Asymptomatic employees with a high-risk community exposure (as defined above)
   a. Fully vaccinated employees (as defined above) may return to work immediately after the exposure, BUT **MUST** wear a mask/appropriate PPE in all areas of the campus until they get a SARS-CoV-2 PCR test **3 to 5 days** and again **5-7 days** after the exposure and the results are negative (proof of vaccination status is required).
   b. Partially or unvaccinated employees cannot return to work and must self-quarantine for at least 10 days from the last exposure. The employee is required to actively monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days; EHS will provide directions on the monitoring protocol at the time the incident is reported.
   c. Post COVID-19 diagnosis (based on a SARS-CoV-2 PCR test): if an employee is involved in a high risk exposure within 90 days after the positive test and remains asymptomatic, the employee may immediately return to work after the exposure (proof of positive test results is required).

2. **Asymptomatic employees that have a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test** who remain asymptomatic cannot return to work for at least 10 days from the date of the positive test. Employees who develop symptoms during this period cannot return to work for 10 days from the symptom onset; they should also be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications and the symptoms should have markedly improved.

**Return to Work:** A negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR test is not required after isolation or quarantine, however, EHS **MUST** clear all asymptomatic employees with either a high-risk community exposure and/or a positive PCR test before returning to duty. Clearance to return to work is completed over the phone; EHS will call the employee when they are eligible to return to duty. Alternatively, employees can call 212-844-1100 on the 10th day respectively.

**The above guidance is subject to change based on local, state and federal health authority guidelines**
D. Employees with Approved, Conditional or In Process Covid-Vaccine Exemptions

Employees to whom the MSHS Exemption Committee has granted an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, or who have submitted an exemption request that is still pending, must test regularly for infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus as a condition of continued employment or matriculation. Weekly testing will be conducted through EHS at no cost to the individual. Testing times and locations can be found on COVID-19 Web Staff Resources by clicking here.

- Individuals must submit a COVID-19 PCR saliva specimen weekly to EHS.
- The employee complete their weekly sample on their own time
- EHS provides a home saliva testing kit each week when they drop off the current week’s sample
- The testing week is defined as Sunday through Saturday and testing must be completed:
  - At least 3 days apart (e.g. if test is on Friday, the next test cannot be before Monday)
  - No more than 8 days apart (e.g. if test is on a Monday, the next test must be on or before Tuesday.)
- Individuals will be notified of test results as follows:
  - Negative results: will be sent to MyChart
  - Positive results: EHS will call the individual

Employees who work remotely only need to be tested on weeks that they are working onsite. It is the employee’s responsibility to notify EHS when they are working remotely.

Employees can choose to be tested weekly outside of MSHS and report their results to EHS. In these instances, employees are responsible for any costs related to testing.

- The testing week is defined as Sunday through Saturday and testing must be completed:
  - At least 3 days apart (e.g. if test is on Friday, the next test cannot be before Monday)
  - No more than 7 days apart (e.g. if test is on a Monday, the next test must be on or before Monday.)
- A copy of the test results must be uploaded into the Mandatory Testing REDcap tool (https://redcap.mountsinai.org/redcap/surveys/index.php?s=FKKCATWA49) within 24 hours of your receiving the results.

AND
- It is the employee’s responsibility to notify their supervisor of positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test results, as well as notify EHS of by completing the online EHS COVID 19 Tool.
Work Status:

Employees that have a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test will be immediately removed from work and be instructed to self-isolate for 10 days from date of positive test.

During this time, employees will have to use accumulated PTO or other leave time if available consistent with MSHS policy. Employees may work remotely if previously approved by their manager.

Return to Work:

A negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR test is not required after isolation or quarantine, however, EHS MUST clear all employees with a positive PCR test before returning to duty. Clearance to return to work is completed over the phone; EHS will call the employee when they are eligible to return to duty. Alternatively, employees can call 212-844-1100 on the 10th day respectively.

Additionally, weekly testing may be suspended for up to 90 days after a positive PCR test.

The above guidance is subject to change based on local, state and federal health authority guidelines.
Appendix A

**MSHS Employee/Student-Only Asymptomatic Covid-19 PCR Testing**
Employees and students of MSHS are eligible to be tested once a month. Testing is by appointment only and must be made through this link http://EHSAppointments.as.me.

Mount Sinai South Nassau employees should call 516-632-8445.

**MSHS Primary Care Locations for Asymptomatic COVID-19 Testing**
These testing appointments require an office visit with a primary care doctor. At time of booking at a MSHS Ambulatory site, the employee should request a “Covid Screening” visit. Fees may apply for seeing a provider, however there should not be any out-of-pocket expenses for the cost of the SARS-CoV-2 PCR.

Free COVID-19 testing is also available through New York State (NYS). To find a NYS testing site, please click on the following link https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you.

**Downtown & Brooklyn**
- Peter Krueger Clinic at 275 7th Avenue (212) 420-2620
- 10 Union Square Urgent Care (212) 844-6000
- 104 Delancey St (212) 677-2157
- 135 N 7th St (Williamsburg) (718) 218-0450
- 200 W 57th St (212) 247-8100
- 226 W 14th St (212) 252-6000
- 255 Greenwich St (212) 298-2720
- 309 W 23rd St (212) 256-7000
- 518 E 20th (646) 682-3555
- 52 W 8th St (212) 466-4848
- 55 E 34th St (212) 252-6000
- 729 7th Ave (212) 930-7300
- 780 8th Ave (212) 641-4500

**MSH**
- 17 E 102nd Internal Medicine Associates (212) 659-8551
- 234 E 85th Street (212) 241-6585

**MSM – Mount Sinai Doctors Urgent Care**
- 638 Columbus Ave, 2nd Floor (212) 828-3250

**MSW - Ansonia**
- 2109 Broadway, 2nd Floor (212) 523-6003
Network

- Mount Sinai Doctors Internal Medicine – Staten Island
  - emailstafftesting@mountsinai.org
  - 2315 Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10314
- Mount Sinai Doctors Five Towns
  - MountSinaifivetowns@mountsinai.org
  - 1436 Broadway, Hewlett, NY 11557
- Mount Sinai Doctors Long Island (Cuba Hill)
  - 5 Cuba Hill Rd, Greenlawn, NY 11740
- Mount Sinai Doctors Long Island (Nesconset)
  - 59 Southern Blvd, Nesconset, NY 11767
- Mount Sinai Doctors Jackson Heights
  - 37-22 82nd St, 2nd Floor, Jackson Heights, NY 11372
- Mount Sinai Manhasset Medical Associates
  - manhassetinternalmed@mountsinai.org
  - 1155 Northern Blvd, Manhasset, NY 11030
- Mount Sinai Doctors Scarsdale
  - Mdsw_scarsdale@mountsinai.org
  - 341 Central Park Ave, Scarsdale, NY 11030
- Mount Sinai Doctors Forest Hills
  - 99-01 Queens Blvd, Queens, NY 11347