



April 16, 2020

## **Recommended Practice for Employee Symptom Monitoring to Reduce COVID-19 Risk at UW–Madison**

### **What is the benefit of symptom monitoring in reducing COVID-19 risk?**

Daily symptom monitoring may help detect the early onset of illness so that employees can self-isolate themselves from others and reduce their risk of spreading the disease. As such, we all have a role to play in protecting ourselves and others. Self-monitoring for COVID-19 related symptoms is the best method for protecting yourself, family members, friends and the community at large.

### **Self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms.**

All UW–Madison employees continuing to work on campus and at affiliated facilities should self-monitor for these symptoms:

- A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater
- New cough (i.e., not caused by pre-existing medical condition)
- Sore throat
- New shortness of breath (i.e., not caused by pre-existing medical condition)

Fever is one of the most common symptoms of COVID-19. By routinely checking your temperature before coming to work in the morning and later in the evening before going to bed, you can track one of the early indicators of illness.

We recommend employees check their temperatures at home. This will help reduce the likelihood of a symptomatic person coming to campus and reduce the risk of disease spread. It will also help reduce the risk of disease transmission associated with sharing a thermometer with others on site.

### **How is self-monitoring done?**

Employees can use a log sheet such as the CDC CARE document referenced below to record temperature readings and any observations of symptoms such as a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above, shortness of breath, sore throat and cough. Observations should be recorded both in the morning and evening. Employees should wait to take their temperatures for at least 30 minutes after eating, drinking or exercising and at least 6 hours after taking medications that may lower temperature. Some critical areas, with limited staffing and/or high-risk roles, may require that employees complete the symptom tracker log sheet daily and submit it to area supervision when requested.

### **University Health Services**

University of Wisconsin–Madison 333 East Campus Mall Madison, Wisconsin 53715  
608-265-5600 [www.uhs.wisc.edu](http://www.uhs.wisc.edu)

### **Environment, Health & Safety**

University of Wisconsin–Madison 30 East Campus Mall Madison, Wisconsin 53715  
608-265-5600 Email: [biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu](mailto:biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu) <https://ehs.wisc.edu/>

If you have any questions about implementing a self-monitoring program for temperature and other COVID-19 related symptoms please contact UW Occupational Health ([occmed@uhs.wisc.edu](mailto:occmed@uhs.wisc.edu)) or EOH ([eoh@uhs.wisc.edu](mailto:eoh@uhs.wisc.edu)) and we will assist you with setting up a self-monitoring program.

**What do I do if my temperature is high or I have a new cough, sore throat or new shortness of breath?**

You should first call your healthcare provider and follow their guidance. You should not report to work. This will help keep your co-workers and others safe. If you develop symptoms at work, you should head straight home and then call your healthcare provider.

**Will I be paid if I stay home?**

Employees who stay home due to fever or illness may have different options available to them for leave purposes. Consult with your human resources office or divisional disability representative for additional information about leave options.

**When can I return to work?**

A doctor's note is not required to return to work. UW–Madison Occupational Health is following CDC recommendations for return-to-work protocols. You can return to work after at least 7 days have passed from the start of your symptoms and you have had 3 days or more without symptoms without using symptom-reducing medication.

**References:**

What You Should Know About the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and COVID-19, US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, accessed at:  
[https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/wysk\\_ada\\_rehabilitaion\\_act\\_coronavirus.cfm](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/wysk_ada_rehabilitaion_act_coronavirus.cfm)

**Related Documents:**

Criteria for Return to Work and Work Practice/Restrictions for Healthcare Personnel (HCP) with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-10 AND Work Exclusion for HCP due to potential exposure, UW-Madison Environment, Health and Safety, March 22, 2020

Check and Record Everyday, US Centers for Disease Control, March 11, 2020