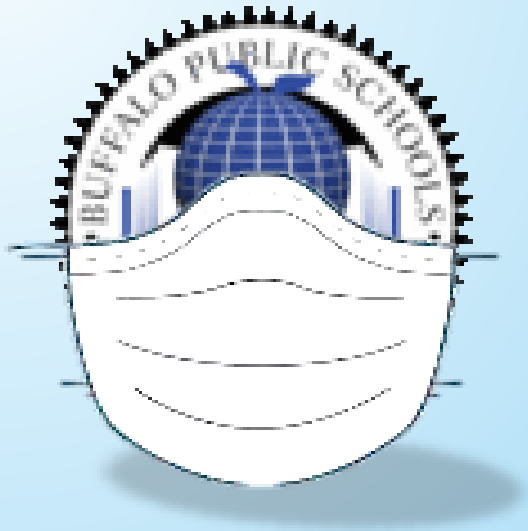
BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COVID-19 Protocols and Guidance from Human Resources



PRIMARY RESOURCES

Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH)
https://www2.erie.gov/health/coronavirus

The Center for Disease Control (CDC)
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov
https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp

New York State
https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-205-quarantine-restrictions-travelers-arriving-new-york
https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/if-you-are-quarantined-yourself

Buffalo Public Schools
https://www.buffaloschools.org/Page/89196

Consultation with:
Erie County Personnel Department

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EMPLOYEE SELF-SCREENING FOR WELLNESS AND COVID-19

BPS empoloyees must self-screen **before reporting** to and **while present** at any BPS worksite location. If an employee is ill, even if they are not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, they should remain home to prevent the spread of any illness.

If an employee is experiencing any of the following symptoms while present at a BPS worksite, they should **remain home using illness time.**

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

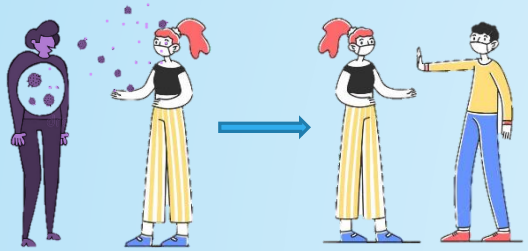
What if I come in contact with someone who may have COVID-19?

CLOSE CONTACTS OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES

A close contact of a positive COVID-19 is defined as any individual who was within six (6) feet of an infected person for at least ten (10) minutes starting from 48 hours before the onset of COVID-19 symptoms. **The District protocols include social distancing of 6 feet, therefore employees should not come into close contact at work**.

Close contacts will be determined by the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) and notified through contact tracing. If an employee is a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case, the employee should inform their Supervisor and provide the mandatory quarantine order from either the ECDH or their physician.

A secondary contact, is defined as contact with someone who was in contact with a COVID-19 case, or contact with someone who is being tested for COVID-19. A secondary contact **does not require the employee to quarantine**.



What happens if I need to quarantine?

QUARANTINE LEAVE

Employees are eligible for up to two weeks (10 days) of paid leave ("Quarantine Leave") if they are unable to work onsite or from home due to COVID-19 quarantine, isolation, or symptoms while waiting diagnosis. In order for employees to receive this leave provision they must provide a positive test, or mandatory quarantine order to Human Resources via the COVID-19 or Quarantine Reporting Portal.

Employees placed in at-home quarantine are required to stay home; separate themselves from others, including household members; and monitor their health in accordance with Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) Guidelines. They are prohibited from visiting with non-household members.

To apply for Quarantine Leave, employees must submit documentation to Human Resources Department, via the online portal. Verification that they have completed their mandatory quarantine period must be provided through the portal as well before an employee is cleared to return to work. The quarantine order customarily supplies the end date which can be used to return an employee to work.

After the two week period, employees are required to use their own accrued time to cover any continuing absence.

QUARANTINE PROCESS

An employee must quarantine for one of the following reasons:

- Employee is COVID-19 positive and subject to an Isolation Order by the Erie County Department of Health
- Employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and awaiting COVID-19 test results
- Employee is non-essential or able to work from home and a confirmed close contact of a positive COVID-19 case
- Employee is non-essential or able to work from home and subject to Federal, State, or local Quarantine Order, including ten (10) day mandatory quarantine following travel to a designate state.

AN EMPLOYEE REQUIRED TO QUARANTINE HAS AN OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE HUMAN RESOURCES WITH THE QUARANTINE ORDER

QUARANTINE PROCESS

Employee must **immediately** contact Human Resources with a copy of medical documentation regarding their COVID-19 diagnosis, symptoms, or their Federal, State, or local isolation or Quarantine Order. Medical documentation must be dated and include specific reference to COVID-19, reason for leave (close contact, diagnosis, symptoms, etc.) and the dates of leave. Human Resources will inform your supervisor of approved Quarantine Leave using the reporting portal.

Employees who test positive, or who are mandated to quarantine who are able to work remotely are approved to do so.

The Request for Paid Leave form must be completed and submitted in order for the 10 illness days to be applied to the employees accruals. Employees use illness time pending the restoration of their illness days.

Employees should communicate with their Supervisor and Human resources as soon as possible to ensure accurate and complete entering of time. Only payroll can enter Quarantine leave; it cannot be entered by employees

What happens if I have to get tested for COVID-19?

COVID-19 TESTING

Staff are directed to remain home if are experiencing symptoms and to consult with their doctor or service provider via Telemedicine.. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever/Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If anyone has a chance to speak with an employee who has expressed concerns about symptoms, please do not direct/mandate them to get the COVID-19 test. Our health insurance will not cover it. They must get a script from a medical provider to get the test. Please encourage them to contact their primary or use telemedicine to speak with a medical professional about their symptoms so that the doctor can instruct their patient on next steps. **Employees who are out of work for illness not related to COVID-19 must use their accruals.**

POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST

Should a staff member test positive for COVID-19, you must immediately report the finding to the HR online portal. This staff member will be required to quarantine for ten (10) calendar days.

Upon confirmation of a positive test result, Supervisors will employ a procedure that promotes safety of the work site and:

- Ensures and protects confidentiality
- Demonstrates ethical and professional conduct
- Creates a judgment-free zone
- Addresses health and safety concerns through contact tracing
- Works collaboratively with the Erie County Department of Health (ECDH) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- Works collaboratively with Plant Operations and Custodial Services

When can I come back to work?

RETURNING TO WORK

Paid Quarantine Leave benefits and/or work from home authorization cease as soon as a quarantined employee meets the applicable criteria to return to work.

COVID-19 Positive employees:

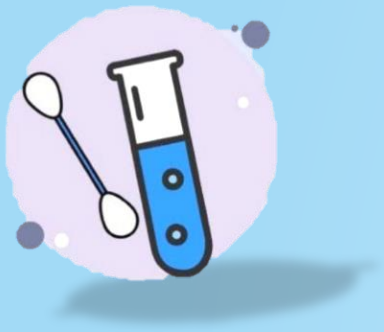
- With documentation from either the Erie County or Department of Health or their physician that they have completed their mandatory quarantine period.
- COVID-19 symptoms have ceased. If the employee has used the 10 illness days allotted, they will use their accruals if they are unable to work and are still experiencing symptoms.

Employee will provide verification that they have completed their mandatory quarantine period to the online portal.

RETURNING TO WORK

Employees returning from a state that has been designated mandatory ten (10) day quarantine:

- May return to work ten (10) days after they return to New York State, so long as they test negative for COVID-19.
- Proof of travel dates and return to New York State may be requested
- Employee must get tested 5-7 days after they return to New York State.
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 employee should follow the guidelines under this section for "COVID-19 positive employees".
- Employees that have voluntarily traveled to a state requiring mandatory ten (10) day quarantine, as defined by the Governor in NYS Executive Order No. 205, **are not eligible for paid Quarantine Leave, or to work remotely**.
- Employees who take a test immediately upon their return, and another 3 days later, may be cleared to return on the 4th day with a negative test.



COVID-19 EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

Buffalo Public Schools has compiled a list of resources and tips to focus on employee health and wellness during the pandemic:

- Managing Stress and Anxiety
- Telemedicine
- Counseling support and resources through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

MANAGING ANXIETY AND STRESS

- **Take care of your body** – Try to eat healthy well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep
- **Connect with others** – Share your concerns with how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain health relationships and build a strong support system
- **Take breaks** – Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Try taking deep breaths, do activities you usually enjoy, and/or meditate.
- **Stay informed** - Watch, listen to, or read the news for updates from officials. Always check your sources and turn to reliable sources of information like your local government authorities.
- **Seek help when needed** – If distress impacts activities of your daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a clergy member, counselor, doctor, or contact the District's Employee Assistance Provider, ComPsych, for free and confidential support

TELEMEDICINE

- $0 cost-share/ waived deductible for Doctor on Demand telemedicine visits
- $0 cost-share/waived deductible for COVID-19 diagnostic tests
- $0 cost-share/waived deductible for all participating physician office, urgent care, and emergency room visits for diagnostic testing related to COVID-19 (not the ongoing treatment)

BUFFALO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR TELEMEDICINE BENEFIT

Download Doctor On Demand

- On your smartphone, download DoctoronDemand app from the Apple of Google Play store
- Create your account by filling in the information as prompted
- Don't forget to have your BCBS of WNY health insurance card handy.

Visit www.DoctoronDemand.com

- You must have access to a camera on your laptop or desktop computer
- Create your account by filling in the information as prompted
- Don't forget to have your BCBS of WNY health insurance card handy.

Our access to Doctor on Demand is through their partnership with BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York, and not the Buffalo Public Schools. Therefore, please select the "skip" option on the employer page and go straight to the health insurance section. Scroll to choose Blue Cross Blue Shield of Western New York. Once you enter your BCBS member ID and group ID, the site will recognize it. If you continue to have access issues, please call their Customer Support Team at 1-800-997-6196.

⇒ $0 cost-share/waived deductible for telemedicine visits.

⇒ Click on "Start a Virtual Visit" and choose to See a Doctor Now or Schedule an Appointment. Doctors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

⇒ Concerned about Coronavirus? There is a free assessment based on CDC guidelines that anyone can take, regardless of having a visit which gives you some indication of their risk level. If you choose to have a virtual visit, the doctor will instruct the patient in conducting a selft-exam. If through this exam, the patient is deemed to be at risk, the DoD physician will refer that patient to their local health department for further testing or instruction.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Guidance Resources
The Buffalo Public Schools offers all employees and their families access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through ComPSych Guidance Resources. There is no cost to employees or their families and all information is **confidential** – no personally identifiable information is sent to the District.

This support is designed to help employees and their families in resolving issues such as :

- Marital
- Financial and/or Legal
- Emotional Problems
- Family Issues
- Substance/Alcohol abuse
- Work & Education

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

On the web: www.guidanceresources.com you can find articles, trainings, and get in touch with Guidance Consultant to speak about the issues that you are personally facing.

WebID: BuffaloSchoolsEAP

BY PHONE: 866-645-1757

TTY: 800-697-0353

ComPsych®
GuidanceResources® Worldwide

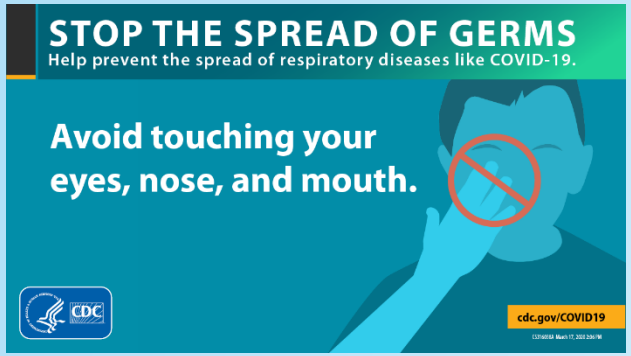
CRISIS SERVICES & TEXT HELPLINE

Crisis Services for Buffalo and Erie County provide services for those who are in state of emotional crises:

- **Buffalo & Erie County Crisis Service** – 716-834-3131
- **24 Hour Addiction Helpline** – 716-831-7007
- **Kids Helpline** – 716-834-1144 or 1-877-kids-400
- **Chautauqua County Helpline** – 1-800-724-0461
- **24 Hour Erie County Domestic Violence Hotline** – 716-862-HELP
  For Shelter 716-884-6000
- **24 Hour NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline** – 1-800-942-6906
- **Hearing Impaired?** – use 711 (National Relay Service)
- **Text line** www.crisistextline.org

IF YOU ARE IN A STATE OF EMOTIONAL CRISIS AND NEED IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE YOU ARE URGED TO CONTACT CRISIS SERVICES

FOLLOW CDC GUIDELINES



Thank you for doing your part at keeping Buffalo Schools Strong

Jamie Warren, Associate Superintendent for Human Resources, BPS