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COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR SUPERVISORY STAFF

EHS DEPARTMENT
NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY

COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR SUPERVISORY STAFF

This guidance is being provided to assist NYCHA supervisory staff to respond to questions and situations that may arise related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019). This guidance will continue to be revised based on updates or guidance from local or federal public health authorities. If further clarification is needed regarding the information provided, please email ehs@nycha.nyc.gov. Staff must also consult with, and follow guidance documents and policies issued by the Chair and General Manager and NYCHA’s Human Resources Department. Continue to follow, and remind staff of the infection prevention strategies being recommended by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”) and the Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”):

- ❖ Stay home if you are sick.
- ❖ Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue, shirt sleeve, or bent arm but not your hands.
- ❖ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- ❖ Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- ❖ Monitor your health more closely than usual for cold or flu symptoms.
- ❖ Practice social distancing. Create more personal space between yourself and others (6 ft).
- ❖ Wear a face covering when in public or in the workplace and unable to maintain at least 6ft distance between yourself and others.

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A. Managing an employee who is showing symptoms of COVID-like illness while at work. Commonly reported symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath (difficulty breathing) and sore throat. What should supervisors do?

1. If the employee's symptoms are severe or appear life threatening, call 911 immediately. Keep the employee separate from other employees while waiting for the paramedics. If he/she is able to, ask the employee to wear a face covering/mask.
2. For less severe symptoms, separate the sick employee and send the employee home immediately. If they are unable to leave immediately, place the person that is ill in a separate room/area away from others and if available, ask them to wear a face mask or face covering if they are able to.
3. Follow guidance in Section E for notifying employees of potential exposure and instructions that they must follow.
4. Advise all staff to follow hand hygiene protocols, respiratory etiquette, social distancing and self-monitoring for symptoms.
5. See Section B for requesting cleaning and disinfection services of the employee's work area. NYCHA has hired a vendor to perform routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces in work areas and offices at developments. At Central Offices, routine cleaning and disinfection of common areas, offices, workspaces, and frequently touched surfaces are performed by the landlord's cleaning contractor.
6. Notify Human Resources and the EHS Department of suspected/confirmed COVID-19 by sending an e-mail to hr.covid19@nycha.nyc.gov and ehs@nycha.nyc.gov.
7. See NYCHA's guidelines for Leave Policies associated with COVID-19.

B. Cleaning and disinfection guidance for the workspace that was occupied by an employee who was suspected/confirmed to have COVID-19. *See Section C. below for information on virus stability on various surfaces.

1. NYCHA has hired a vendor who performs routine cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces at NYCHA Developments. Routine cleaning and disinfection of Central/Satellite Offices is performed by the landlord's cleaning contractor.

NOTE: If it has been more than 7 days since the person who is sick visited or was in the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not required as per CDC Guidance. Routine cleaning and disinfection will continue.

2. Keep the employee's work station or primary work area isolated until the vendor has disinfected the area.
3. If disinfection services are needed due to a confirmed/suspected case at a development, the following steps will be taken (for Central/Satellite Offices see Step #5):

- a) Once the Location Supervision notifies the Department Director (or designee) of an employee with suspected/confirmed COVID-19. The Department Director (or designee) should advise the reporting location supervisor to request disinfection services from the Department of Management and Planning (DMP) sending e-mail to dmp@nycha.nyc.gov with a copy to ehs@nycha.nyc.gov. Copy the Department Director on the request.
 - b) EHS logs the suspected/confirmed COVID-19 case in the COVID-19 Notification Log.
 - c) Location Supervision requests disinfection services from DMP and provides DMP with the following information:
 - A point of contact (POC) for the vendor
 - Address and specific area requiring cleaning
 - Last day the sick employee was present at the location.
 - d) DMP contacts the vendor and requests disinfection services at the location and provides the vendor with the point of contact.
 - e) Vendor advises DMP of the expected time of arrival at the requested location.
 - f) DMP contacts the location POC and EHS, to advise them of the estimated time of arrival for the vendor and provides the location supervision with the "EHS Notice" advising employees assigned to the work location of the potential exposure to COVID-19 and that the work location is being disinfected as a result.
 - g) The Location POC advises the location supervision of the ETA of the vendor and advises the location supervision to the extent possible to restrict employee access to those areas that are only accessible by employees until the vendor arrives.
 - h) Location supervision provides the EHS Notice to all employees assigned to the work location.
 - i) Vendor arrives at the work location and disinfects the work location.
 - j) Upon completion of the disinfection, location supervision notifies the POC, Department Director and the EHS Department that all disinfection services are completed.
 - k) EHS logs completion of disinfection services.
 - l) If disinfection is not completed per required response time, EHS will escalate to the General Manager.
4. For disinfection services related to a COVID-19 case at Central Office/Satellite Office locations:
- a) The Department Director/Deputy Director (or designee with copy to Department Director) emails ehs@nycha.nyc.gov and provides the following information:
 - Name of Requesting Department
 - Location, address, and floor number of the employee's primary work area (provide cubicle or office number if available)

- Last day the sick employee was present at the location.

Note: In accordance with the CDC, if it has been more than 7 days since the person with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not required. Routine cleaning and disinfection will continue.

- b) EHS submits the cleaning and disinfection services request to DRES for coordination with Building Services.
 - c) After cleaning and disinfection are complete, DRES provides confirmation to EHS and the requestor that disinfection has been completed.
5. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, all NYCHA buildings are being cleaned with increased frequency. High touch surfaces will continue to be cleaned daily.
 6. If the staff member was assigned to a vehicle or spent time in a NYCHA vehicle while sick it should not be used by any other staff member until frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle have been cleaned and disinfected. See Sections I and J for Vehicle Cleaning Guidance. Notify Fleet Services if the vehicle used was part of the pool.

C. Stability of SARS-Cov-2 on Various Surfaces

The virus that causes COVID-19 (SARS-Cov-2) is stable for several hours to days on various surfaces, according to a study from the National Institutes of Health, CDC, UCLA and Princeton University that was published in The New England Journal of Medicine. The stability of the virus on various surfaces and when aerosolized is as follows:

SURFACE/AEROSOLS	SARS-Cov-2 STABILITY (Hours)
Stainless Steel	72 Hours
Plastic	72 Hours
Cardboard	24 Hours
Copper	4 Hours
Aerosols	3 Hours

D. If an employee notifies a supervisor that he/she tested positive for COVID-19, or results of a test are pending, supervisors should:

1. Notify the Department Director or Deputy Director

2. The Department Director, Deputy Director (or designee with copy to the Department's Director) will notify and submit any documentation provided by the employee to hr.covid19@nycha.nyc.gov with a copy to ehs@nycha.nyc.gov.
3. If disinfection services are required for the sick employee's work area, see Section B. If it has been more than 7 days since the person who is sick visited or was at the work location, enhanced cleaning and disinfection are not required as per CDC Guidance. Routine cleaning and disinfection of the work area will continue.
4. When EHS receives notification that an employee tested positive or results of a test are pending, EHS submits an email to the Department leadership to communicate with employees at the location/department regarding their potential exposure. See Section E for further information on communicating with employees about potential exposure.

E. Notification and Self-Monitoring Instructions for Employees with Potential Exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace

1. Supervisors who receive notification that an employee has tested positive or is suspected of having COVID-19, must advise location or department employees of their potential exposure to COVID-19. If multiple departments occupy the work location, notify the Department Directors/Deputy Directors of these departments so that they can inform their staff of potential exposure.

NOTE: Do not identify by name the infected employee or you could risk a violation of confidentiality laws. Review the Chair and General Manager's policy on maintaining employee confidentiality related to COVID-19.

2. Employees who may have been in close contact for a prolonged period, i.e. within 6ft of an individual who tested positive or is presumed to have COVID-19, should monitor themselves closely for 14 days from the time of exposure. The timeframe for having contact with an individual also includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual reported being symptomatic. Supervisors should ask the sick employee to name close contacts and ensure these individuals are notified and provided with appropriate instructions. Essential workers who have been exposed but are asymptomatic are not required to self-quarantine.
3. Communicate to staff the following NYC DOHMH guidance for individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 (this communication also applies if employees believe they were exposed to a resident or visitor who is confirmed/suspected of having COVID-19):

There is widespread community transmission of COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) happening in New York City. Community transmission means that COVID-19 is circulating in NYC and we should act as if we are all exposed.

The DOHMH and CDC advise that essential workers who have had an exposure but remain asymptomatic should be instructed to adhere to the following practices prior to and during their work shift:

- a) Inform their supervisor if they believe they were in close contact for a prolonged period, with an individual who tested positive or is presumed to have COVID-19. Supervisors

must ensure that the employee's seating arrangements and duties will allow the employee to adhere to social distancing during the work day. Make any necessary adjustments as required (such as staggering lunch breaks, adjusting duties to avoid non-essential interactions with other employees and residents during the 14-day period that symptoms are being monitored).

- b) Employees must self-monitor for symptoms. Take your temperature prior to coming to work and again at night. CDC defines a fever as a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Remain alert for cough, shortness of breath or sore throat. If any of these symptoms appear, STAY HOME.
 - c) Practice social distancing. See Section K for Social Distancing tips to share with employees.
 - c) Wear a face covering at all times while in the workplace.
 - d) Avoid sharing food and personal equipment such as headsets, phones, utensils, tools, or objects used near the face. Frequently clean and disinfect your work area and equipment after use.
 - e) Employees who feel sick at work should notify their supervisor who must ensure they are separated from others and sent home immediately.
 - f) If you feel sick, **STAY HOME**. If you have/feel the onset of flu-like symptoms (cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat), **you should stay home**. If you do not feel better in three to four days, consult your health care provider.
4. All employees should be reminded to continue to follow infection prevention guidance provided by the NYC DOHMH:
- a) Stay home if you are sick.
 - b) Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - c) Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
 - d) Continue to practice social distancing and avoid close contact with other individuals
 - e) Wear a face covering when unable to maintain at least 6-ft distance between yourself and others.
 - f) Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue, shirt sleeve, or bent arm but not your hands.
5. If it is confirmed that you or an employee has COVID-19 or you may have COVID-19, you must not report to work for seven days after the symptoms started or for three days after the fever has stopped (without the use of fever reducing medication), whichever is longer.
6. See NYCHA's Leave Policy related to COVID-19.

F. Employee with a household member who is under quarantine due to potential exposure to COVID-19.

1. If a medical provider or public health authority recommended that the employee self-quarantine, the employee **MUST** follow this guidance. If any employee states that this was recommended, they must stay home and follow HR policies for submission of any necessary paperwork for leave purposes.
2. For employees who are not sick and were not advised by a medical professional or health official to quarantine, determine if the employee can perform work remotely. See NYCHA's Emergency Teleworking guidance and instructions.
3. If the employee cannot work remotely and is providing essential services, provide the employee with the instructions listed in Section E for essential workers with potential exposure to COVID-19.
4. If an employee has/feels the onset of flu-like symptoms (cough, sneezing, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat) he/she should stay home.
5. If an employee begins to feel sick while at work, he/she should inform a supervisor who should separate the employee from the rest of the staff and send the sick employee home. The NYC DOHMH recommends that if after 3-4 days they are not feeling any better, they should seek medical care immediately.
6. See NYCHA's leave policy related to COVID-19 and criteria for returning to work.

G. Notification of a resident death in a unit due to COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19

If a supervisor is notified that a resident allegedly died in a unit from COVID-19. The supervisor must:

1. Instruct staff not to enter the unit for 3 days.
2. Notify the Property Manager and Director of the Property Management Department. The Property Management Director or Property Manager must email the Environmental Health and Safety Department at EHS@nycha.nyc.gov.
3. EHS will record and track this information in its COVID-19 notification report.

H. Notification that a resident has or may have COVID-19.

1. If a resident self-reports to a NYCHA staff member or supervisor that he/she tested positive, notify the Property Manager or Assistant Property Manager at the resident's location.
2. HUD advises that PHAs can provide notification of positive COVID-19 cases without giving the name/apartment number/other personally identifiable information.
3. The Property Manager (or designee, who must copy the Property Manager on communications) emails the Environmental Health and Safety Department at EHS@nycha.nyc.gov and also copies the Property Management Director.
4. EHS will record this information in its COVID-19 notification report.
5. See Section E for information and instructions to share with staff who believe they were

in close contact with a resident who has or may have COVID-19.

6. All employees should be reminded to continue to follow infection prevention guidance provided by the health authorities:
 - a) Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - b) Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue, shirt sleeve, or bent arm but not your hands.
 - c) Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
 - d) Practice social distancing and avoid close contact with other individuals
 - e) Wear a face covering when unable to maintain at least 6ft distance between yourself and others.
7. If it is confirmed that you or an employee has COVID-19 or you think you may have COVID-19, you must not report to work for seven days after the symptoms started or for three days after the fever has stopped, whichever is longer.
8. See NYCHA's Leave Policy related to COVID-19 and criteria for returning to work after illness.

I. Routine Vehicle Cleaning Guidance

1. Ensure all NYCHA staff who drive shared vehicles are instructed to clean frequently touched ("high-touch") surfaces before and after each use.
2. Frequently touched surfaces include, but are not limited to, steering wheel, seatbelt buckles, gear shifter, door handle, turn signal switch, windshield wiper switch, armrest, and radio.
3. The NYC Fleet guidance indicates that standard cleaning & disinfection products are recommended (e.g. Clorox, Purell, Peroxide multi-purpose cleaner). If there is a difficulty obtaining suitable cleaning products contact ehs@nycha.nyc.gov.
4. Wear gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.
5. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
6. Doors should remain open when cleaning the vehicle.
7. Remove and discard gloves after cleaning. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.

J. Vehicle cleaning/disinfection guidance for vehicles used by employee who had COVID-like symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19.

1. Take the NYCHA vehicle out of rotation until it has been cleaned and disinfected. Contact Fleet Services if assistance is needed to clean and disinfect a vehicle.

2. If the vehicle is part of NYCHA's Fleet Pool notify General Services.
3. If other staff members were travelling in the vehicle with the employee when he or she was sick, notify them of potential exposure. See Section C.
4. The vehicle should not be used by any other staff member until all frequently touched surfaces have been cleaned and disinfected. Contact Fleet Services if assistance is needed to clean and disinfect a vehicle.
5. Open doors and windows to increase air circulation in the car. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
6. Ensure cleaning personnel wear gloves and clean and disinfect all surfaces, following general cleaning guidance for cleaning of high-touch surfaces, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces (e.g., steering wheel, seatbelt buckles, gear shifter, door handle, turn signal switch, windshield wiper switch, armrest, and radio).
7. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
8. Doors should remain open when cleaning the vehicle.
9. Standard cleaning & disinfection products are recommended (e.g. Clorox, Purell, Peroxide multi-purpose cleaner).
10. Gloves should be removed after cleaning. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.

K. Social Distancing Recommendations for the Workplace

All NYCHA supervisors must promote social distancing practices within their departments, units, and locations. Be mindful that daily operations allow essential staff who cannot telework to adhere to social distancing guidelines. As much as possible, identify activities within your departments that make social distancing challenging, and identify alternate ways of doing business, e.g. offering virtual trainings and digital communications vs in-person. Consider the following best practices:

[By Order of the NYS Governor, all non-essential employees should be working from home.]

1. Limit the number of people who congregate and interact with one another within the workspace. Instruct employees not to congregate in break rooms, locker rooms, pantries, lunchrooms, kitchens, copier rooms, etc.
2. In locker rooms that are small, consider taking turns to use the locker room rather than all staff using the room at the same time. Supervisors should give staff the appropriate time to make this happen. Staggered schedules may help to prevent this crowding.
3. Only hold and attend in-person meetings if they are essential and cannot be postponed. In-person meetings should be limited to 10 people or less with at least 6 feet distance between individuals to the extent possible. Before scheduling an in-person meeting that cannot be cancelled or postponed, visit the space to ensure it allows for enough physical distance between individuals.
4. If face-to-face meetings must occur, e.g. daily muster, move them to a location where the participants can maintain a 6-ft separation between each other, such as outdoors. Consider using radio communications to conduct muster.
5. Whenever possible, allow more physical space between employees at work stations. This may include temporarily rearranging/changing seating assignments.
6. Stagger mealtimes and breaks to reduce crowding in shared eating facilities.
7. Stagger the schedule for use of common/shared kitchens.
8. Reduce the number of face-to-face interactions with residents for simple informational purposes. Consider using bulletin boards, signs, posters, brochures, emails, phone, or mail.
9. As much as possible utilize technology to conduct trainings and meetings even for staff who are not teleworking. Utilize applications such as Microsoft Teams to share screens and conduct trainings. Consider keeping staff trained and engaged through webinars.
10. Encourage staff to help reduce overcrowding in elevators. In buildings with elevators, limit the number of occupants per car. Only get into a car where you can maintain a physical distance from others. Otherwise, wait for the next elevator. If possible, take the stairs.

L. Guidance for Staff Handling Document Submissions from Residents, Visitors, or Employees

1. Encourage residents, visitors, or staff to send documents electronically when possible.
2. If in-person drop-offs or interactions are required at management offices, residents must remain behind the protective barrier while conducting business.
3. Ensure that signage is posted, reminding residents to call ahead before visiting the management office.
4. Remind employees to wash their hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after receiving or handling documents.

5. Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers (with at least 60% alcohol) to staff who frequently handle document submissions.
6. Remind employees to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.
7. Consider having documents placed in a secured physical inbox or lock box and let sit for 24 hours before handling. While there is no data on how long the virus remains stable on paper, studies show that it remains stable for up to 24 hours on cardboard.
8. Gloves should not be treated as an alternative to hand hygiene. Wearing gloves may give individuals a false sense of security. While gloves can protect hands from coming into direct contact with respiratory droplets on a surface, these droplets will remain on the surface of the gloves. If employees wear gloves and continue to touch potentially contaminated surfaces and then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth they can still become infected.

The most effective infection prevention measure is for employees to follow hand-washing/hand sanitizing guidelines at all times, especially after handling documents.

M. Guidance on Face Coverings

Per Executive Order 202.16, effective April 15, 2020, and DCAS Commissioner Directive 2020-1, all essential employees present in the workplace must wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose when in direct contact with members of the public. "Direct contact" refers to whenever there is a potential for you to be within six feet or less of any other person, including another staff member or a member of the public, including residents. Based on these directives NYCHA requires all employees who are in direct contact with other staff members or members of the public, including residents to wear a face covering.

NYCHA will issue face coverings to its employees. These face coverings are not respirators such as N-95s or N-100s. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene ("DOHMH") and the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") continue to discourage the use of respirators such as N-95s or N-100s by non-healthcare workers. These are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders. While PPE such as N-95s are intended to protect the wearer a face covering is not intended to protect the wearer, but it may prevent the spread of the virus from the wearer to others. A face covering can include anything that covers your nose and mouth, including dust masks, scarves, and bandanas

NYCHA will provide surgical masks/dust masks (as long as supplies are available) to be used as a face covering for personnel entering apartments to conduct work described in the Work Order Guidance.

NOTE: It is essential that all staff continue to practice social (physical) distancing and good hand hygiene even when wearing a face mask — including keeping 6 feet of distance between themselves and other individuals whenever possible.

N. Monitoring and enforcing employee compliance with NYCHA’s Face Covering policy.

All staff are responsible and accountable for taking necessary actions to provide a safe workplace. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that their staff follow the requirement to wear face coverings, and Supervisors must lead by example.

Supervisors must review face covering policy from the Chair, NYCHA’s Face Covering FAQ, and Safety Precautions and ensure that all employees have reviewed this information and are adhering to the guidance.

- Wearing a face covering is now required by NYCHA Regulations, like wearing a NYCHA-prescribed uniform or other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Supervisors should confirm that each staff member has a face covering in their possession, and ensure replacements are provided, where deemed necessary.
- Supervisors and/or Storeroom personnel should keep track of the distribution of face coverings to staff.
- Remind staff to wear face coverings.
- Use progressive discipline to reinforce the requirement to wear face coverings.
- Issue Instructional and Counseling Memos, where appropriate.
- Refer for formal disciplinary action (Local Hearing or General Trial), where appropriate.