

Employees: Coronavirus Information & FAQs

Updated June 9, 2022

Employee Monitoring

1. What is the requirement for employee self-monitoring?

- In addition to caring for COVID-19 patients across our healthcare system, we are also aware that COVID-19 is being spread in our community and that our employees may be exposed both inside and outside the healthcare setting. In an effort to take additional precautions to mitigate community spread, we are requiring all employees to self-monitor. The emphasis is on regular symptom and temperature monitoring. We ask you to please stay home from work if you develop a temperature of 100 Fahrenheit or higher, a cough that is unusual to you personally, shortness of breath, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, new loss of taste/smell, headache, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea (any of these). If you develop symptoms, please notify your leader and visit the COVID Self Service Portal (portal will not work if using Internet Explorer).
- Answers to questions related to time away, pay, and recommendations on next steps are available by visiting the COVID Self Service Portal, or by calling 678-503-1900, prompt "0."
- In line with CDCs guidance, effective immediately, all employees are required to take their temperature once before their shift begins.

Employee Exposure

1. If you have a known, unprotected (not wearing appropriate PPE) contact (within less than 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with a coworker or patient who has been diagnosed with coronavirus, **and you are a non-vaccinated exempt employee, what steps should be taken?**

- Beginning March 14, 2022, unvaccinated employees identified as having a high-risk workplace exposure will be removed from the workplace for 10 days or may choose to participate in serial surveillance testing, which includes submission of multiple negative COVID tests.

2. If you have a known, unprotected (not wearing appropriate PPE) contact (within less than 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with a coworker or patient who has been diagnosed with coronavirus, **and you are a vaccinated employee, what steps should be taken?**

- If asymptomatic, you will be permitted to work. Self-monitoring is an expectation for all workforce members. Per Georgia Department of Public Health and CDC guidelines, outside of work, you should stay home, wear a mask and monitor for any new symptoms.
- If symptomatic, you will not be permitted to return to work until you have been tested for COVID-19. To schedule testing please visit our COVID Self Service Portal. If you have trouble with the portal, you can call the COVID triage line at 678-503-1900. If you become symptomatic while at work, you should notify your leader, remove yourself from the workplace, go home, self-isolate, and schedule testing by going to the COVID Self Service portal.

3. **If you have a known, unprotected (not wearing appropriate PPE) contact** (within less than 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with a person outside of Piedmont who has been diagnosed with coronavirus, **what steps should be taken?**
 - If asymptomatic, you will be permitted to work. Self-monitoring is an expectation for all workforce members. Per Georgia Department of Public Health and CDC guidelines, outside of work, you should stay home, wear a mask and monitor for any new symptoms.
 - If symptomatic, you will not be permitted to return to work until you have been tested for COVID-19. To schedule testing please visit our COVID Self Service Portal. If you have trouble with the portal, you can call the COVID triage line at 678-503-1900. If you become symptomatic while at work, you should notify your leader, remove yourself from the workplace, go home, self-isolate, and schedule testing by going to the COVID Self Service portal.
4. **If you have traveled (domestic, international, cruise) what should you do upon return?**
 - Self-monitor for symptoms. If you become symptomatic please follow Piedmont's symptomatic protocol, alert your supervisor and schedule testing via the COVID Self Service Portal.
5. **If someone in your household is sick, or has tested positive for COVID-19, what steps should be taken?**
 - If asymptomatic, you will be permitted to continue to work. Self-monitoring is an expectation for all workforce members. Per Georgia Department of Public Health, outside of work, you should stay home, wear a mask and monitor for any new symptoms
 - If symptomatic, you will not be permitted to return to work until you meet Piedmont's return to work criteria after being tested for COVID-19. To schedule testing, please use our COVID Self Service Portal. If you become symptomatic while at work you will need to notify your leader or his/her designee, remove yourself from the workplace, go home, self-isolate, and go to the COVID Self Service portal to schedule a COVID test.
6. **If you have a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, a cough that is unusual to you personally, shortness of breath, chills, muscle aches, sore throat, new loss of taste/smell, headache, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea (any of these), what steps should be taken?**
 - You will not be permitted to return to work until you have been tested for COVID-19 and meet Piedmont's return to work criteria. Guidelines for return to work criteria are included in the information provided through the COVID Self Service Portal.
7. **If you received instructions from your physician to self-isolate/quarantine due to a medical concern/condition, what steps should be taken?**
 - If you need to take time away to care for your own serious health condition or to care for an immediate family member/dependent with a serious health condition, you should request a leave through ESS AbsenceTracker system. Visit the Leaves of Absence page on the intranet for information about Piedmont's Leaves of Absence Policy and guidelines on how to initiate a request using the ESS system.

- If you were placed out of work due to COVID or Influenza by your primary care physician, urgent care, or any medical outlet outside of Piedmont's COVID Self Service Portal, follow Piedmont's Leave of Absence Process in order to initiate the process that will ensure your leave of absence is handled appropriately.

General Employee Questions

1. May I decide to self-isolate/quarantine as a precaution?

- If you are considered to be a mission critical team member (critical to the continued operations of business or directly impacting patient care) and you are asymptomatic, you are expected to continue to report to work unless you are on an approved leave of absence or have received a medical accommodation.
- If you are considered to be a non-mission critical team member (not critical to the continued operations of business or directly impacting patient care) and your role is not conducive to remote work options, your leader and Piedmont's staffing offices may be able to assist you in identifying areas/roles that you can help to support.

2. If a family member is immunocompromised, over 65, or vulnerable to COVID-19, do I have to work?

- If you are considered to be a mission critical team member (critical to the continued operations of business or directly impacting patient care) and you are asymptomatic, you are expected to continue reporting to work unless you are on an approved leave of absence or have received a medical accommodation.
- If you are considered to be a non-mission critical team member (not critical to the continued operations of business or directly impacting patient care), and your role is not conducive to remote work options, your leader and Piedmont's staffing offices may be able to assist you with identifying areas/roles that you can help to support.
- For additional information on self-care and care of individuals in your home with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

3. If I am immunocompromised, over 65, or vulnerable to COVID-19, do I have to work? Do I have to redeploy to areas with a high intake of COVID patients?

- If circumstances occur when there is not access to adequate PPE (facemasks, N95, or eye protection), and in line with CDC's guidance, Piedmont has a process to ensure that we offer alternative options, for our higher-risk employee population, from caring for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection.
- If you believe that you fall into the "high-risk" category as is defined above, please notify your leader so that the appropriate steps can be followed. If, you are immunocompromised and are seeking options to be removed from the care of patients during times with inadequate PPE, you may request a medical accommodation through Piedmont's accommodation process.

4. How do I schedule COVID testing?

- Follow link <https://piedmonthealth.force.com/EHS/s/> from any device (internet explorer is not a supported browser).

5. Does Piedmont offer same day testing for employees?

- Same day testing is dependent on appointment availability. Follow link <https://piedmonthealth.force.com/EHS/s/> from any device (using a browser other than internet explorer) to schedule testing.

6. Can my family get tested through Piedmont's employee process?

- If you have a family member in need of testing, we encourage you to visit piedmont.org for a local testing facility, or visit the [Georgia Department of Public Health](#) for additional testing locations.

7. Can I get tested through Piedmont's Employee process if I do not have MyChart?

- Yes, but you will be asked to set up a MyChart account.

8. Do I have to report my COVID positive results?

- All COVID test results must be reported through the portal. Follow link <https://piedmonthealth.force.com/EHS/s/> from any device (internet explorer is not a supported browser).

9. Do I need to call Employee Health and the triage line to let them know I am COVID positive?

- No, it is not necessary to call Employee Health or the triage line. Follow link <https://piedmonthealth.force.com/EHS/s/> to report your positive result through the portal.

10. Can I just report my positive results to my manager/EHS/HR?

- All employee positive results must be reported to the portal. Follow link <https://piedmonthealth.force.com/EHS/s/> from any device (using a browser other than internet explorer).

11. How do I get clearance to return to work?

- Clearance to RTW is obtained through the portal. Follow link <https://piedmonthealth.force.com/EHS/s/> from any device (using a browser other than internet explorer).

12. Do I need a repeat COVID 19 test in order to be cleared to return to work?

- No, you do not need to repeat your COVID test to return to work.

Leave, Pay, Return to Work & Work Requirements

1. If you are symptomatic and are asked to self-isolate/quarantine due to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 exposure, how will your compensation be handled?

- If you need time away for your own medical condition related to COVID-19, you will be eligible for the same benefits and/or pay options that all eligible employees are able to access during a leave of absence under FMLA or Piedmont's Leaves of Absence policy.

2. If you are returning from a leave related to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and/or Influenza, what steps need to be taken?

- COVID-19 positive result and Influenza positive or negative result: you will need to self-isolate and be out of work based on Piedmont's current policy
- COVID-19 negative result and Influenza positive or negative result: you will need to self-isolate and be fever-free for 24 hours without medication.
- Prior to return from an absence related to COVID-19, all employees are required to visit the [COVID self-service portal](#) to be cleared to return to work.
- Upon return, employees will be required to wear a facemask (not cloth) at all times in the healthcare facility for 21 days from date returned to work.
- If staffing permits, all employees returning from a COVID related leave should be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients until 14 days after illness onset. Severely immunocompromised is defined as:
 - Patients receiving chemotherapy and/or on the oncology unit
 - Patients on the transplant unit and/or transplanted patients
 - NICU patients
- Employees must adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette.
- Employees must self-monitor for symptoms, and seek re-evaluation from 678-503-1900 if symptoms recur or worsen. Throughout this process, employees are required to update their leader or designee.

3. How will my job be protected during this time if I need to take time away for reasons related to COVID-19 or Influenza?

- Notify your supervisor immediately of your need to be out of work, even if you have been directed to be out of work by a triage nurse, a member of Employee Health and Safety, or based on Piedmont's most recent guidelines surrounding COVID-19 and employee workplace requirements.
- If you are sent home by a triage nurse or your leader due to exposure and/or symptoms, you will need to follow Piedmont's Leave of Absence process in order to initiate the process that will ensure your leave of absence is handled accordingly.
- If you were placed out of work due to COVID or Influenza by your primary care physician, urgent care, or any medical outlet outside of Piedmont's COVID Self Service Portal, follow Piedmont's Leave of Absence process in order to initiate the process that will ensure your leave of absence is handled appropriately.
- If employees are taking leave for any reason that is not considered as a COVID-19 qualifying leave, they will need to follow Piedmont's Leaves of Absence Policy in order to initiate the process that will ensure your leave of absence is handled accordingly.

4. Will I have the option to take time off without using PTO?

- Based on Piedmont's current Leaves of Absence policy, you may choose to take time as unpaid during an approved leave of absence.

5. Will I be held to the attendance policy if I refuse to come to work?

- If you are considered to be a mission-critical employee and you are not exempt from working in your position for one of the reasons below, Piedmont, at its discretion may determine that those absences will be reviewed in accordance with the Attendance and Punctuality policy or other applicable policies.
- Reasonable accommodation: employees that have a serious medical condition/disability may request a reasonable accommodation in order to safely be able to complete the essential functions of their position.
- High-risk: employees that may be immunocompromised, of older age 65+, and/or pregnant during circumstances of inadequate PPE.
- Pregnant employees: Even when PPE may be accessible, pregnant employees may request light duty options.

6. What if I would like to temporarily leave Piedmont to travel to another area to care for COVID-19 patients?

- If you are considered to be a mission critical employee and you are not exempt from working in your position for one of the reasons below, Piedmont needs you to remain in your role so that we can continue to care for our patients during this critical time.
 - Reasonable accommodation: employees that have a serious medical condition/disability may request a reasonable accommodation in order to safely be able to complete the essential functions of their position.
 - High-risk: employees that may be immunocompromised, of older age 65+, and/or pregnant during circumstances of inadequate PPE.
 - Pregnant employees: Even when PPE may be accessible, pregnant employees may request light duty options.
 - Mission-critical employees that make the decision to leave temporarily or resign to care for COVID-19 patients in a high-risk area, and that leave in "good-standing," will not be able to return or be rehired for a period of 90 days in order to ensure that Piedmont's workforce members and patients are not placed at additional risk.

7. If I am interested in resigning from Piedmont during the COVID-19 crisis, will I be eligible for rehire?

- If you are considered to be a mission-critical employee and you are not exempt from working in your position for one of the reasons below, Piedmont needs you to remain in your role so we can continue to care for our patients during this critical time.
 - Reasonable accommodation: employees that have a serious medical condition/disability may request a reasonable accommodation in order to safely be able to complete the essential functions of their position.
 - High-risk: employees that may be immunocompromised, of older age 65+, and/or pregnant during circumstances of inadequate PPE.

- Pregnant employees: Even when PPE may be accessible, pregnant employees may request light duty options.
- If you are in a mission-critical role and you wish to remain in good-standing, you will be required to provide a minimum notice period of two (2) weeks, and you will not be allowed to return for a period of 90 days following your separation date.
- If you are in a mission-critical role and you resign without meeting the notice period requirements, you will not be eligible for rehire for a period up to one year. There will be no PTO payout for a mission-critical employee who resigns without meeting the notice period requirements.
- Exceptions to rehire eligibility must be reviewed between Employee Relations and the appropriate leader(s).

8. Can I use my Extended Illness Bank (EIB) for COVID-19 related absences?

- Employees that are out due to their own health condition will use the same additional pay options (PTO, EIB, STD) that all eligible employees receive during an approved leave of absence under Piedmont's policy. In order to receive approval to use EIB or STD during the leave period, employees are required to initiate a leave request through the ESS AbsenceTracker system.

Employee Support Resources

1. What resources and programs are available to Piedmont employees facing challenges related to their well-being and childcare?

- As a healthcare provider navigating COVID-19, Piedmont is committed to an environment that is safe and accommodating for our patients, visitors, and our workforce. We understand that our employees need the proper tools to address the ins-and-outs of this pandemic, both clinically and personally.
- Click [here](#) to visit the COVID-19 Employee Resource Page on the intranet. This page serves as an extension of our benefits and wellness programs, but has been tailored to provide specific resources that you (and your family) can use during this time. Please note that this page is evolving as the situation changes. Be sure to check back frequently for updates.

COVID-19 Policy Updates

Workforce Fatigue Policy

Clinical areas in which on-call work is expected

- Clinical staff with access to self-scheduling will be responsible for scheduling on-call in compliance with this policy and any unit policies.
- Maximum of 60 hours per seven-day period will be worked.
- The maximum shift duration will be 16 hours. Any shift in excess of 16 hours must be approved by the Administrative Supervisor, Administrator on call, or the Chief Nursing Officer. If, due to unpredictable occurrences, Clinical Staff work continuously for 16 hours, then it will be the Director/Clinical Manager or their designee's responsibility to ensure they have a break after eight-hours before their next work shift.

Who do I contact for COVID-19 employee related matters?

- Call the HR Service center at 678-503-1900 for general and COVID-19 employee-related matters. Hours: Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:30am-5:00pm for employee COVID-19 related questions, between the hours of 8:30am-5:00pm employees with concerns related to COVID-19 symptoms and/or exposures will have the option to speak to the COVID Triage Line.
- You are also encouraged to visit the COVID Self Service Portal to schedule testing, report COVID test results, and/or to obtain Return to Work clearance.