



COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Policy

Updated: March 11, 2022

Purpose

Hope Community Resources, Inc (Hope) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and environment for our employees and the recipients who choose our services. Hope has developed the following COVID-19 mitigation plan, which includes policies and procedures to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19, in accordance with guidance from sources including the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), and State of Alaska Licensing; under the consultation and direction of Hope's Medical Director.

Scope

With the continued spread of coronavirus or "COVID-19," a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, we all must remain vigilant mitigating risk for those we serve and for our employees. In order to maintain safety and to continue providing critical services, this COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Policy will remain in place until further notice and updated as necessary. Hope has multiple workplaces, with site-specific considerations. All procedures, policies, and practices outlined below apply to all workplace locations unless specifically noted as unique to a certain environment or worksite.

This Policy is based on currently available information from the CDC, OSHA, DHSS, and State of Alaska guidance. It is subject to change based on further information. Each circumstance and environment is different and may warrant stricter or different safeguards than what is outlined in policy, which can be directed by the Hope Healthline under the Medical Director's authority. Hope may also amend this Policy based on operational needs.

In February 2020, Hope identified a team of employees to monitor the risk of COVID-19 in the communities we serve and to stay abreast of changing guidance from entities such as those listed above. The team is responsible for policy administration and communication to the workforce and support teams. The team is composed of the following members:

Name	Title	Phone Number	E-Mail
Dr. William Browner	Medical Director	907-433-4792	wbrowner@hopealaska.org
Jo-Anne Sullivan, RN	Deputy Director of Health & Wellness	907-433-4778	jsullivan@hopealaska.org

Michele Girault	Executive Director	907-433-4705	mgirault@hopealaska.org
Michael Bailey	Deputy Executive Director	907-433-4721	mbailey@hopealaska.org
Raymond Collins	Program Administrator	907-433-1706	rcollins@hopealaska.org
Sharayah Talarovich	Chief Workforce & Risk Officer	907-433-4769	stalarovich@hopealaska.org

The Hope Healthline was established in March 2020 to support employees and their supervisors with navigating new policies related to COVID-19 and provide a central point of contact for employee clearance for return to work, provide guidance on quarantine and isolation requirements for recipients of services and employees, etc. The Hope Healthline operates 5-7 days per week under the guidance and direction of the Medical Director and these policies. The Hope Healthline can be reached at hopehealthline@hopealaska.org or 907-433-4780.

Responsibilities of Employees

Hope expects every employee to help with prevention efforts while at work. Employees are required to follow the guidelines outlined in this policy such as completing daily health screenings, frequently washing hands and following universal precautions, wearing a mask while in the worksite, etc. Hope expects every employee to follow the expectations of this Policy and abide by Hope Healthline guidance to ensure a smooth transition back into the workplace in the case of quarantine or isolation.

Hope expects that employees will consider how their actions, while on and off the clock, can negatively or positively impact their co-workers and the vulnerable individuals we serve. We expect that employees show one another respect and consideration in all aspects of their work in alignment with Hope's Beliefs, Values, Mission, Vision, and Expectations.

Employees who choose to disregard Hope's expectations as outlined in this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including separation of employment.

Responsibilities of Managers and Supervisors

All managers and supervisors should be familiar with this Policy and be ready to answer questions from employees. Managers and supervisors must set a good example for employees by following this Policy at all times. Managers and supervisors are responsible to communicate with the Hope Healthline regarding employees or support recipients who do not pass the health screening, provide information for staff who are traveling out of the State of Alaska, and other areas indicated in these policies to ensure appropriate tracking and clearance for employees to return to work or for recipients to return to service.

Managers and supervisors are responsible to teach and redirect employees who do not follow policy as outlined. This may include progressive disciplinary actions to ensure policy compliance.

Ready for Work – Safety Practices for All Employees

All employees must follow the following safe practices to minimize the spread of COVID-19 or other communicable diseases in the workplace:

1. Complete a daily electronic health screening form before reporting to work.
 - a. If an employee does not pass the Health Screening, the employee is responsible to immediately notify their supervisor and should not report to the workplace until they have received further guidance and clearance from the Hope Healthline.
 - b. Employees are not required to quarantine for symptoms if they are consistent with a chronic or seasonal condition that is documented by a medical provider and submitted to their employee file. However, symptoms should be reported to the Hope Healthline as COVID symptoms may appear as symptoms the employee may normally experience. The employee may be required to test under the Hope Healthline's direction.
 - c. Full-time live-in employees (HACs) are required to complete the electronic health screening once per week. If there is a change in health status, a health screening form must be completed immediately and the supervisor notified.
 - d. Employees who work remotely are not required to complete a daily health screening.
2. Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol. Follow universal precautions as trained to annually in Bloodborne Pathogens training.
3. Wear a face mask properly at all times, except during meal or break times where physical distancing can be maintained.
 - a. Full-time live-in employees (HACs) are not required to wear a mask while on duty.
 - b. A K95 or similar close-fitting mask as well as additional personal protective equipment (PPE) may be required for all staff in environments under quarantine or isolation under the direction of the Hope Healthline or Medical Director.
4. Maintain six feet of social distance when possible. Employees should avoid physical contact when possible when not providing direct care services.
5. Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
6. Follow appropriate respiratory etiquette, which includes covering for coughs and sneezes.

7. Employee must ensure they have personal protective equipment such as gloves, face mask, and gowns if required. Hope will provide these to employees but employees have a responsibility to report to their supervisor if these have not been made available to them in order to work safely.
8. Disinfect work surfaces a minimum of once per day with an appropriate cleaning solution.
9. Follow Hope's travel policies for all out-of-state travel and provide necessary details to the supervisor for approval before travel.

Vaccination

Hope respects employees' right to choose whether to vaccinate or not. Vaccination is a vital tool to reduce the presence and severity of COVID-19 cases in the workplace, in communities, and in the nation as a whole. Hope strongly encourages all employees to receive a COVID-19 vaccination to protect themselves, other employees, and those who choose our services. A core value at Hope is Safety/Security, and vaccination provides us with an excellent tool in our toolbox to provide safe and consistent supports and services, with as little disruption as possible due to staff or support recipient illness.

While Hope supports an employee's right to choose, employees should be aware that their decision will impact their ability to work in a variety of circumstances. For example, an employee who is not vaccinated who returns from out-of-state travel, or who is exposed to someone with symptoms, will be required to quarantine pending test results and will not be permitted to work until cleared. This same quarantine requirement does not apply to those who are fully vaccinated. These periods of time where employees are not able to work may result in lost wages.

Employees are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after completing primary vaccination with a COVID-19 vaccine with, if applicable, at least the minimum recommended interval between doses. For example, this includes two weeks after a second dose in a two-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's vaccine, or two weeks after the second dose of any combination of two doses of different COVID-19 vaccines as part of one primary vaccination series.

Vaccines are easily accessible within most communities and are provided at no cost to the employee. The vaccine provider may request insurance information, if the employee has healthcare coverage. To find the nearest vaccine clinic, employees can search at the following website by location, which is maintained by the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services:

<https://myhealth.alaska.gov/appointment/en/clinic/search>

Many providers have an opportunity to sign-up online to schedule an appointment time, while others permit walk-in visits as well. Employees who need assistance to find a vaccination site should reach out to the State of Alaska COVID helpline at 907-646-3322 for assistance or email covid19vaccine@alaska.gov. If additional assistance is needed, employees can also access the Hope Healthline at hopehealthline@hopealaska.org or by calling 907-433-4780.

Levels of Protection

Employees and support recipients have varying levels of protection against COVID-19, and this level of protection will fluctuate over time. The following outlines the level of protection each individual has against COVID-19. The level of protection that an employee has will impact their need to quarantine or isolate, as well as clearance from out-of-state travel.

1. **High** level of protection – Fully vaccinated within the last six months; if fully vaccinated for longer than six months, has received a booster.
2. **Medium** level of protection – Fully vaccinated over six months ago and has not received a booster; or has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last three months and has recovered.
3. **Low** level of protection - Not vaccinated and has not tested positive for COVID-19 within the last three months.

Employees, regardless of protection level, may be required to provide direct services in a COVID positive environment due to business need. Employees will be provided with extra personal protective equipment in COVID positive environments such as gowns, gloves, and tight-fitting masks such as K95. Employees also receive a differential pay agreement for increased wages while providing supports to a recipient who is COVID positive.

Testing for COVID-19

Employees will be required to test for COVID-19 for a variety of situations, including but not limited to the following:

1. Employee is experiencing symptoms
2. Exposure to someone who has symptoms, someone who is being tested for COVID-19 due to symptoms, or been exposed to someone who is COVID positive
3. After return from out-of-state travel

Testing is required 72 hours after symptom onset, contact with a COVID positive person or someone showing symptoms, or returning from out-of state travel. If you have a **Low** level of protection, you will be required to quarantine away from work in any of these circumstances until test results are returned and you are cleared by the Hope Healthline; unless explicitly directed otherwise by the Hope Healthline. Employees with a **High** or **Medium** level of protection will only be required to quarantine pending test results if they themselves are symptomatic. These employees are still required to test but may work while test results are pending.

Acceptable tests are PCR or TMA. Rapid or at-home test results are not permitted for clearance. Results from testing must be sent to the Hope Healthline at hopehealthline@hopealaska.org. Once results are received, the Hope Healthline will review and clear employees to return to work and will communicate directly with the supervisor if a positive result is received in order for contact tracing and other mitigation procedures to occur while maintaining confidentiality.

If an employee declines to test as advised, they will be required to quarantine for a minimum of 10 days before returning to the workplace.

Quarantine & Clearance to Return to Work

An employee is not permitted to be at the worksite while on quarantine. Quarantine will occur in the following circumstances based upon an employee's level of protection:

1. **Low** level of protection results in quarantine when:
 - a. Employee is experiencing symptoms
 - b. An employee has been exposed to someone who has symptoms, someone who is being tested for COVID-19 due to symptoms, or been exposed to someone who is COVID positive
 - c. An employee has returned from out-of-state travel
2. **Medium or High** level of protection results in quarantine when:
 - a. Employee is experiencing symptoms

The Hope Healthline is responsible to clear employees and support recipients for return to work or services from quarantine. Employees or support recipients will be considered for clearance upon receipt of a negative test taken after 72 hours. Additionally, individuals who had symptoms will be considered for clearance after they have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and symptoms are improving.

COVID Positive (+) Isolation and Clearance to Return to Work

An employee is generally not permitted to be at the worksite while positive for COVID-19 and on isolation.

An employee may be permitted to work while COVID + in the following circumstances:

1. As reviewed and approved by Hope's Medical Director or designee due to staffing hardships and/or business necessity.
2. If an employee is able to work remotely and is not at the worksite and does not have contact with co-workers or support recipients.

Isolation will occur when an employee tests positive for COVID-19. General guidelines for when an employee or support recipient may receive clearance by the Hope Healthline are:

1. **All** levels of protection: Must isolate for at least 5 days from symptom onset or positive test if asymptomatic. May be considered for clearance after 5 days if individual is fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and symptoms are improving. Upon clearance, individual must wear a tight-fitting mask, like K95, for additional 5 days.

If wearing a tight-fitting mask cannot be tolerated by a support recipient, a minimum of 10 days of isolation is required.

An employee or support recipient who was severely ill with COVID-19 or are immunocompromised may

be required to isolate for at least 10 days under the direction of the Hope Healthline.

All employees must receive clearance from the Hope Healthline before returning to work from a quarantine or isolation status.

Out-Of-State Travel

Any employee who will be traveling out of the State of Alaska must submit their time-off request with travel details to their direct supervisor, which must be approved by the Director. Supervisors and Directors will reference the “Director’s Approving Leave Checklist” to ensure all considerations have been taken into account to determine whether to approve the requested travel/time-off request.

Time-off requests should be submitted via the Time-Off tile in UKG, which is available online or in the Rodio mobile app. Employees must add a comment to the time-off request that includes the details of the destination of travel and any other relevant notes for the Supervisor and Director’s consideration. Comments should include:

1. Where is the employee’s travel destination(s)? Does it include travel within the U.S., International, or both? Are there any additional risks associated with this travel destination?
2. Provide leave and return dates of air or land travel out of state.
3. What is the employee’s level of protection? Will the employee be required to quarantine upon return? Employees should confirm their time off dates requested include any required quarantine timeframes based on their level of protection at the time of travel.

Upon Director approval, the Supervisor or Director must notify the Hope Healthline of the upcoming travel including staff name and contact information, vaccination status, travel dates, and destination.

Domestic Travel Within the U.S.

1. **Low** level of protection – Employee must quarantine upon return to Alaska and are not permitted to return to work until cleared by the Hope Healthline. Must test for COVID-19 72 hours after arrival in Alaska and submit results to the Hope Healthline for clearance.
2. **Medium** or **high** level of protection – **Not** required to quarantine upon return to Alaska. May immediately return to work. Must test for COVID-19 72 hours after arrival in Alaska and submit results to the Hope Healthline for clearance from tracking.

International Travel Outside the U.S.

1. **Low** or **Medium** level of protection – Must quarantine upon return to Alaska and are not permitted to return to work until cleared by the Hope Healthline. Must test for COVID-19 72 hours after arrival in Alaska and submit results to the Hope Healthline for clearance. CDC recommends an additional negative test within one day before travel to return to the U.S.
2. **High** level of protection – **Not** required to quarantine upon return to Alaska. May immediately return to work. Must test for COVID-19 72 hours after arrival in Alaska and submit results to the Hope Healthline for clearance from tracking.

Cleaning of Surfaces and Disinfecting

Hope has instituted regular housekeeping practices, which include cleaning and disinfecting common areas and other elements of the work environment, where possible. Employees should regularly do the same in their assigned work areas by cleaning the surfaces of their workspace daily. Commonly touched areas in Hope facilities and assisted living homes should be cleaned at a minimum daily. If a surface is suspected to be potentially contaminated, the work area and site of contamination will be cleaned immediately.

Disinfection should be conducted using an EPA-registered household disinfectant, alcohol solution with at least 60% alcohol, or diluted household bleach solution. Hope will maintain Safety Data Sheets of all disinfectants used on site.

Employees are required to follow universal precautions as trained to annually in Bloodborne Pathogens training.

Visitors

Visitors are permitted in Hope facilities at this time. Visitors must complete and pass a Health Screening Form upon entry, sign the visitors log, and have their temperature taken. For assisted living home visitors, see additional settings policy for guidelines regarding visitation.

Visitors must comply with general safety practices as expected of employees, including maintaining six feet of social distance where possible, frequent hand washing, and mask wearing.

Personal Protective Equipment

Hope will provide personal protective equipment for employees at no cost to the employee as necessary, including providing surgical masks, K95s, KN95s (as requested), gloves, gowns, etc.

OSHA Recordkeeping & Critical Incident Reporting

If a confirmed case of COVID-19 is reported for a support recipient, a Critical Incident Report with the State of Alaska must be filed within 24 hours. This should be filed by the supervisor who oversees the support recipient's care. An additional report will be made by Hope's Licensing staff member(s) to the State of Alaska Licensing department for any assisted living home locations that are on quarantine or isolation

status.

If a confirmed case of COVID-19 is reported for an employee, Hope's Human Resources department will determine if it meets the criteria for recordability and reportability under OSHA's recordkeeping rule. The HR department will conduct an assessment of any workplace exposures to determine if the case is work-related. Work-relatedness is assumed for illnesses that result from events or exposures in the work environment, unless it meets certain exceptions. One of those exceptions is that the illness involves signs or symptoms that surface at work but result solely from a non-work-related event or exposure that occurs outside of the work environment. If an employee develops COVID-19 solely from an exposure outside of the work environment, it would not be work-related, and would not be recordable to OSHA or workers' compensation insurance.

The HR department's assessment will consider the work environment itself, the type of work performed, risk of person-to-person transmission given the work environment, and other factors such as community spread. If an employee has a confirmed case of COVID-19 that is considered work-related, Hope will report the case to OSHA if it results in a fatality or an in-patient hospitalization within 8-hours of the exposure incident occurring.

If a COVID positive case is determined by the HR department to be work-related, a workers' compensation claim will be filed on the employee's behalf. Whether the claim is approved under workers' compensation is at the discretion of the adjusting company and the insurer.

Confidentiality/Privacy

Except for circumstances in which Hope is legally required to report workplace occurrences of communicable disease, the confidentiality of all employee and recipient medical conditions will be maintained in accordance with applicable law and to the extent practical under the circumstances. Hope reserves the right to inform other employees that a co-worker (without disclosing an employee's name) has been diagnosed with COVID-19 if other employees might have been exposed to the disease, so other employees may take measures to protect their own health.

Anti-Retaliation

Employees have a right to a safe workplace and to the protections required under OSHA's General Duty Clause. Hope will not discriminate or retaliate against any employee for exercising their right to protections required by under OSHA. If an employee has any concerns about safety in the workplace, they can reach out to any member of the COVID-19 team listed in this policy or to the Director of Human Resources so the concern can be reviewed and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Resources

1. Dr. William Browner, Medical Director for Hope Community Resources, Inc.
2. US Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA). (2021). *Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace*. Retrieved from: <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>

3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2021). *COVID-19 Workplaces and Businesses – Workplace Prevention Strategies*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/workplaces-businesses/index.html>
4. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). (2022). *What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws*. Retrieved from: <https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws>
5. Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) Division of Health Care Services Residential Licensing. (2021). *COVID-19 Recommended Guidance for Congregate Residential Setting*. Retrieved from: https://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/HumanCoV/VisitationGuidelines_ResidentialCongregateFacilities.pdf
6. Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). (2022). *COVID-19 in Alaska*. Retrieved from: <https://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/default.aspx>
7. State of Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL). (2021). *COVID-19 Exposure Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Safety Plan*. Retrieved from: https://labor.alaska.gov/lss/training/COVID-19_Safety_Plan_Example_Template.docx