MTC

COVID-19 EMPLOYEE PLAN

By Executive Order, face coverings must be worn in state buildings, which includes all Midlands Technical College campuses.

FACULTY and STAFF FAQS

A. Return to Campus Plans

1. When will employees be required to return to campus?

MTC's return to campus process will occur in three phases. Phase one will begin on June 15 with approximately a third of the college's workforce returning to campus. Another third will return starting on June 29, with the final third of employees expected to be back working on campus on July 13.

The appropriate Executive Council member will determine in which phase an employee returns and HRM will notify the employee via email. Employees will also receive information about return to campus requirements, new workplace protocols, and MTC's COVID-19 safety orientation from HRM.

2. Will all employees be required to return to campus?

The college will make every attempt to accommodate an orderly transition of employees during the return to campus process.

The idea is to return to pre-pandemic operations when all employees were working on campus. At the start of phase three on July 13, most employees will have returned to campus. However, there may be unique circumstances that won't allow an employee to return to campus as scheduled, such as an employee who is under quarantine. Unique circumstances will be addressed on an individual basis by HRM.

3. Can I return to the workplace if I tested positive for COVID-19?

NO! However, if you tested positive for COVID-19, consistent with DHEC recommendations, you are not to return to the workplace until 10 days have passed since your symptoms began AND you are free of fever (100.4° F/38° C or greater using an oral thermometer) for three days without the use of fever-reducing medicines AND your other symptoms have improved.

4. How will the college help ensure a safe environment?

As always, the health and safety of the MTC community are the top priorities during this transition. The college will issue guidelines and protocols based on SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)guidelines for returning safely.

Faculty, staff, and students are required to obtain and wear face coverings. If you don't have a face covering, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has an instructional video titled, How to Make Your Own Face Covering.

Additionally, the following precautions are being put in place:
- Prior to returning to campus, employees are required to complete a COVID-19 safety orientation
- Employees are required to complete a COVID-19 health inquiry form
- Modifications, where appropriate, have been made to the workspace to ensure social distancing
- Plexiglas shields are being installed where appropriate
- There will be increased availability of hand sanitizing stations
- Exposures will be managed according to DHEC and CDC recommendations and the MTC exposure protocol
- Cleaning of facilities and equipment will occur much more frequently
- Sanitizing wipes will be available for cleaning high-touch spaces
- Employees and students are expected to adhere to CDC and DHEC safety recommendations
- New educational and warning signage will be in place throughout the college's campuses and facilities
- Individual employee circumstances and concerns will be addressed by HR, and students' circumstances and concerns will be addressed by SDS

5. How do we maintain social distancing?

Everyone must take responsibility for maintaining social distancing! The college is developing a comprehensive training plan for faculty, staff and students on social distancing. The college will use signage and communication campaigns to remind everyone of their responsibility to maintain social distances. Where appropriate, hallways, seating and common areas will be marked to ensure traffic flow is in compliance with social distancing recommendations. Capacity of classrooms, waiting areas, offices and other facilities will be appropriately adjusted to make social distancing possible in those spaces.

6. How will we get updates? Is there a number to call regarding virus-related issues with referrals if individual attention is needed?

Emailed updates will arrive to your MTC email from reopeningmtc@midlandstech.edu as well as hradmin@midlandstech.edu. Additionally, the college will post frequent updates on the website www.MIDLANDSTECH.EDU/welcomeback. Employees may contact HRM at 803.822.3500 for virus-related questions.

7. What will the Fall semester be like?

We are looking forward to welcoming students back on campus in the fall with a return to the college's wide range of class delivery formats. Those who prefer face-to-face classes will have plenty of courses to choose from, and those who are more comfortable with online (asynchronous), virtual (synchronous), and hybrid formats will also have more options than in the past. We want to give students options whenever possible. In the summer, we provided a Google spreadsheet sharing how courses would be delivered. For fall, we are making adjustments directly in Colleague, so the student can see how a class will be delivered when they use the Course Search or when they view class availability in Student Planning.

8. What circumstances would cause the college to revert to alternative delivery?

The circumstances that will cause the college to return to alternative delivery of teaching and learning include, but are not limited to, orders by federal, state, or local officials to cease operating in the on-campus mode. Also, the MTC Commission and/or administration may decide that due to the evolving COVID-19 environment it is in the best interest of students, faculty and staff to return to an alternative delivery of teaching and learning.

B. Workforce Management

1. Can I refuse to come to work out of fear of contracting COVID-19?

Under Section 13(a) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), you can only refuse to come to work if you believe you are in imminent danger. However, imminent danger is defined very narrowly.

Employees who have concerns about returning to campus as scheduled due to an underlying health condition that places them at higher risk for severe illness, those who are pregnant, and those who are otherwise unable to return to campus will have an opportunity to notify his/her supervisor and HRM by completing an *Inability to Return to Campus* form available in the COVID-19 Safety Orientation. HRM will work with these employees on an individual basis to address their unique situations and concerns.

Subject to approval, use of annual leave or other appropriate form of accrued paid time off is an option.

2.   I have been affected by school closures due to COVID-19 and need to be available for my school-aged children. Am I eligible to continue to telecommute?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, provisions to extend telecommuting flexibilities more broadly to accommodate employees who have been affected by school closures were put in place. If you are not eligible to continue telecommuting, you may be eligible for expanded FMLA leave under the provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) (see Q & A – FFCRA) or contact HRM at 803.822.3500.

3.   I have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19. What options are available to me?

If telecommuting is not available, you may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave. Contact HRM at 803.822.3500.

4.   Does the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) apply to COVID-19?

Yes. If an employee or a qualifying family member contracts COVID-19, it constitutes a "serious health condition" under the FMLA and a resulting leave of absence may be FMLA qualifying if the employee meets the other requirements to be covered by the FMLA. However, the FMLA generally does not cover staying home to avoid becoming sick.

5.   Can I continue to telecommute rather than return to campus to work?

The plan is to return to pre-pandemic operations when all employees were working on campus. MTC's broad use of telecommuting was in direct response to the pandemic.

Plus, faculty and staff are needed on campus so that we can test our systems before students return in a large way. We need to see if our restrooms, traffic flows, breakrooms, etc., can handle the number of people on campus before we add students to the mix.

However, under the provisions of *MTC Procedure 2.1.15: Telecommuting*, you may submit a request to continue telecommuting. Participation in telecommuting is not an employee right or benefit and may be discontinued at any time. Denial or termination of a telecommuting arrangement is not subject to the employee grievance process.

MTC
COVID-19 EMPLOYEE PLAN

C. COVID-19 Disease

1. **When will employees be required to return to campus?**

    If you are sick, **DO NOT REPORT TO THE WORKPLACE**. Adhere to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) If You are Sick guidelines, and contact MTC Human Resources Management (HRM) at **803.822.3500**. The SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) recommends that you call your health care provider if you have fever, cough, or shortness of breath. For a free online health assessment, please see DHEC's listing of telehealth virtual care providers in South Carolina. DHEC also offers a 14-day Symptom Monitoring Worksheet.

2. **Why do I need to contact HRM if I am sick with COVID-19 symptoms?**

    Per MTC procedure 7.8.3, Infectious Diseases, you are required to report infection with an infectious disease to HRM so that proper arrangements can be made to stop any spread of the infectious disease, manage leave and benefits, and other job-related issues.

3. **If I became sick, will my privacy be protected?**

    Yes, MTC will protect your privacy to the fullest extent possible, and your identity will not be disclosed. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law, including but not limited to HIPAA, the FMLA, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

4. **I have questions about COVID-19 terms and recommendations. Where can I find answers?**

    DHEC's Frequently Asked Questions (COVID-19) defines terms such as *Social Distancing, Quarantine*, and *Close Contact*. You will also learn how one should respond to potential and actual COVID-19 exposures and find other important related information of interest at DHEC's Frequently Asked Questions (COVID-19).

5. **If within the past 14-days I have been in close contact (within six feet for ten minutes or more) of someone who has tested positive or is presumptive positive for COVID-19, what should I do if I am expected to return to the workplace?**

    Do not return to the MTC workplace. Notify HRM at 803.822.3500 prior to your expected return date. Per the guidance provided at DHEC's Frequently Asked Questions (COVID-19), if you are a close contact to a person with COVID-19, it is recommended that you self-quarantine and stay away from other people as much as possible for 14 days from the last date of exposure.

6. **My coworker is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. What should I do?**

    If your coworker is showing symptoms of COVID-19, immediately contact HRM at 803.822.3500 and ensure you maintain your social distance from the employee. You should not discuss your observations with anyone else.

7. **Who is at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19?**

   Currently, the CDC identifies those at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 as people aged 65 years and older and people who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility. Also at higher risk are people of all ages with underlying medical conditions particularly if not well controlled. Those conditions include: chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immunocompromised, severe obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, and liver disease.

8. **I have heard that some impacted by COVID-19 are quarantined and others are isolated. What's the difference?**

   Both quarantine and isolation are measures purposed to protect public health. This SC DHEC poster explains the difference.

9. **As an employee of MTC, how should I expect MTC to respond to an employee's potential or actual COVID-19 exposure?**

   MTC's response will be prompt and aligned with SC DHEC and CDC guidelines.

10. **How can I protect myself and my family from the COVID-19 disease?**

    The CDC provides prevention tips, including a video on proper hand washing techniques.

11. **I'm still concerned about the spread of COVID-19. How should I prepare for it?**

    You can prepare for the spread of COVID-19 by complying with the recommendations found on DHEC's poster, Preparing for the Spread of COVID-19.

12. **What are the current travel restrictions?**

    Please refer to the CDC's domestic travel advisory and their Travel: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for current travel guidelines.

13. **In addition to the MTC website, how else can I stay abreast of current COVID-19 information, statistics, and events?**

    Additional COVID-19 sources of information are:

    - SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)
    - DHEC News Releases, Information, and Videos (COVID-19)
    - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
    - World Health Organization

MTC

COVID-19 EMPLOYEE PLAN

D. Emotional, Psychological, and Physical Support Services

1. I'm beginning to feel stress and anxiety over this COVID-19 pandemic. Where can I find help?

If you are an FTE or TGP employee, you and your family are eligible for counseling services through the MTC Employee Assistance Program (EAP). First Sun, MTC's EAP provider, also offers interactive resources if you prefer.

Additional mental health resources include:

- State Health Plan Telehealth Behavioral Health Visits
- CDC Stress and Coping Information
- Department of Mental Health Coping Resources

2. Are there any resources available in MTC's My Professional Development Pathway (MyPDP)?

Yes. MyPDP is available to ALL MTC employees and it is full of content in the form of short videos, courses, resources, and books covering a myriad of topics, including stress. In MyPDP, HRM has featured a video, Handling Unexpected Stress. You are highly encouraged to peruse the MyPDP content libraries to identify the modules that will meet your current needs. You can do so conveniently, from the comfort of your home.

3. I have a number of needs as a result of COVID-19. Where can I find help?

The United Way Association of SC identifies by zip code resources for most any need you may have.