

MTC

COVID-19 EMPLOYEE PLAN

I. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As we navigate and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, Midlands Technical College (MTC) protocols have the primary goal of protecting the safety and well-being of the MTC community, the public, and all MTC constituents, while continuing to achieve the College's critical mission of education and workforce development.

MTC's plans are consistent with the Executive Orders of the Governor of South Carolina and the guidelines and recommendations of our public health authorities, the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Timelines are driven by DHEC and CDC recommendations.

Public health officials continue to learn more and to communicate their findings about the COVID-19 virus. MTC's policies, plans, and protocols will be revised as necessary as more information becomes available.

II. EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Per the CDC, "COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection." Therefore, personal prevention practices such as social distancing, wearing face coverings, [handwashing](#), [staying home when sick](#), plus environmental [cleaning and disinfecting](#) are important practices.

Workplace Expectations and Guidelines

All employees are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined in this document. To offer the most protection for yourself and those around you, assume everyone including yourself, is infected with COVID-19 and strictly adhere to the guidelines to avoid transmission of the virus. Failure to comply with the policies and protocols may result in corrective action.

Requirement - Symptom Monitoring

Employees must check for symptoms every day before reporting to the campus. Employees must be free of ALL COVID-19 symptoms or have been evaluated and cleared by a qualified health official or medical doctor before reporting to the campus. Presently, COVID symptoms include one or more of the following:

- > Cough
- > Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- > Fever
- > Chills

- > Repeated shaking with chills
- > Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- > Nausea or vomiting
- > Muscle pain or body aches
- > Headache
- > Sore throat
- > Fatigue
- > New GI symptoms
- > New loss of taste or smell
- > Diarrhea

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, have been in close contact with someone who recently tested positive for COVID-19, have been asked to quarantine, or have tested positive for COVID-19, (1) DO NOT REPORT TO CAMPUS (2) notify your supervisor (3) contact the Assistant HR Director, Nicole Edwards in Human Resource Management (HRM) at 803.822.3500. According to CDC guidelines, you should [self-isolate](#) and NOT report to campus until you have been advised to do so by Human Resource Management (HRM) staff.

Staffing Options

Departments are to consider staffing options to maintain the required social distancing measures and to minimize the number of employees within buildings and work spaces. Alternate staffing options must be approved by the immediate supervisor.

Remote Work

To reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus, those who can work remotely to fulfill some or all of their job functions may have the option to continue to do so for a period of time.

Alternating Days

Alternating work days for employees is an option and may be particularly useful where employees work in large common workspaces including cubicles.

Staggered Reporting/Departing

Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas, hallways, elevators, and exits and will further promote social distancing.

III. HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE – Preventive Personal Safety Practices

Cloth Face Coverings/Face masks

Appropriate use of face coverings is critical in minimizing risks to others around you. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you are not feeling sick as some infected persons never experience symptoms. The face covering or mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

MTC employees are required to wear a cloth face covering or face mask when working on campus while in the presence of others and in public settings and common work spaces, meeting rooms, hallways, classrooms, etc. Only when in a private office space alone with the door closed, may the cloth face covering or face mask be removed.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance. Cloth face coverings and disposable masks are for use in non-health care environments.

Use the Face Covering to Protect Others

- > Wear a face covering to protect others in case you're infected but don't have symptoms
- > Keep the covering on your face the entire time you're in public
- > Don't put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead
- > Don't touch the face covering, and, if you do, clean your hands

Wear Your Face Covering Correctly

- > Wash your hands before putting on your face covering
- > Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- > Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- > Make sure you can breathe easily

Take Off the Face Covering Carefully

- > Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth when removing your face covering
- > Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- > Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- > Fold outside corners together
- > Place covering in the washing machine
- > Wash your hands with soap and water

Social Distancing

Maintaining adequate space between you and others is one of the best ways to avoid being exposed to and/or spreading COVID-19. Studies suggest that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms. Therefore, social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk for severe complications related to COVID-19. While in the workplace, employees are expected to adhere to these social distancing practices:

- > Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people at all times
- > Avoid gathering in groups where social distancing can't be maintained
- > Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings
- > Follow directional and instructional signs

Supervisors are expected to ensure staff demonstrate self-enforcement of social distancing protocols in all areas. All MTC employees should enforce social distancing protocols in common areas and where individuals are likely to interact. Our collective safety must be a team effort.

Handwashing

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face.

If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

Gloves

According to the CDC, gloves are recommended when you are cleaning or caring for someone who is sick. In most other situations, like running errands, [wearing gloves is not necessary](#). Instead, [practice everyday preventive actions](#) like keeping [social distance](#) (at least 6 feet) from others, washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds (or using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol), and wearing a [cloth face covering](#).

Intensify Cleaning/Disinfection

Operation's cleaning teams have intensified cleaning and disinfecting according to their cleaning protocol and consistent with CDC guidelines. To help protect yourself and others, (1) avoid use or sharing of items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected (2) wipe down commonly used and shared surfaces before and after use such as copiers, printers, computer, coffee makers, light switches, door knobs, etc. and (3) increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors if doing so does not pose a safety risk to those using the workspace.

Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene

If you are in a private setting and do not have on your face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Immediately discard the tissues in the trash and wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or if soap and water are not available, use sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Workplace Preparation

Hand sanitizing stations have been installed across the campus. Some common spaces may be unavailable and/or provide limited seating to promote social distancing. Safety and directional signs have been posted throughout the workplace. Employees are expected to follow signs on traffic flow through buildings, elevator usage, restrooms, and similar common use spaces.

IV. HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE - Responsive

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, have been in close contact with someone who recently tested positive for COVID-19, have been asked to quarantine, or have tested positive for COVID-19, (1) DO NOT REPORT TO CAMPUS (2) notify your supervisor (3) contact the Assistant HR Director, Nicole Edwards in Human Resource Management (HRM) at 803.822.3500. According to CDC guidelines, you should [self-isolate](#) and NOT report to campus until you have been advised to do so by Human Resource Management (HRM) staff.

Supervisors have a responsibility to immediately direct an employee to go home if the employee is experiencing [symptoms of COVID-19](#). The supervisor is then to notify HRM at 803.822.3500 so that appropriate actions can be initiated timely.

Confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 will be managed according to the College's Exposure Protocol. Actions outlined in the protocol include, when appropriate, coordinating with DHEC to determine course of action and follow-up based upon CDC guidance, coordinating additional cleaning and sanitizing, making appropriate internal notifications to supervisors and/or staff who may have had an exposure, and managing the return to work process.

V. WORKPLACE SCENARIOS

Use of Restrooms

Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least 6 feet distance between individuals. Wash your hands thoroughly afterward to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Use of Elevators

Practice social distancing when using the elevator. Limit the number of occupants by waiting for the next elevator or use the stairs. If you are using the elevator, wear your face covering and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol upon departing the elevator.

Meetings

Face-to-face meetings are discouraged as well as unnecessary travel between campuses. Meetings should continue to be held virtually using Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, and other available collaboration tools.

Non-Essential Travel

Non-essential travel of any kind is discouraged, however, the Executive Council member may grant exceptions at his/her discretion.

Use of College Vehicles

Use of college vehicles that must be signed out is suspended until further notice.

VI. MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

- > [State Health Plan Telehealth Behavioral Health Visits](#)
- > [MTC Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)
- > [CDC Stress and Coping Information](#)
- > [Department of Mental Health Coping Resources](#)
- > MyPDP learning modules - MyPDP is located under the [Employee Services section of the MyMTC homepage](#)

Should you have questions or concerns, please contact your supervisor or HRM.