

What Employers Need to Know About Coronavirus

CAN MY EMPLOYEE COME TO WORK?

One of my staff recently visited China. Can they come to work?

Healthy people who have visited China and were in the United States before February 3, 2020 can go to work as they normally would.

If you have staff returning from China on or after February 3, 2020, Public Health Madison & Dane County will already be receiving their contact information (see right) and will advise them on whether they can go to work or not.

One of my staff had contact with someone who visited China. Can they come to work?

Public Health Madison & Dane County is in contact with anyone who fits CDC's risk criteria, and those individuals are given instructions about whether they can go to work. Employers do not need to make that determination. The risk criteria are very strict, and there are many reasons why people are told not to go to work. It does not mean they are necessarily sick.

Do I need to contact public health if I have a staff member returning from China?

No. Current travelers from China are being routed through certain airports where they are screened for symptoms.

If they have symptoms and were in certain parts of China, they aren't allowed to travel further. Otherwise they will travel to their final destination. Public Health Madison & Dane County will receive contact information of people staying in Dane County and will call them to monitor symptoms and ensure they are staying home if necessary.

What is being done to keep us safe?

If someone is supposed to be isolated, Public Health Madison & Dane County staff will make those arrangements with them. We are following up with the person who has coronavirus on a daily basis. If there are other people under investigation who need to be isolated at home, we will be following up with them on a daily basis to monitor their symptoms and be sure they are staying home. Just because someone is isolated does not necessarily mean they are sick.

KEEPING EMPLOYEES HEALTHY DURING COLD AND FLU SEASON

Keep tissues and hand sanitizer in easy to access places. Encourage employees to keep these items at their desk too.

Create a Business Continuity Plan. This plan helps businesses map out how to provide essential services if a number of employees are sick or unavailable.

Work with your cleaning staff to make sure workspaces are cleaned and disinfected correctly. The CDC has basic information on cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing: bit.ly/cleaningworkspaces.

Consider longer term policies. Offering paid sick leave, allowing staff to work from home, and creating mandatory flu vaccination policies can help keep employees healthy.

MESSAGES TO SHARE WITH EMPLOYEES ABOUT STAYING HEALTHY

Risk of coronavirus in the US is low. Visit cdc.gov/coronavirus for the most up-to-date information.

Stay home when you're sick.

Get your flu shot.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. CDC has lots of resources reminding people about this: bit.ly/cdcfluresources.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if no soap and water are available.

Avoid assumptions or stereotypes about who you think might be sick.