

# Unified Clinics Guidance on Operations during COVID-19

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Blueprint Taken From  
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Occupational Safety and Health Administration

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## Introduction

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. To reduce the impact of COVID-19 outbreak conditions on the Unified Clinics, it is important for all employees to follow this guidance for COVID-19.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) developed this COVID-19 guidance based on traditional infection prevention and industrial hygiene practices. It focuses on the need to implement engineering, administrative, and work practice controls and personal protective equipment (PPE), as well as considerations for doing so.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides the latest information about COVID-19 and the global outbreak: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov).

The OSHA COVID-19 webpage offers information specifically for workers and employers: [www.osha.gov/covid-19](http://www.osha.gov/covid-19).

## About COVID-19

### Symptoms of COVID-19

Infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can

cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases, can be fatal. Symptoms typically include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Some people infected with the virus have reported experiencing other non-respiratory symptoms. Other people, referred to as *asymptomatic cases*, have experienced no symptoms at all.

## How COVID-19 Spreads

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person- to-person, including:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has SARS-CoV-2 on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the primary way the virus spreads.
- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (i.e., experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this type of asymptomatic transmission with this new coronavirus, but this is also not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

The CDC website provides the latest information about COVID-19 transmission: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html).

## Steps the Unified Clinics is Taking to Reduce Workers' Risk of Exposure to COVID-19

This section describes basic steps that we are taking to reduce the risk of worker exposure to COVID-19.

## Implement Basic Infection Prevention Measures

For most employees, protecting yourself depends on practicing basic infection prevention measures. As appropriate, all employees should implement good hygiene and infection control practices, including:

- Frequent and thorough **hand washing**. If soap and running water are not immediately available, use alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Employees are required to **stay home if they are sick**.
- Employees are required to practice **respiratory etiquette**, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Employees should not report to work if they are experiencing any condition that results in coughing
- Patients will be asked to reschedule if they are coughing, report illness, or do not pass the screening questionnaire.
- Employees are discouraged from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- The Unified Clinics will maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment.
- The Unified Clinics has an ample supply of hospital grade disinfectant wipes for ongoing cleaning of areas throughout the day.
- The Unified Clinics has ample supply of hand sanitizer that will be available in all areas throughout the clinics.

## Prompt Identification and Isolation of Sick People

- The Unified Clinics has a policy and procedure for screening employees and patients for health status
- Prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a critical step in protecting everyone.
- Employees are required to self-monitor for signs and

symptoms of COVID-19 and document such prior to reporting to work.

- Patients will not be schedule, nor receive service if they present when they are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Intake rooms on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor will be used an isolation room if required. Immediately isolate anyone who have [signs and/or symptoms](#) of COVID-19. Move potentially infectious people to a side intake room, away from others until they can be picked up or until they leave the facility.
- All employees and patients will be required to maintain social distancing and wear a face mask, and or other PPE depending on the services being provided.

## **Workplace Controls**

Occupational safety and health professionals use a framework called the “hierarchy of controls” to select ways of controlling workplace hazards. During a COVID-19 outbreak, when it may not be possible to eliminate the hazard, the most effective protection measures are (listed from most effective to least effective): engineering controls, administrative controls, safe work practices (a type of administrative control), and PPE.

### ***Engineering Controls***

Engineering controls involve isolating employees from work-related hazards. At the Unified Clinics, these include:

- The Unified Clinics has established a COVID 19 Reopening Plan that outlines phases for reopening. This plan is meant to reduce occupancy at the Unified Clinics and required a percentage of the services to remain remote (e.g., telehealth), in order to increase the physical distance among employees and patients.
- Limiting clinic services to only those services that cannot be provided using telehealth
- Suspending all non-essential in-person visitors, including visiting scholars, researchers, faculty and students, until further notice.
- Reception staff to work in closed office space

and greet patients through customer window whenever practical.

- Designated space marked on the floor of reception area for patients to wait for assistance.
- Distancing of reception furniture to maintain social distancing
- Limiting patient services by only allowing scheduled services, no walk ins.
- Dedicating one entry point for patients, closing off stairwell entry points for patients

### ***Administrative Controls***

Administrative controls are changes in work policy or procedures to reduce or minimize exposure to a hazard. These include:

- Requirement that sick employees or patients stay at home.
- Requirement that face masks be worn by employees and patients.
- Minimizing contact among people by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications if feasible.
- Discontinuing work related nonessential travel.
- Requirement that employees do not return to the workplace if exposure to someone with COVID, until tested and given clearance by a healthcare professional.
- Requirement that employees and patients be screened prior to being onsite.
- Requirement that any suspected infected individual be isolated and asked to leave the premises.

### ***Safe Work Practices***

Safe work practices are used to reduce the duration, frequency, or intensity of exposure to a hazard. These include:

- Requiring personal hygiene; no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, disinfectants, and disinfecting wipes to clean work surfaces.

- Requiring regular hand washing or using of alcohol-based hand rubs. Employees should always wash hands when they are visibly soiled and after removing any PPE.

### ***Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)***

Examples of PPE include: gloves, goggles, face shields, face masks, and respiratory protection, when appropriate.

All types of PPE will be available and includes:

- Surgical face masks or personal mask must be;
  - Consistently and properly worn.
  - Regularly inspected, maintained, and replaced, as necessary.
  - Properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.
- N95 face masks when infected person identified or known to be, or suspected of being, infected with COVID 19.
- Gloves will be required when touching patients or patient equipment

## **Classifying Unified Clinics Employee Exposure to COVID 19**

Worker risk of occupational exposure to COVID-19, during an outbreak may vary from very high to high, medium, or lower (caution) risk. The level of risk depends in part on the need for contact within 6 feet of people known to be, or suspected of being, infected, or requirement for repeated or extended contact with persons known to be, or suspected of being, infected. To help determine appropriate precautions, OSHA has divided job tasks into four risk exposure levels: very high, high, medium, and lower risk. The Occupational Risk Pyramid shows the four exposure risk levels in the shape of a pyramid to represent probable distribution of risk. Most American workers will likely fall in the lower exposure risk (caution) or

medium exposure risk levels.

### Occupational Risk Pyramid for COVID-19



### Very High Exposure Risk

**NO EMPLOYEE AT THE UNIFIED CLINICS IS IN A VERY HIGH EXPOSURE POSITION**

*Very high exposure risk* jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19 during specific medical, postmortem, or laboratory procedures.

Workers in this category include:

- Healthcare workers (e.g., doctors, nurses, dentists, paramedics, emergency medical technicians) performing aerosol-generating procedures (e.g., intubation, cough induction procedures, bronchoscopies, some dental procedures and exams, or invasive specimen collection) on known or suspected COVID-19 patients.
- Healthcare or laboratory personnel collecting or handling specimens from known or suspected COVID-19 patients (e.g., manipulating cultures from known or suspected COVID-19 patients).

### High Exposure Risk

**NO EMPLOYEE AT THE UNIFIED CLINICS IS IN A HIGH EXPOSURE POSITION**

*High exposure risk* jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19. Workers in this category include:

- Healthcare delivery and support staff (e.g., doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff who must enter patients' rooms) exposed to known or suspected COVID-19 patients.
- Medical transport workers (e.g., ambulance vehicle operators) moving known or suspected COVID-19 patients in enclosed vehicles.

## **Medium Exposure Risk**

**Unified Clinics Employees in this Category Include: Clinical Healthcare Providers (physician, audiologist, social worker, optometrist, speech therapist, psychologist) and general reception employees.**

*Medium exposure risk* jobs include those that require **frequent and/or close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) people who may be infected** with, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

In areas without ongoing community transmission, workers in this risk group may have frequent contact with travelers who may return from international locations with widespread COVID-19 transmission. In areas where there *is* ongoing community transmission, workers in this category may have contact with the general.

## **Lower Exposure Risk (Caution)**

**Unified Clinics Employees in this Category Include: Officer Personnel**

*Lower exposure risk (caution)* jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected nor frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.



# Unified Clinics COVID 19 Related Policies and Procedures

**SUBJECT:** Disease Preparedness for COVID 19 and Safety Committee Responsibility

**POLICY:** The Unified Clinics will adhere to health guidelines outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and local and state public health guidelines for management of disease preparedness. The Unified Clinics Safety Committee will be responsible for oversight of COVID 19 disease preparedness.

**PROCEDURE:**

The Safety Committee will have oversight and monitoring of policies and procedures related to the management of any public health crisis, including the COVID 19 pandemic.

Responsibilities of the Safety Committee include:

- A. Communicating any policies, procedures and guidelines as advised by Public Health.
- B. Monitoring the implementation of key practices that apply to patients and employees.
  - a. Social distancing
  - b. Cleaning protocols
- C. Establishing a virtual training program for employees.
- D. Approving any protocols established by individual clinics.
- E. Making recommendations for disease preparedness protocols.
- F. Creating appropriate signage for common areas for patient and employee adherence.

**SUBJECT:** Disease Preparedness for COVID 19 – Facility Entry and Health Check

**POLICY:** The Unified Clinics will follow a facility entry and health check protocol during the COVID-19 pandemic, until no longer advised by public health guidelines. Employees and patients refusing to follow the protocol may be denied entry into the facility.

**PROCEDURE:**

It will be the responsibility of all employees to assist with the implementation of facility entry and health check protocols.

1. Single Point of Entry for Patients
  - a. Patients should enter the facility through the main patient entrance where screening by WMed personnel is conducted for entry
  - b. Patients arriving at reception desks, or with direct access to clinical providers, must be screened and attest to health status with a self-reported health status questionnaire available on a desk near the elevator
    - i. Individual clinics may implement their own additional patient screening if required for purposes of assessment and treatment
    - ii. Screening forms will be given to healthcare provider when greeted for appointment by the provider
  - c. Patients reporting illness, or suspected of illness, will be asked to leave the facility and reschedule the appointment
  - d. Patients with obvious COVID-19 symptoms, or who report illness, are to be asked to self-isolate in an intake room until they can leave the facility
2. Waiting Areas
  - a. Patients are asked to remain in their vehicle until their appointment time
  - b. Patients will be told during scheduling to not bring additional family members to an appointment, unless absolutely necessary
  - c. Patient waiting areas are to remain at low occupancy. If occupancy does not allow a 6 ft space between patients, safety personnel will be notified.

- d. Entry points on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor will display signage or required patient face masks and required social distancing
  - e. Entry points on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor will display signage stating that patients are required to participate in a health screen
3. Employees Reporting to Work
- a. Employees must conduct their own health check and document temperature and symptom checklist upon arrival to the workplace.
  - b. Employee health checklists will be maintained by each clinic and submitted weekly to the Safety Committee
  - c. Employees are not to report to work when any symptoms of illness are present

**SUBJECT:** Disease Preparedness for COVID 19 – PPE

**POLICY:** The Unified Clinics will adhere to health guidelines outlined by the Center for Disease Control and local public health for the use of PPE during a public health crisis of a transmittable virus.

**PROCEDURE:**

Clinics will follow the guidelines in this policy for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE is defined as hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, face coverings or masks, N95 masks, face shields, gloves and gowns.

1. Employees and patients are required to wear a face coverings or mask while in the facility. Any face covering is allowable.
2. Surgical masks will be available for employees or patients presenting at the clinics without a face covering.
3. N95 masks should be used if an infected person is identified in the clinic, to prevent the transmission of the virus.
4. Face shields will be available if an infected person is present in the facility and requires care within the clinics.
5. Gowns will be available if an infected person is present in the facility and requires care or clean up of an infected area.
6. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the clinics.
7. Gloves will be available and worn for touching personal items of patients or for clean up of potentially contaminated objects.

**SUBJECT:** Disease Preparedness for COVID 19 – Social Distancing

**POLICY:** The Unified Clinics will follow a social distancing protocol during the COVID-19 pandemic, until no longer advised by public health guidelines. Employees and patients refusing to follow the protocol may be denied entry into the facility.

**PROCEDURE:**

It will be the responsibility of all employees to assist with the implementation of social distancing protocols.

1. Exercise effective social distancing by keeping a minimum of 6ft between individuals
2. Waiting areas will have furniture spread apart, as much as feasible
  - a. Place furniture so that seating faces away from one another
  - b. Any nonessential areas should be blocked off if not in use
3. Physical barriers or signage will be used to block areas
4. Appointments will be scheduled to allow adequate time between appointments for cleaning
5. Signage will display reminders of social distancing requirements

**SUBJECT:** Disease Preparedness for COVID 19 – Cleaning & Sanitizing

**POLICY:** The Unified Clinics will follow a cleaning/sanitizing protocol based on OSHA and CDC guidance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, until no longer advised by public health.

**PROCEDURE:**

It will be the responsibility of all employees to assist with the implementation of cleaning and sanitizing protocols.

1. Hand sanitizing stations will be visible throughout the clinics
2. Signage will be displayed to emphasize regular hand washing and hygiene etiquette
3. Increased cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, table tops, light switches
  - a. Disposable wipes will be available throughout the clinic
  - b. Reception and officer employees will frequently touch up common surfaces throughout the day
4. Cleaning service will continue to clean restrooms and common areas daily
5. Clinical employees will be responsible for frequent touch up of surfaces in their clinical space and the cleaning of clinical equipment.
  - a. Clinical equipment (vision, audiology, speech, medical services) will be cleaned by those clinical employees using the equipment, following a cleaning protocol for the equipment. These clinical providers know best how to maintain their equipment.
6. Removal of all material in shared, common areas
  - a. No magazines, books or brochures will be available in waiting rooms
  - b. No children's toys will be available in waiting rooms