

Effective February 1, 2026

Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury Communicable Disease Guidelines

Purpose:

To protect the health and safety of employees, residents, and visitors by minimizing the risk of exposure to communicable diseases in the workplace.

Employees must not report to work when experiencing symptoms of a communicable disease.

Reporting:

- Symptoms or exposure must be reported **immediately** to the supervisor.
- If the supervisor is unavailable, contact the RWC clinic.

Communicable Diseases Include (but not limited to):

- COVID-19, Influenza, Strep Throat, Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), Chickenpox, Norovirus, Measles, Mumps, Head Lice, Meningitis, RSV.
- Other communicable diseases may be covered as determined by the Infection Prevention Nurse or his/her representative.

Testing:

- **On-site testing may be available** for COVID-19 and Influenza.
- **All other tests** must be arranged through an external healthcare provider.

Return to Work:

- Follow all instructions regarding **testing, quarantine duration, and PPE use**.
- **COVID-specific and Influenza-specific** return guidelines are outlined separately.
- Guidelines for other diseases will be given by the supervisor in consultation with the clinic, if not provided by the employee's healthcare provider.

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Paid Leave & Documentation:

- Time off due to a communicable illness (as verified by a RWC or external healthcare provider) will be paid under **special circumstance leave up to a maximum of seven days**.
- Special circumstance leave is not an attendance occurrence.
- **Documentation is required** to receive this pay.
- PTO will be applied to absences without documentation or to additional time off needed beyond what is prescribed.

COVID-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

COVID Symptomatic

- If employee experiences any Covid symptoms, he/she must immediately contact his/her supervisor and take a Covid rapid test as directed.
- If the rapid test is negative, a PCR test will be given or an additional rapid on Day 3.
- If the employee tests negative, the employee must remain out of work until at least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and symptoms have improved, or if following evaluation, another diagnosis is suspected or confirmed, return-to-work decisions should be based on their other suspected or confirmed diagnoses.

COVID Positive

- A positive employee must take a Covid rapid test on Day 5 (the first day of symptoms is Day 0).
- If the Day 5 test is Positive, the employee may return to work on Day 11 if at least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and symptoms have improved.
- If the Day 5 test is Negative, the employee must test again on Day 7. If the Day 7 test is Negative, the employee may return to work the next day (Day 8) if at least 24 hours

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have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and symptoms have improved.

- Seek guidance from your healthcare provider for further treatment.

COVID Exposure

- No work restrictions as long as employee does not develop symptoms . However, work restriction may be considered if employee:
 - -is unable to test or wear mask for 10 days following exposure
 - -is moderately or severely immunocompromised
 - -works on a unit with residents who are moderately or severely immunocompromised
 - -works on a unit experiencing ongoing Covid transmission that is not controlled by initial interventions
- Employee must Rapid test on Day 1 after exposure. Exposure day is day 0. If negative, employee will test again on Day 3. If negative, employee will test again on Day 5.
- If employee has tested positive for Covid in the past 30 days, the employee does not need to test unless he/she develops Covid symptoms.
- Employee should wear source control for 10 days following the exposure.

Influenza-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Influenza Positive

- Exclusion from work for 7 days from symptom onset or until the resolution of symptoms, whichever is longer; and at least 24 hours without fever (without the use of fever reducing medications).
- Be mindful to follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette after returning to work. If symptoms such as cough and sneezing are still present, employees should wear a facemask while on property. Performing frequent hand hygiene (especially before and after each patient contact and contact with respiratory secretions) should be followed.
- Seek guidance from your healthcare provider for further treatment.