Coronavirus (COVID-19) Exposure Prevention, Preparedness and Response Plan

Effective: Immediately  Date: 04/21/2020
Updated: 5/12/2020
Updated: 5/27/2020
Updated 6/12/2020

1. Introduction

Aquinas College takes the health and safety of our employees and students very seriously. With the spread of the coronavirus or “COVID-19,” a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, it is important that all employers have in place a COVID-19 Exposure Prevention, Preparedness and Response Plan. This Plan is based on information available from the CDC and OSHA at the time of its development and is subject to change based on further information provided by the CDC, OSHA, and other public officials. Aquinas College may also amend this Plan based on operational needs.

Aquinas College will continue to be in compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which requires employers to comply with the safety and health standards and regulations as set forth by OSHA or by a state with an OSHA-approved state plan. In addition, in compliance with the Act’s General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1), Aquinas College will continue to provide employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

While there are no specific standards covering SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19 exposures, Aquinas College OSHA’s Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other safety policies and procedures remain in effect.

2. Transmission of COVID-19

COVID-19 is mostly spread through person-to-person contact (within about 6 feet). Small suspended droplets from coughing and sneezing can enter the mouth and lungs of those nearby. It is also possible that infection can occur by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated by the virus then touching your own eyes, mouth or nose.

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 or from people who have the virus but are asymptomatic, but this is also not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
Although the United States has implemented public health measures (which are constantly changing as the situations change) to limit the spread of the virus, it is likely that some person-to-person transmission will continue to occur.

3. Symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms can cause illnesses ranging from mild to severe. In some cases, COVID-19 can result in death. 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 no symptoms at all.

4. Action Steps to Stay Informed and then to Disseminate and Instruct

To address the ongoing impact of COVID-19, Aquinas College is committed to:

- Monitoring CDC, OSHA and state and local public health department websites for information on the status of coronavirus.
  - WHO (World Health Organization): [https://www.who.int/](https://www.who.int/)
  - State of Michigan: [https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus)
  - Local: Kent County Health Department: [https://www.accesskent.com/Health/coronavirus.htm](https://www.accesskent.com/Health/coronavirus.htm)
  - NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health): [https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/index.htm)

- Proactively educating our employees on what is known about the virus, including its transmission, as well as its prevention.
- Establishing a written communicable illness policy and response plan that covers communicable diseases readily transmitted in the workplace.
- Implementing measures to recognize and address potential COVID-19 risks in the workplace to help prevent the spread of illness.
- Continuing to evaluate, develop, implement and communicate about workplace flexibilities and controls.
- Implementing Workplace Controls:
  - Engineering Controls (such as physical barriers)
  - Administrative Controls (such as face masks, informing workforce about the symptoms, establishing restrictions for access to the worksite and face-to-face contact)
5. WORKPLACE PROTOCOLS TO REDUCE SPREADING THE VIRUS

The following employee protocols have been established to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for workers deemed business-essential job functions and for whom working fully from home is not possible. In addition, all employees entering campus will be required to pass a daily symptom screen and temperature check.

- Stay home when you are sick
  - Restrict outside activities, except for obtaining medical treatment. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, taxis/Uber/Lyft.
  - Check with your healthcare provider regarding your symptoms. Many are offering telemedicine at this time.
  - If you believe you have COVID-19 symptoms or if you believe you have had close contact with someone with COVID-19, call your healthcare provider to let them know you might have or might have been exposed to COVID-19. This will enable them to provide detailed instructions.
- Avoid people who are sick and always maintain a social distance of not less than least 6 feet when interacting with others.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue; then throw the tissue in the trash (use elbow if no tissue is available). Immediately wash hands.
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces with EPA-Approved disinfectants.
- Avoid using other workers’ phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment.
- Wear a facemask when you have to interact with other people to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - If soap and water is not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with greater than 60% alcohol (ethanol) or at least 70% isopropyl alcohol.
  - Wash especially after using the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Do not meet in person unless absolutely necessary; use the telephone, Zoom, Google Meets, etc.
- Do not go into any other buildings or offices unless absolutely necessary.
- Do not fly domestically or internationally.
- Do not visit areas where the incidence of COVID-19 puts you at risk.
- Immediately report any safety and health concerns.
6. Protecting Yourself and Your Co-Workers

Major symptoms of COVID-19 include: fever (temperature of 100.4°F), atypical cough and/or atypical shortness of breath

If you develop any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19 or other acute respiratory illness:

Notify your supervisor and stay home. Discuss your care and treatment with your healthcare provider. If you test positive for COVID-19, you may return to work three days (72 hours) after recovery. This means you have not had a fever for three days (without use of fever-reducing medications) AND you have experienced improvement in respiratory symptoms AND at least ten days have passed since you first experienced symptoms. In addition, you must be released from any quarantine or isolation by the local public health department in accordance with Executive Order 2020-114. Note that in accordance with this Order, Aquinas College is required to immediately report any confirmed case of COVID-19 to the health department.

If you have come into “close contact” with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, you should self-quarantine for 14-days. At the end of that time, if you have not developed any symptoms of COVID-19 or another illness, you may return to work. You may also want to have a COVID-19 test. Employees should refer to the CDC’s guidance on how to conduct a risk assessment.

Per CDC Guidance: an individual is considered a close contact if they a) have been within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time or b) have had direct contact with infectious secretions from a COVID-19 case (e.g., have been coughed on). Close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a common space with a COVID-19 case. Considerations when assessing close contact include the duration of exposure (e.g., longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk) and the clinical symptoms of the person with COVID-19 (e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk, as does exposure to a severely ill patient).

To protect the safety of our employees, should an employee exhibit any signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 while on campus, the potentially infectious employee will be required to immediately leave the worksite to mitigate the risk of infecting others in the workplace. If it is not possible for the employee to immediately leave campus, the employee will moved to an area where they can be isolated, preferably outside if possible, until they are able to leave the premises.

6. Classifying Worker Exposure to COVID-19

The four exposure risk classifications levels identified by the OSHA are:

1) Lower Risk (Caution)
2) Medium
3) High
4) Very High

The level of risk depends in part on the industry type, need for contact within 6 feet of people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with COVID-19, or requirement for repeated or extended contact with persons known to be, or suspected of being, infected with COVID-19.
Lower risk category includes: those that do not require frequent and/or close contact with people who may be, or suspected of being, infected with COVID-19, nor frequent close contact with the general public. At Aquinas College, the employees in this category would include those who work in administrative offices and generally do not need to interact with students or the general public in a face-to-face manner and who can conduct the majority of their interpersonal interactions telephonically. These departments include Business Office, CFO, HR, Conferencing, Grounds & Housekeeping, Marketing & Communication.

Medium exposure risk category includes: those that require frequent and/or close contact with people who may be infected with COVID-19, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients. This category would include those who may have frequent contact with travelers who may return from international locations as well as contact with the general public. While distance learning is being done, the departments that fall into this category include Campus Safety, Dean of Students, and Residence Life employees.

When students return to campus and regular operations resume, the departments at Aquinas College in this category potentially include Admissions, Advancement, the Academic departments, Academic Advising, the Advantage Center, Athletics, Campus Ministry, Campus Safety, Career Services, CDIE, Center for Sustainability, Copy Center and Mailroom, CORE, Counseling Services, Dean of Students, Financial Aid, ITS, Library, Maintenance, OLLI, President’s Office, Provost, Residence Life, Student Leadership and Engagement.

High exposure risk category includes: healthcare delivery or support staff, medical transport, and mortuary workers. There are no positions of this sort at Aquinas College.

Very high exposure risk category includes: healthcare workers, healthcare or laboratory personnel and mortuary workers. There are no positions of this sort at Aquinas College.

7. What to Do to Protect Workers Based on the Assigned Risk Classification Level

The recommended procedures to protect workers in the four exposure risk categories are as follows:

1) Lower Risk – Wear facemasks when in situations where they may encounter other employees or students (e.g., in restrooms, going to and from their office). Frequently wash hands and disinfect workplace (see Section 5 above). Conduct meetings virtually. Do business with telephone and email. Limit visitors to office.

2) Medium Risk – Install physical barriers, where feasible; wear face masks and require visitors to wear facemasks when in close proximity with others; maintain social distancing; inform employees of symptoms of COVID-19 including posting signs about such; limit access to work site and common areas; restrict access to only certain workplace areas; minimize face-to-face contact; frequently wash hands and disinfect workplace; utilize combination of gloves, gown, face mask and/or face shield based on work task.

3) High exposure risk – No specific procedures identified as there are no positions of this sort at Aquinas College.

4) Very high exposure risk - No specific procedures identified as there are no positions of this sort at Aquinas College.
8. Workers Traveling Abroad or Working Internationally

See www.aquinas.edu for the current travel restrictions adopted by Aquinas College. Business travel is suspended unless approved by President Quinn.

Workers travelling or working abroad should consult the “Business Travelers” section of OSHA COVID-19 webpage (www.osha.gov/covid-19), which also provides links to the latest:

CDC travel warnings: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers

U.S. Department of State (DOS) travel advisories:

The DOS cannot provide Americans traveling abroad with medications or supplies, even in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak. As COVID-19 outbreak conditions change, travel into or out of a country may not be possible, safe, or medically advisable. It is also likely that the governments will respond to a COVID-19 outbreak by imposing public health measures that restrict domestic and international movement, further limiting the U.S. government’s ability to assist Americans in these countries.

More information on COVID-19 planning and traveling abroad can be found at www.cdc.gov/travel

If an employee has recently traveled on personal or College business outside the United States or to another state where COVID-19 has been confirmed, you are requested to notify your supervisor and Aquinas College Human Resources Department of your travel so a record can be made of it. Aquinas College recommends you check out CDC’s Traveler’s Health Notices (see link above) for updated information and recommendations that shall be made prior to travel and after return from the destination.

Employees who travel domestically may be required to self-quarantine for fourteen days following return from a trip.

Any employee traveling internationally will be required to self-quarantine for fourteen days following return from a trip.

9. Campus Visitors

No personal visitors are allowed at this time, including employee food deliveries.

Visitors with a legitimate business need to be on campus must be approved by the College President or the appropriate AVP or VP, who will register the visitor with Campus Safety as their guest. Visitors must report to Campus Safety upon arrival to complete a health screen and be cleared to enter campus.

The screen will include the questions regarding major COVID-19 symptoms along with a temperature check.

Any visitor who answers the screening questions with a “yes” and/or has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will not be permitted to enter campus. Once cleared to enter campus:
• A face mask will be provided if the visitor does not have one.
• A handout on social distancing will be provided and reviewed with the visitor.

10. Contractors and Vendors

Contractors and vendors who provide services on campus must provide appropriate assurances that their parent company:

1) has a COVID-19 Response Plan;
2) their employees have been trained in the basic health and safety precautions of a) social distancing, b) hand washing, and c) wearing a face mask;
3) their employees have been provided with a face mask to wear when social distancing is not possible; and
4) their employees are screened for COVID-19 symptoms each day before entering College property.

This assurance must be in the form of a written document that acts as an Addendum to any contractual agreement on file with Aquinas College. Any manager who engages or has engaged a contractor or vendor to provide services on Aquinas’s campus must request this document before any third party employee enters campus. The Addendum must then be forwarded to Steve Lunger, Controller, who will retain the document in the contractor/vendor file in the business office. An electronic document is also acceptable.

Campus deliveries from vendors must be properly coordinated so there is minimal contact with employees or students.

11. Events Attendees on Campus

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-115, Aquinas College will allow social gatherings or events organized among persons not part of the same household to be held indoors on campus as long as the gathering or event does not exceed 50 people and the persons in attendance who are not part of the same household maintain six feet of difference between each other at all times. Such gatherings or events may be held outdoors on campus provided the event or gathering does not exceed 250 people and persons not part of the same household maintain six feet of distance from each other at all times.

An event may be held in a performance space, a meeting hall, a theater or similar venue and be open to spectators or patrons as long as the venue enables persons not part of the same household to maintain a distance of six feet from one another at all times while in the venue and the number of people in the venue is limited to 25% of its maximum capacity or 250, whichever is smaller.

12. Responsibility of Managers and Supervisors

All managers and supervisors must be familiar with this Plan and be ready to answer questions from employees. Managers and supervisor must hold themselves and their employees accountable for following these safety rules so that the risk of spreading COVID-19 is lessened. If a confirmed case of COVID-19 is reported to a supervisor or manager, they must IMMEDIATELY notify Human Resources.
13. Responsibility of Employees

Aquinas College is asking every one of our employees to help with our prevention efforts to minimize the spread of COVID-19 on our campus. All employees must comply with the various social distancing, cleaning, handwashing and other measures outlined in this Plan to protect themselves and their co-workers as much as possible. This includes notifying their supervisor and staying home when experiencing symptoms or when they know they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Employees who test positive for COVID-19 must IMMEDIATELY report their diagnosis to either their manager or Human Resources.

14. References

OSHA 29 CFR 1910/1926
OSHA Ten Steps All Workplaces Can Take to Reduce Risk of Exposure to Coronavirus
Guidance on Preparing Workplace for COVID-19 (OSHA 3390-03 2020)
OSHA Prevent Worker Exposure to Coronavirus (COVID-19)
OSHA Worker Exposure Risk to COVID-19
COVID-19 Workplace Checklist
BHS Insurance Agency - Risk Management Department
Governor’s Executive Orders for State of Michigan

15. Information

Aquinas College’s Plan is based on information in the websites mentioned above. Changes in the Plan can or will occur as new information from these nationally known resources are made available.

If there are any questions regarding any information in the Plan or in the information provided from these sites, please contact Human Resources and we will do our best to assist with your situation.