



# **PANDEMIC POLICY**

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## Contents

<b>Subject: Pandemic Policy.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WHAT IS A PANDEMIC?.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>EMERGENCY READINESS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WORKING REMOTELY .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CONTROLLING THE DISEASE SPREAD .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SOCIAL DISTANCING .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PLAN .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>VACCINATIONS &amp; SPECIAL NEEDS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>TRAINING .....</b>	<b>6</b>

New Hope Services is committed to provide a safe and healthy workplace for everyone. This policy will let you know how we will respond to a pandemic outbreak, (such as Coronavirus – COVID-19), our emergency response, and how we prepare for this emergency. It will give you directives and the specific steps you are expected to take to protect yourself and to protect everyone else in your workplace while we attempt to continue to work. Our goal is to keep you safe and to continue to provide the level of service to our customers/clients that reflects in a positive way on our brand.

## **WHAT IS A PANDEMIC?**

A pandemic is the wide and rapid spread of an infectious and contagious disease. Once the disease enters the human population it can be carried quickly through large populations throughout the country. Certain diseases, such as the Coronavirus produced COVID-19, were identified at the end of 2019 in Asia and quickly spread to Europe and then to the United States through travelers throughout the world.

Because infected humans are so contagious, they become “spreaders.” The more humans who become contagious, the more rapidly the disease spreads. The World Health Organization and the Center for Disease Control springs into action and aggressively looks for a vaccine while instructing everyone on how to control the spread until a vaccine is discovered.

A pandemic, such as COVID-19, is very serious because it threatens the life of the victims and seriously disrupts the economy. It obliterates the social lives of entire societies. In addition, there are staggering medical costs and an overloaded healthcare system. The severity of a pandemic, in the absence of a vaccine, can only be controlled by the behavior of the people affected. It is for this reason we must create specific rules and procedures.

## **EMERGENCY READINESS**

In the event of a pandemic or any other emergency the company will always follow the directives issued by local, state, or federal authorities, such as Civil Defense, National Guard or the federal Department of Homeland Security. We expect all employees to obey all orders issued under local, state, or federal law.

Under emergency conditions, the Key Employees, responsible for ensuring that the company can remain in operation, have a protocol they will follow to determine whether there is a need to shut down the business, slow down certain parts of the business or watch closely the changing conditions while remaining in operation. Decisions will be made based on the accumulated information available.

## **WORKING REMOTELY**

The government may issue a lock-down order or the company may decide to instruct employees to stay at home. This may create a need to instruct certain employees to work remotely.

When possible, we will install in all remote work locations the equipment necessary for off-site telecommuting operations and a designated secure web site through which employees can communicate with each other and outside authorities.

All remote work schedules during a national crisis will be considered temporary and must be requested/approved by executive management via the Emergency Telework Request form. If an employee works at home, there must be a process whereby the supervisor can maintain the level of oversight expected. This issue must be addressed as part of the plan for remote work.

If the work schedule results in the employee and supervisor not having the needed direct contact (phone/email/text), working remotely is not an option. Supervisors must require weekly (or in some cases, daily) status reports or teleconferences. ZOOM & TEAMS are the kind of video conferencing that work. Supervisors may never take a hands-off approach to their remote work scheduled employees. They need to ensure that business, department, and team needs are met. They will continuously monitor these special arrangements to ensure that job production does not suffer. To assure the company operation is both efficient and effective, the Supervisor will keep detailed records of the schedule and the work assigned to any employee with a remote work schedule arrangement. NHS utilizes Swipeclock as our electronic log-in system for time and attendance. The remote employee must use this system to record time and it must be verified.

No employee may assume that a remote schedule cannot be changed. In all cases there will be a look back period established, whereby the supervisor will review any issues in the remote work schedule arrangement and how they were resolved. In the event of an unforeseen change in operations, the remote work schedule may be altered or cancelled immediately.

Employees working away from the office in any capacity must accept responsibility to assure the company equipment is secure and used for the purpose assigned and confidentiality of the documents is maintained. The space identified as the remote workspace must be organized, free of background noise, and present a professional image when the employee is communicating. It is important to remember this space is no different than the usual worksite when observed from the caller's point of view.

## **CONTROLLING THE DISEASE SPREAD**

The Company will be aggressive to minimize the spread of infection in the workplace. There are many measures that employees can take to protect themselves and those around them.

**REPORTING FOR WORK:** Do not report for work if you are obviously ill or if:

- You have a temperature of 100.4 or higher, or chills
- You have a cough
- You have extreme fatigue
- You have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- You have new loss of taste or smell
- You have a headache
- You have a sore throat, congestion, or runny nose
- You have nausea or vomiting
- You have diarrhea
- You have obvious muscle or body aches or pains, or any other symptoms of illness that are new or different to you.

Contact your healthcare provider immediately and do exactly as the healthcare provider directs.

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, either you must provide a statement with a negative test for COVID-19, or complete the quarantine period recommended by the CDC, be fever-free for 48-hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, and all other symptoms must be resolving before returning to work.

We expect every employee who has been in direct contact with an infected person to contact HR in order to determine next steps as recommended by the CDC based on the individual situation, and to conduct contact tracing. Any employee who has traveled outside the United States or who has traveled on a cruise

ship, must also contact HR to determine appropriate return to work instructions based on current CDC guidelines.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

Every employee must practice social distancing every day, wherever they are. The goal of social distancing is to limit exposure to infectious bacteria and viruses during a communicable disease outbreak. You will see that we will repeat this information and we will continue to remind you because social distancing behaviors are difficult in a society where we like to be together, but they are life-saving during a pandemic.

The following practices are mandatory to ensure we maintain the social distance that is safe for everyone:

- If working in close proximity to other individuals, attempt to keep a minimum distance of at least two arm's length (6 feet) from the nearest person. When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.
- Adhere to public health hygienic recommendations by washing your hands after touching commonly used items or coming into contact with anyone who is sick.
  - Proper hand washing involves scrubbing hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water that is as hot as possible.
  - Use hand sanitizer when there is no soap nearby.
- Avoid touching your face, nose, and mouth and avoid rubbing your eyes.
- A mask and/or face shield is recommended for increased safety, unless otherwise mandated by the Indiana Governor's Executive Order. NHS will follow all Executive Orders from the Governor's Office regarding mask requirements.
- Practice proper coughing or sneezing etiquette by coughing or sneezing into your elbow or tissue.
- Properly dispose of anything that comes in contact with your mouth such as tissues or plastic eating utensils.
- Avoid coming in contact with individuals displaying symptoms of illness.
- Avoid congregating anywhere in your workplace. That includes bathrooms, breakrooms, offices, stockrooms, lobbies, loading docks, places where people smoke, or conference rooms.
- Use video conferencing, such as Zoom, or Teams, instead of in person meetings whenever possible.
- Do not share anything – this includes food, gum, mints, clothing, tobacco products, lip balm, cosmetics, pens, phones, computers, or anything else where the virus could have settled from another person's use. Handshaking/hugging is discouraged.
- Refrain from keeping a community candy/mint dish around your work area. Bring your own refrigerator bag to work.
- Do not have anything personal delivered to you at work.
- Stay at home if you feel unwell. Do not come to work if you have a temperature of 100.4 or higher. If temperature persists longer than one day, contact your healthcare provider.

- Report immediately if you come into contact with anyone who has COVID-19.

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PLAN**

Our employee assistance program (EAP) remains available to you to the extent practicable and reasonable during an influenza outbreak. We contracted with our EAP provider to make available to you a team of crisis-management specialists with medical backgrounds. Our provider partners with company officials and local authorities as appropriate, and wants to ensure the reasonable availability and continued provision of critical information (such as where to go to obtain medical assistance for yourself or ill family members), respite care, use of personal-protection equipment, psychological and emotional support during a pandemic, including assistance and support following the death of an infected family member.

Contact information for our EAP with OneAmerica (CompPsych) @ 855-387-9727, download the GuidanceNow mobile app, or visit [GuidanceResources.com](https://www.GuidanceResources.com).

(Web ID: ONEAMERICA3)

Or with Humana (LifeWorks) @ 844-261-3286, download the LifeWorks mobile app, or visit [login.lifeworks.com](https://login.lifeworks.com) (Humana).

(Password: eap)

## **VACCINATIONS & SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Company urges all employees to receive vaccines and other preventive care to reduce disease or infections. At this time, all licensed and unlicensed healthcare personnel in Indiana who have in-person contact with patients or exposure to infectious material in any healthcare setting (in-patient, out-patient, in-home, congregate setting, etc.) are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and subsequent boosters – which includes Direct Support Professionals, Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, and other individuals providing in-person direct care (either medical or personal needs care). This includes all NHS employees. NHS highly recommends all employees receive the COVID-19 vaccination, as well as the annual flu vaccination, due to their occupational exposure to potentially infected individuals/clients, at no charge. Employees should refer to Human Resources for a copy of the COVID-19 Vaccine Program Acknowledgement Form and instructions on how to sign-up to receive the vaccination through the IN.gov portal.

Employees, who serve as a “Key Employee” during a Pandemic or other emergency, must be willing to allow their health care provider to provide information created as a result of employment-related health care services, such as inoculations, provided to employees at Company specific request and expense, when such information is needed to process insurance claims. We maintain the confidentiality of all such employee medical information, respecting the rules under HIPAA.

In the event you become ill at work or have a condition that could be life-threatening during an emergency, please inform Human Resources of the information we need to provide to first-responders about your medical conditions that could be compromised.

We urge you to confidentially self-identify to Human Resources so that we are aware of and can prepare for you to receive any special medical expertise you might require if you become severely ill on the job. Human Resources maintains the confidentiality of any information you provide, making it available solely on a need-to-know basis and only when needed by first-responders (EMS).

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please be certain Human Resources has your latest contact information. It may be necessary to contact you without notice and we need to be certain we can contact someone who will be able to give you needed information.

Human Resources will need your emergency contact information each year. Supervisors need to maintain contact information for every employee in their department.

## **TRAINING**

Every employee is at risk of exposure to contagious and infectious diseases. Annual training about Blood Borne Pathogens and Infectious Diseases is mandated by the Occupational Health & Safety Administration. Our Blood Borne Pathogens and Pandemic Policy training programs are offered through the RELIAS online training platform, and every employee is required to complete both trainings.

You are required take a refresher course at least one time each year as part of your annual training requirements. During the Blood Borne Pathogen training you will be instructed how to use Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).

The company provides personal protection equipment, face masks, eye protection, rubber gloves, and anti-bacterial hand cleaner and wipes, and encourages you to use all of these PPE. Used in conjunction with the vaccination, PPE is a highly effective way to stop the spread.