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<b>Subject:</b> COVID-19 Notification and Return to Work	<b>Policy/Procedure Number:</b> 00006
<b>Effective Date:</b> TBD	<b>Review Date:</b> 11/17/2022
<b>Applicable To:</b> VT State Legislative Employees, as defined	<b>Revision Date:</b> 11/17/2022
<b>Issued By:</b> Legislative Office of Human Resources	<b>Approved By:</b> Legislative Office of Human Resources; Joint Legislative Management Committee

## PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT

The Vermont General Assembly aims to safeguard the health of all employees from COVID-19 and therefore, encourages all employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect themselves, their fellow employees, legislators, and members of the public who enter the State House. All employees, regardless of vaccination status and COVID-19 test results, are required to comply with the Legislative Face Mask Policy.

## DEFINITIONS

**Employee**—An individual who holds a permanent or temporary position and currently receives wages from the Vermont General Assembly. The term employee does not include employees of the Speaker of the House, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the House Clerk, the Senate Secretary, or independent contractors.

**COVID-19 Test Types**—Tests that have been cleared, approved, or authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to detect current infection with the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) virus. These include nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs), such as PCR-based tests, and antigen tests, which are rapid tests.

**Legislative Workplace**—Any legislative space, including the State House, 1 Baldwin Street, 2 Aiken Avenue, 4 Aiken Avenue, 109 State Street, 133 State Street, and any other location being used for legislative purposes.

## VACCINATION AGAINST COVID-19

All employees are encouraged to stay up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations as defined by the Vermont Department of Health. As of November 2022, this



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was defined as an individual having completed a COVID-19 vaccine primary series and received the most recent booster dose as recommended for that individual by the Center for Disease Control.

Vaccines may be obtained at healthcare provider offices, local pharmacies, and walk-in clinics. Employees can check the Vermont Department of Health website at [healthvermont.gov](http://healthvermont.gov) for changes and updates to this information.

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## **COVID-19 PROTOCOL FOR EMPLOYEES**

An employee of the General Assembly is required to promptly notify the Office of the Sergeant at Arms, the employee's supervisor, or the Legislative Office of Human Resources at [HRC19@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:HRC19@leg.state.vt.us) when the employee has tested positive for COVID-19 or has been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed health care provider. An employee who receives a positive COVID-19 test or is diagnosed with COVID-19 shall be directed to follow the Vermont Department of Health isolation guidelines and seek appropriate medical care, as necessary. Following a positive COVID-19 test or COVID-19 diagnosis, an employee will not be permitted to enter or return to the legislative workplace until the employee has satisfied the applicable return to work criteria set forth in this policy.

An employee who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 at work, but who has not yet tested positive, is encouraged to test according to the Vermont Department of Health guidelines and to wear a mask while in the legislative workplace or follow the Remote Work Policy (#00007) as appropriate. The employee should follow the notification procedure as set forth in this policy if the employee tests positive.

Eligible employees may use earned sick time for time missed due to illness or because of symptoms related to COVID-19. More information regarding time off due to illness can be found in the Earned Sick Time Policy (#00002), the Parental and Medical Leaves of Absence Policy (#00001), and the Pre-Eligibility Leave Policy (#00003).

If an employee's health and job permit, an employee may be permitted to work remotely, in accordance with the Remote Work Policy (#00007), until the employee is sufficiently recovered to return to the legislative workplace.

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## **RETURN TO WORK CRITERIA**

For any employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 or been diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee will be required to follow the Vermont Department of Health's isolation guidelines and will be permitted to return to the legislative



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workplace once the Vermont Department of Health's return to work guidelines have been met.

If an employee has severe COVID-19 or a medical condition impacted by COVID-19, the General Assembly will follow the guidance of the employee's licensed health care provider regarding when the employee may return to work.

An employee who requires an accommodation, such as remote work or a reduced work schedule, because of complications due to COVID-19, long-term effects of COVID-19, or another COVID-19-related reason should submit a written request for an accommodation to the Legislative Office of Human Resources and the employee's supervisor. Employees requesting a reduced work schedule or intermittent leave due to COVID-19 complications will be subject to the rights and requirements of the Parental and Medical Leaves of Absence Policy (#00001).

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## **CLOSE CONTACT GUIDANCE**

Employees who believe they have been in close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive should refer to the Vermont Department of Health guidance to determine if they meet the definition of a close contact. If it is determined that an employee is a close contact, the employee is encouraged to test according to the Vermont Department of Health guidelines.

Employees who are a close contact, and/or have symptoms of, test positive for, or are diagnosed with COVID-19 shall follow the protocol and return to work criteria as applicable and as set forth in this policy.

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## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

All medical information collected from employees, including vaccination information, test results, and any other information obtained pertaining to COVID-19, will be kept confidential in accordance with applicable laws and rules.

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This document is subject to change and is not intended to establish a contract of employment or any contractual rights.

Employees with questions, concerns, or disputes with the content of this policy must notify their direct supervisor/director or the Legislative Office of Human Resources at the Vermont General Assembly, Montpelier, VT, in writing.