

Employment Services COVID-19 Statement V1, 10-22-21

Statement to Customers and Partners Regarding COVID-19

As COVID-19 continues to impact businesses and schools nationwide, Northwest Center's number one priority is the health and safety of our clients, employees, and partners.

We continue to serve every Northwest Center Employment Services client and partner. To do so safely, we follow procedures recommended by leading resources including The [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#). We closely monitor updates about COVID-19 cases and update our safety measures as the situation changes.

Here is an overview of the safety precautions Northwest Center (NWC) follows:

On-site at NWC Locations

Northwest Center continues to follow these protocols for any employees or visitors to our office locations:

- Requiring masks or face coverings at all locations.
- Limiting the amount of people and visitors in workspaces and meeting rooms.
- Requiring physical distancing.
- Requiring employees with known COVID symptoms to stay at home.
- Minimizing contact among workers, clients, and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications
- Having face masks, shields, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies available to employees in the workplace.
- Providing regular communications on COVID-related government mandates to leadership and employees.
- Providing information on where to receive vaccines and encouraging employees who are able to become vaccinated against COVID-19.

At All Work Locations

At any locations where NWC works or interacts with employees, employment partners, or clients, we:

- Require masks or face coverings.
- Maintain physical distancing.
- Require that those with known COVID symptoms stay at home.
- Provide NWC staff and clients with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviors, e.g. cough etiquette and care of personal protective equipment (PPE) or reinforce training provided by employers.
- Provide PPE and hand sanitizer to NWC staff and clients as needed during work hours if the employers do not already provide PPE.
- Train clients on the correct use of masks and other PPE: how to put them on, use/wear, and take them off correctly in the context of their current and potential duties or reinforce training provided by employers.
- Ensure training materials are easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all clients.
- Emphasize expectation that NWC staff and clients abide by all screening and safety protocols implemented by employment sites.

Universal Infection Prevention

NWC continues to follow these hygiene and infection control baseline practices for all employees and worksites:

- Frequent and thorough hand washing.
- If soap and running water are not immediately available, we provide hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Staying home when sick. If an employee appears ill with known COVID-19 symptoms, NWC retains the right to require them to stay home until they are cleared to return to work by a medical provider. Any requirement to leave the worksite is communicated via our HR team and employees will be supported to ensure their efficient and safe return to work.
- Practicing respiratory etiquette such as covering coughs and sneezes.
- Following occupancy limits.
- Ensuring that disinfecting supplies such as wipes, disinfectant sprays, and papers towels are available to sanitize shared spaces and equipment.
- Providing cleaning and disinfecting guidelines and procedures to all employees.

Symptoms, Testing Positive for COVID-19, and Notification Procedures

Northwest Center Employment Services follows this protocol for our employees, clients, vendors, and partners. Please know that we maintain the utmost confidentiality for all involved.

When an Employee Exhibits Symptoms or is Confirmed to Have COVID-19:

1. An employee who tests positive for COVID-19 must immediately notify their supervisor/manager and stay at home for the required quarantine time.
2. The employee or their supervisor/manager will contact any impacted clients, vendors, business partners, or guardians about potential exposure.
3. Any client who has potentially been exposed will be sent home (we will ensure that clients remain in a safe area with needed support until they can return home). We request that all reporting procedures are followed in accordance with the associated county.
4. Employees who begin experiencing COVID-19 symptoms while working must notify their supervisor/manager and leave the work area. Their supervisor/manager will work to ensure replacement coverage for the day, and will ensure that any clients being served remain in a safe area with needed support until they can return home.
5. Employee will not return to work until cleared by a medical professional.
6. If an employee or client of NWC is not able to pass a specified health screening at an employment site, they must:
 - a. Follow any instructions posted at the facility
 - b. Immediately contact their supervisor/manager and follow the instructions above.

Indirect Notification of Exposure:

This protocol is in effect when we receive information about exposure from third-party sources and have not been able to directly verify exposure.

1. If an individual at an employment site or entity NWC works closely with notifies us of a positive COVID-19 case at that site, the associated Employment Services supervisor/manager is notified immediately.
2. NWC will then work with the other entity to help identify if any NWC employees or clients may have been in close, prolonged contact (within six feet for more than 10 minutes) with the individual who tested positive.
3. EMPLOYEES: The supervisor/manager and HR team will notify any NWC employees who had close, prolonged contact and offer necessary work-from-home or leave options.
4. CLIENTS: NWC personnel will notify NWC-supported clients (and parents/guardians) of their exposure risk with recommendations to test or quarantine.

Direct Notification of Exposure:

When someone positive for COVID-19 has had close, prolonged contact with an NWC employee or client, we follow this protocol.

1. The employee notifies their supervisor/manager and/or NWC HR immediately.
2. NWC HR will verify details and obtain information on travel or prolonged contact with other employees or work associates, all while maintaining utmost confidentiality.

3. HR will notify any employee identified as having close, prolonged contact and offer any necessary remote work or leave options.
4. The Employment Services team will notify any clients and employer sites identified as possibly being affected.

If a Client or Customer is Positive for COVID-19:

1. We ask that the individual we serve and/or their support network notifies both their NWC job coach/employment consultant and their direct employer if confirmed positive or medically presumed positive for COVID-19.
2. The NWC personnel will immediately notify their supervisor/manager.
3. That employee's Supervisor/Manager, Regional Director, and NWC HR will work together to identify NWC employees who may have been in close, prolonged contact with the client who tested positive (within the 10 business days leading up to their diagnosis).
4. Those identified NWC employee will be informed and if needed offered work-from-home or leave options.
5. Employment Services will coordinate notifications to any clients and/or employer sites who are identified as possibly being affected.

It is the honor of Northwest Center Employment Services to continue to serve our clients, customers, business partners, and families. If you have any additional questions or concerns about our safety protocols, please contact [CONTACT INFO].