



# FACULTY AND STAFF QUESTION & ANSWERS— COVID-19 & STUDENTS

## 1. What is faculty/staff responsibility regarding reporting COVID-19 scenarios if a student discloses positive results, exposure and/or signs and symptoms?

Faculty and staff are asked to report positive and presumptive COVID-19 cases and exposures to the BSU/NTC Contact Tracing Team using the COVID Hotline- 218-755-2901 or email [Covid@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:Covid@bemidjistate.edu). This is not considered a breach of confidentiality. Due to the current COVID-19 public health emergency, the U.S. Department of Education has made an exception to FERPA student privacy rules. The disclosure of personally identifiable student information to parents, law enforcement officials, trained health care professionals and public health officials is permissible to protect the health and safety of others.

## 2. A student has informed me that they are experiencing COVID symptoms, can they come to campus?

Students should always take the COVID Health Screening Tool before coming to campus, attending clinicals, doing fieldwork, etc. Students in the residence halls should also use the Health Screening Tool before leaving their residence hall to attend an in-person class, use on-campus services, etc. This screening tool will help answer if a student should come to campus, attend an off-campus clinical, etc. It will also help on-campus residents determine if they should attend in person class or use or seek on-campus services. Symptoms that can be attributed to another medical condition (such as a runny nose from allergies), may not prevent a student from

coming to campus. If students are still unclear if they can come to campus, or are not sure they answered the screening questions correctly, they can call the COVID Hotline- 218-755-2901 or email [Covid@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:Covid@bemidjistate.edu) with additional questions.

Students with symptoms of COVID-19 should take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of others: stay home and self-isolate. Contact your medical provider for next steps. Stay isolated until test results return.

## 3. A student has informed me they:

- a. Have been tested for COVID and are waiting on results
- b. Have tested positive for COVID 19

Inform the student that they need to remain off-campus or in their on-campus residence and work with them regarding course work and assignments.

Ask the student to please call the COVID Hotline- 218-755-2901 or email [Covid@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:Covid@bemidjistate.edu) to report this information. The Contact Tracing Team will work with the student on next steps including how long to remain off campus or in their on-campus residence, potential needs, and academic assistance. In addition, please pass along this information on to the [Covid@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:Covid@bemidjistate.edu) email address. The Contact Tracing Team will follow-up with the student, if not already informed.

## 4. A student has informed me that they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, what do they need to do?

It is likely the student will need to remain off campus or in their on-campus residence and potentially quarantine for 14 days. Please advise them to call the COVID Hotline- 218-755-2901 or email [Covid@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:Covid@bemidjistate.edu), and the Contact Tracing Team will work with the student to determine next steps.

For a student in quarantine due to a possible exposure, a negative test **will not** clear them to return to classes sooner than 14 days. For more information on quarantine, see the CDC website: [When to Quarantine](#)

## 5. A student could not come to class one day but now is back or wants to come back to class. Can they?

It is possible for a student to be out for less than the 10-day isolation period or the 14-day quarantine period associated with COVID-19. As we enter fall allergy and cold and flu season, all of us may experience some common symptoms for all three illnesses. The Minnesota Department of Health has released [a COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs](#) to assist with these cases. MDH is working on a decision tree specific to Higher Education but has advised colleges and universities to use the above decision tree for now. As each case is unique, the Contact Tracing Team will use guidance from the CDC, MDH, Local Public Health and medical providers to determine when a student can return to campus.

## 6. Is BSU or NTC providing an "all clear" note for students to return to class

No, we are not providing any documentation stating a student can return to campus.

## 7. What is the difference between quarantine and isolation?

**Quarantine** keeps someone who might have been exposed to the virus away from others. The quarantine period is 14 days after an individual's last contact with a person who has COVID-19. A negative test **will not** end the quarantine period for an individual, they must remain in quarantine for the full 14 days, as symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.

**Isolation** is used to separate infected people from those who are not infected. People in isolation should stay in isolation until it is safe for them to be around others. The isolation period typically lasts at least 10 days but there are factors that could decrease or increase the amount of time a person would need to spend in isolation. The Contact Tracing Team will work closely with the student to determine an end date for the isolation period.

## 8. What does contact tracing mean?

Contact tracing is the process of identification of persons who may have come into close contact with an infected person and the collection of further information about these contacts. By tracing the contacts of infected individuals, testing them for infection, isolating or treating the infected and tracing their contact, public health officials aim to reduce infections in the population. Contact tracers notify, interview and share advice and resources with people who may have been in close contact with someone with confirmed or probable COVID-19.

Close contact is defined as an individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from two days before illness onset, or for asymptomatic patients, two days prior to positive specimen collection.

