



Illness Response Procedure

Updated: September 12, 2023

Preface

We remain mindful of the lessons we have learned and how we can apply those lessons to all contagious or infectious diseases that our campus may encounter. BTC will monitor future guidance from Whatcom Department of Health to ensure the campus remains a safe learning environment.

This procedure articulates our guiding principles and process going forward to maintain a healthy campus community in a sustainable way. The college will continue to provide support and information to our campus community as we move forward.

Principles

Stay healthy and engage in healthy practices. BTC encourages all individuals to manage their health through proper diet, exercise, and stress reduction to the extent possible. Please check these links for general advice and consult your health care provider: [CDC Healthy Living](#), [WA DoH You and Your Family](#).

Engage in good public hygiene practices. This includes frequent hand washing, appropriate masking, and staying current on all recommended vaccinations (including COVID-19 and all applicable booster shots and flu vaccines). Make staying healthy and keeping your community healthy a consistent practice. Please check these links for general advice: [CDC Hygiene](#), [CDC Vaccine Information for Adults](#), [WA DoH Immunization](#).

If you are sick, stay home. Students and employees have a social obligation to help keep each other healthy and take steps to prevent the spread of illness. It is the responsibility of the individual to determine if they should stay home and not come to campus due to an illness.

Individuals exposed to COVID-19

Quarantine is no longer a standard recommendation after being exposed to COVID-19. If you have been exposed to COVID-19, you should take the following steps:

- Wear a high-quality mask or respirator around others at home and in public for 10 days after your last contact with the person with COVID-19
- Take a test 3-5 days after your last contact with the person with COVID-19
 - If you test positive, follow the guidance above.
 - If you test negative with an antigen test, consider retesting with an antigen test 24-48 hours after the first negative test.
- Watch for symptoms of COVID-19



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Individuals testing positive for COVID-19

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 and have [symptoms](#), inform your faculty or supervisor and isolate for **at least 5 days** after your symptoms first appeared. You can leave isolation after 5 full days if:

- Your symptoms are improving 5 days after the start of your isolation, and
- You have not had a fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

You should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public for 5 additional days (day 6 through day 10) after the end of your 5-day isolation period.

If you continue to have a fever or your other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, wait to end your isolation until you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and your other symptoms have improved.

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 but have not had any symptoms, inform your faculty or supervisor and isolate for **at least 5 days** after you tested positive for COVID-19. You can leave isolation after 5 full days if you have not developed symptoms.

You should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at BTC for 5 additional days (day 6 through day 10) after the end of your 5-day isolation period.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, your isolation period should start over from when your symptoms began. Follow the recommendations above for ending isolation if you have symptoms.

Process

Follow directions from the [Whatcom County Health Department](#) regarding COVID-19 exposure or infection.

Campus awareness. The college will notify programs or departments about public health issues of general concern. All communication about such incidents will come from the college and should not come from individuals.

Faculty/Supervisor response

Faculty or supervisors who receive notification of an individual with a **positive COVID-19 test** will report the information to the Illness Response Team (studentillness@btc.edu). The Team will contact the reporting individual directly with clear instruction on the recommended protocols to follow in response to their circumstance. The individual should not return to campus sooner than recommended/allowed by applicable Whatcom County Health Department guidelines. The Illness Response Team will be the follow-up contact for reporting individuals.



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All health program students and faculty completing clinical rotations at partner facilities will continue to report illness and receive guidance from the programs per facility policies related to exposure, quarantine, and return to rotations. When appropriate, the Illness Response Team will notify students and employees of potential exposure, as well as develop any necessary operational modifications.

Campus community support. BTC is committed to the success of students and employees who may be affected by illness. Each program or department will work with impacted individuals on a case-by-case basis as situations arise. Faculty should work with students to help them stay current with work and access alternative means of instruction, if available. Supervisors should work with employees to facilitate remote work, if appropriate for the position.