

# CWU Coronavirus Policy Statement

## Purpose

The purpose of the following policy statement is to ensure in so far as we can, that we protect the safety of all our staff, throughout the course of their work and promote, in line with CWU's duty of care the Health Service Executives (HSE) guidelines, regarding the promotion and protection of our staff in the context of the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus. This document is an awareness policy only. For further medical advice, please follow the guidelines below or contact your General Practitioner.

## 1 Protective and Preventative Steps - If You Have been in Contact with a Confirmed Case:

Anyone who knows they have been in close contact with a confirmed case in the last 14 days and has symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties or fever) should:

- 1 Report this to the Personnel Officer or the General Secretary immediately.
- 2 Isolate themselves from other people - this means removing yourself instantly from your workplace. The cancelling or rescheduling of appointments with members, stakeholders will be arranged on your behalf remotely.
- 3 You should go into a different, well-ventilated isolated room, stay at home and for health reasons be contactable on a phone. Do not go to public areas, do not use public transport or taxis and avoid having visitors to your home.
- 4 Phone their GP, or emergency department - if this is not possible, phone 112 or 999
- 5 In a medical emergency (if you have severe symptoms) phone 112 or 999
- 6 It is important to keep away from older people, those with long-term medical conditions or pregnant women.

### 1.1 Close Contact Means Either:

- Face-to-face contact
- Spending more than 15 minutes within 2 meters of an infected person
- Living in the same house as an infected person

**(It can take up to 14 days for symptoms of coronavirus to appear).**

## 2 When You May Need to be Tested for Coronavirus

You will only need to be tested for coronavirus if you have symptoms and have had symptoms in the last 14 days been:

- In close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus
- To a country or region with a spread of the coronavirus
- In a healthcare center or hospital where patients with coronavirus were being treated

If your doctor thinks that you need a test for coronavirus, they will tell you where the test will be done. They will also tell you when to expect your results.

Please following the link to the most up-to-date areas affected by the virus.

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/advice-for-people-returning-from-affected-areas.html>

### 3 How Coronavirus is spread

You could get the virus if you:

- Come into close contact with someone who has the virus and is coughing or sneezing
- Touch surfaces that someone who has the virus has coughed or sneezed on

The virus may only survive a few hours if someone who has it coughs or sneezes on a surface. Simple household disinfectants can kill the virus on surfaces. Clean the surface first and then use a disinfectant. All offices should have access to hand-sanitizer. This should be used by all staff, as a precautionary preventative measure throughout the course of the day. **These may be sourced locally or centrally through contacting the General Secretary's office.**

### 4 HSE Guidelines for Protecting Yourself from Coronavirus

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze.
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Clean your hands using soap and water or an alcohol hand rub to clean your hands regularly.
- Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing or after toilet use
  - Before and after preparing food
  - Before eating
  - If you are in contact with a sick person, especially those with respiratory symptoms
  - If your hands are dirty
  - If you have handled animals or animal waste

#### 4.1 HSE Guidelines - How to Wash Your hands with Soap and Water

- Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together until the soap forms a lather.
- Rub the top of your hands, between your fingers and under your fingernails.
- Do this for about 15 seconds.
- Rinse your hands under running water.
- Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel.

#### 4.2 Face Masks

Don't use a face mask if you feel well and do not have symptoms - there's no evidence that using masks is of any benefit if you are not sick.

Use a face mask if you:

- have or may have coronavirus
- are in close contact with someone who has or may have coronavirus
- are a healthcare worker in close contact with people who have or may have coronavirus

### **4.3 Self-isolation**

Self-isolation means staying indoors and avoiding contact with other people.

You should self-isolate if you think you may have coronavirus while you are waiting to talk to a doctor. This will help to prevent the spread of coronavirus to others.

To self-isolate:

- Stay at home or in your hotel in a room on your own with a phone.
- Do not go to work, school, religious services or public areas.
- Do not use public transport or taxis.
- Avoid having visitors to your home.

It is important to keep away from older people, those with long-term medical conditions or pregnant women.

**If staff intend to travel to any of the high risk areas, identified by the HSE, can you please advise the General Secretary or the Personnel Officer**