# COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What are the symptoms of the current COVID-19 coronavirus?**

The virus symptoms manifest as a mild to severe respiratory illness with **fever, cough, and difficulty breathing**. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) believes at this time that symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. Unfortunately, at this point there is no easy way to test for the COVID-19 coronavirus. A CDC-developed laboratory test kit to detect the COVID-19 coronavirus began shipping in February to select qualified U.S. and international laboratories.

2. **How is the current COVID-19 coronavirus transmitted?**

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets also land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. Therefore, it is important to stay more than 1 meter (3 feet) away from a person who is sick. The CDC recommends as much as 6 feet. It is possible to catch the virus from someone even before they have symptoms, but little is known about this aspect of the virus at this time.

3. **What steps can we take now to minimize risk of transmission?**

Employees should take the same steps they should be taking to avoid the seasonal flu.  That is, the best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure.  Perhaps the most important way to accomplish this is to **stay home if sick**. In addition, the followings steps can be taken to increase your chances of avoiding exposure:

    a. Clean your hands often
        i. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
        ii. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
        iii. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
    b. Avoid close contact
        i. Avoid close contact with people who are sick
        ii. Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
    c. Stay home if you're sick
        i. Stay home if you're sick, except to get medical care.
    d. Cover coughs and sneezes
        i. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
        ii. Throw used tissues in the trash.
        iii. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
    e. Wear a facemask ONLY if you are sick
        i. If you are sick:  You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. Learn what to do if you are sick.
        ii. If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.
    f. Clean and disinfect

**For Questions or Concerns, please contact Human Resources at (856) 231-2402**

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    i.   Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily and in shared workspaces, before and after shift changes. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

    ii.   If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

4. **What should you do if you are diagnosed with COVID-19?**

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, you should immediately notify your supervisor or manager and you should not report to work.  Employees who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 will be permitted to return to work when they are cleared by their healthcare provider or a local health authority.

5. **What should you do if you believe you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19?**

If you believe that you have come into contact with someone who has been diagnosed with or is symptomatic of COVID-19, you should immediately notify your supervisor or manager and you should not report to work for at least 14 days.

Employees who are out of work as a result of potentially being exposed to COVID-19 should follow CDC recommendations for management of exposed persons, including but not limited to quarantine (voluntary or otherwise), avoiding public activities, remaining home, and social distancing.

For more information, please visit: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html

6. **What if you have symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, and/or difficulty breathing)?**

Employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 should immediately notify their supervisor or manager and should not report to work, if possible.  Employees will be permitted to return to work after providing a healthcare provider's certification that they have been symptom-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom reducing medications).

7. **If you've been out of work as a result of being diagnosed with potentially exposed to COVID-19, how do you return to work?**

After being cleared to return to work by your treating physician or local health agency, you should contact Human Resources at 856-231-2402.

8. **What should you do if you have recently travelled to or from a country that the CDC classifies as a Level 3 Travel Health Notice?**

Employees who have recently travelled to these countries should not report to work for at least 14 days and will be permitted to return to work after being symptom-free for 14 days and/or when they are cleared by their healthcare provider or local health authority to return to work.

Please be aware that the CDC's list of countries subject to a Level 3 Travel Health Notice is evolving.  For more information, please visit:  https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html.

9. **What if our customers ask us to answer questionnaires about our recent travel history and/or potential exposure to COVID-19?**

Conrail employees should comply with the reasonable requests of our customers.  If you have any specific questions or if you believe that any of the information requested may be confidential medical information, please call Human Resources at 856-231-2402.

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10. **Does the COVID-19 coronavirus emergency trump HIPAA privacy rules?**

    No, the government recently sent a stern reminder to all employers, especially those involved in providing healthcare, that they must still comply with the protections contained in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule during the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak.

11. **How should we treat medical information, including but not limited to whether someone may have been diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19?**

    You must treat all medical information as confidential and afford it the same protections as those granted by HIPAA and required by Conrail's Code of Ethics and Policy for Employee Information and Records.  If a government official or agency contacts you in order to request confidential medical information, contact Human Resources.

12. **Do the Family Medical Leave Act or Americans with Disabilities Act apply to this situation?**

    Yes, to the extent you otherwise meet eligibility requirements.