

March 26, 2020

**CWA LOCAL 1133 UPDATE:
COVID-19 and Catholic Health**

OUR TOP PRIORITY: YOUR SAFETY

CWA has been in close contact with members and all of our employers on a daily basis, and we're working to ensure that our healthcare workers are protected and can feel secure going to work and providing care. **Employers must be prepared to keep you and your patients safe.**

Here is the current PPE policy from Catholic Health:

updated 3/21/20

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) FOR SUSPECTED AND CONFIRMED COVID-19

CLINICAL STATUS	PPE REQUIREMENTS	ROOM REQUIREMENT
Stable, NO plans for intubation, BIPAP or CPAP, open suctioning ² , other aerosol generating procedures	<p>Personnel Entering Room: Contact: Gown and Glove PLUS Procedure Mask* AND Eye Protection</p> <p>Patient: Procedure mask* when staff in room and during transport</p> <p><i>*NOT an N95 Respirator</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Room, door closed, <u>does not</u> require AIIR¹ • Suspect cases may NOT be in same room as confirmed COVID-19 cases • Confirmed COVID-19 cases may be in same room with each other if space needed.
Critically Ill, Anticipated need for Intubation, CPR, BIPAP, open suctioning ²	<p>Personnel Entering Room: Contact: Gown and Glove PLUS N95 AND Eye Protection</p> <p>Patient: Procedure mask when staff in room and during transport (if possible)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single AIIR² Room, door closed, <u>if</u> available/possible • Nebulizer therapy may occur in standard room. Staff in room should maintain 6 feet distance or leave room during drug delivery if possible
<p>Procedures where N95 recommended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intubation • Extubation • Sputum Induction • Bronchoscopy • BIPAP/CPAP • CPR • Nebulizer treatments • Nasopharyngeal Swab Tests 	<p>Personnel Entering Room: Contact: Gown and Glove PLUS N95 AND Eye Protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIIR Room¹ (if available) for intubation, extubation, BIPAP, CPAP • Nebulizer therapy and NP Swab collection may occur in standard room. Staff in room during nebulizer Rx should maintain 6 feet distance or leave room during drug delivery, if possible

1. AIIR: Airborne Isolation Room
2. Open Suctioning: defined as suctioning from airway OUTSIDE of ventilator tubing system

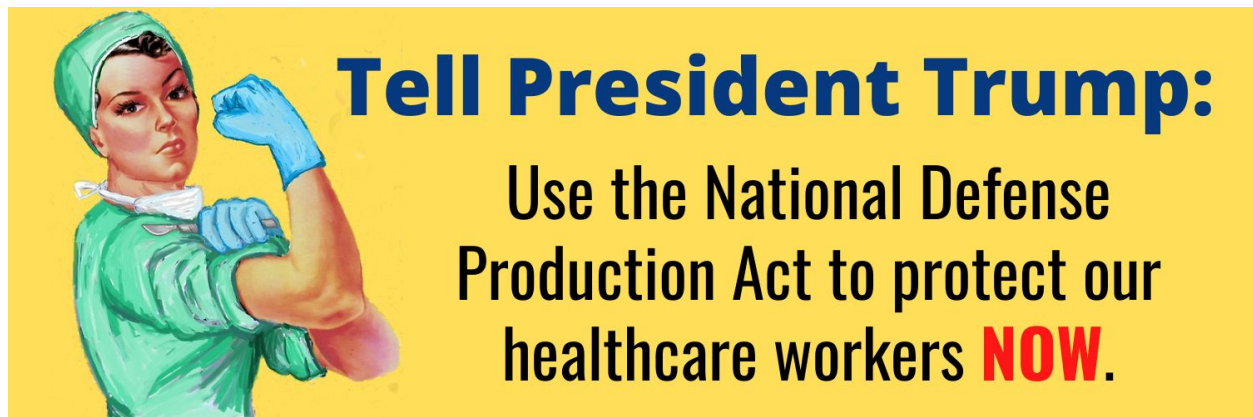
CWA has been working to obtain PPE, additional testing capabilities, and safer guidelines from the CDC for weeks. We're in touch with Governor Cuomo's office and advocating on all three issues.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

President Trump has the power to make a difference by using the full force of the National Defense Production Act, which allows him to order the U.S. manufacturers to produce goods needed to meet the crisis. In WWII, the government overnight switched the auto industry into the "Arsenal for Democracy," changing from production of passenger cars to tanks, jeeps and military aircraft.

Help us call on President Trump to fully use the Defense Production Act and get America producing what is needed for every frontline healthcare worker.

- Please sign the petition to President Trump: www.bit.ly/weneedppe
- Spread the word on social media to get others to sign! Take a selfie wearing a bandana, scarf, or dish towel, and hold a piece of paper that says THIS IS NOT PROTECTION. Post on Facebook (tag @DonaldTrump) and Twitter (tag @realDonaldTrump) with the hashtags #WeNeedPPE #DPANow and the link to the petition.



We need President Trump to do EVERYTHING in his power to ensure that we healthcare workers have everything that we need to do our jobs and be safe.

While the CDC has provided guidelines and materials, there are three pieces that we strongly disagree with them on that we want our members to be aware of:

- We disagree with the CDC that a surgical mask is an acceptable alternative to a N95 respirator.
- We disagree with the CDC that a healthcare provider who has been exposed to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case should continue to work. If you have been infected with the virus, you may be contagious before you show any symptoms for it. It is therefore strongly recommended that any worker who has been exposed should self-quarantine.
- We disagree with the CDC that the virus can't be transmitted through the air. Studies have shown that small particles may remain in the air.

CWA's priority is the safety of our members, and we're working hard to make sure that you have the most clear, accurate info for how to protect yourself, your family, and your patients during this time. We won't stop with the fight to protect our members and our patients.

IF YOU GET SICK

We are working to ensure that our members don't lose any wages if they're quarantined or become ill related to COVID-19. For employees who are subject to mandatory or precautionary order of quarantine, or isolation, issued by the State of NY, the Department of Health, Local Board of Health, or any governmental entity authorized to issue such an order, will be provided with at least 14 days of paid sick leave during the period of quarantine. This sick time will not be deducted from an employee's PTO or ESL. *Important note: at this time a note from your physician alone does NOT qualify you for this program and ESL/PTO will come from your bank* For employees who become ill, the disability will fall under worker's compensation if you are exposed while working to a confirmed COVID-19 patient while working and you have also been confirmed with COVID-19, according to New York State Law A10153.

Employees should make every attempt to come to work. We will be looking at time and attendance issues on a case by case basis and asking for leniency depending upon the circumstance.

COVID-19 TEAM

Catholic Health is currently recruiting volunteers for the COVID-19 Team. Please email covidteam@chsbuffalo.org to volunteer or with any questions. St. Joe's will be the designated COVID-19 hospital and team members are likely to be working there.

Members of the COVID-19 team will receive an additional \$10/hr plus an additional \$10/hr for taking on extra shifts.

CHILD CARE

If you are in need of immediate childcare call the Childcare Resource Network at 877-6666 or email parentservices@wnychildren.org. Healthcare workers and first responders will receive first priority for childcare. If you are required to stay home to take care of a family member who has COVID-19 or a child who is subject to quarantine, you can apply for emergency paid family leave: <https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/employees>

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

- Please limit your public posting about COVID-19 or circumstances at the Hospital. We do not want anyone disciplined for violating the social media policy or an inadvertent HIPAA violation.
- Catholic Health can and likely will mandate overtime due to the state of emergency.
- Catholic Health has instituted a travel ban. If you travel outside of the area and are quarantined as a result, you will be required to use PTO and then go without pay.
- Please remain patient during the screening process. We have a commitment from Catholic Health that there will not be attendance dings or pay docked due to the screening.
- Bargaining is on hold until further notice.

QUESTIONS?

We will be providing updates like this one via text and email as frequently as possible. For daily updates or to ask questions, please use the following resources:

- Email any questions to chcovid19@cwa-union.org
- Call the Local office at 716-828-1133 and ask for one of the Local officers.
- Check the Local website at <https://unionhall.cwalocals.org/cwa-local-1133>
- Join our Facebook pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/mercyhospital>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/kenmoremercy>



COVID-19 RELIEF AVAILABLE TO WORKERS UNDER NEW YORK STATE LAW

PROGRAM	WHO	WHAT	BENEFITS AVAILABLE	HOW TO APPLY
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	Workers who lose their job, regardless of whether the job loss was due to COVID-19 closures.	Up to 26 weeks of partial wage replacement benefits.	Up to \$504 per week. (one-week waiting period waived for lay-off due to COVID-19 related closure)	Follow the directions at this link: https://labor.ny.gov/ui/how_to_file_claim.shtm
PAID FAMILY LEAVE	Workers who are caring for a family member who has COVID-19 or for a minor child subject to quarantine or isolation	Up to 10 weeks of partial wage replacement plus job protections upon return to work.	Up to \$840.70 per week.	Follow the directions at this link: https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/employees
TEMPORARY DISABILITY INSURANCE	Workers who cannot work because of contracting COVID-19 away from work.	Up to 26 weeks of cash benefits.	Up to \$170 per week.	Scroll to the How to File a Claim Section and follow the directions at this link: http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/offt/hejob/db-overview.jsp
WORKERS' COMPENSATION	Workers who cannot work because of being exposed to or contracting COVID-19 at the workplace.	Partial wage replacement and medical care for the work-related illness or injury.	Up to \$934.11 per week, plus medical care for the work-related injury.	Follow the directions at this link: http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/ont/hejob/howto.jsp
EMERGENCY PAID LEAVE	Workers who cannot work because they are subject to quarantine or isolation orders.	Up to 14 days of paid leave plus job protections upon return to work.	(1) Paid Family Leave and Disability benefits up to \$2,884.62 per week, or (2) 14 days of paid sick leave at regular rate of pay, or (3) combination of (1) and (2).	Depending on the size of your employer, some or all of this benefit will be paid by the State via the TDI and PFL programs. For more information visit: https://www.governor.ny.gov/paid-sick-leave-covid-19-impacted-new-yorkers/emergency-covid-19-paid-sick-leave
EMERGENCY UNPAID LEAVE	Workers who cannot work because they are subject to quarantine or isolation because of international travel commenced after 3/18/20 not related to work.	Job protections upon return to work.	Up to 14 days of unpaid leave. You may also qualify for temporary disability insurance as outlined above.	Discuss with your employer. If your employer fails to return you to your prior position, please contact the New York State Department of Labor at 1- 888-4-NYSDOL (469-7365) or (518) 457-9000.

This document is a notice of benefits available under New York State law for which you may be eligible if you are unable to work under varying circumstances related to COVID-19. Please note that other statutory eligibility and documentation requirements apply. Additional benefits may be available under Federal Law.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Exposure Guidance

If you are **asymptomatic** and have had a potential or confirmed **exposure** to a suspected or positive COVID-19 individual, whether from a community based or patient care related situation, it is important that you **adhere to the following guidance**:

- ***An exposure is defined as: being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time without PPE; close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case.***
- ***You can continue to work while you self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days from known date of the potential or known exposure.***
- ***The self-monitoring process includes:***
 - *Taking your temperature twice (2x) daily.*
 - *Noting any change in your respiratory symptoms (new cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat).*
- ***A copy of the Catholic Health Self-monitoring Form (attached) is also available on the Catholic Health Associate Intranet Home Page.***
- ***It is important to report any changes in your symptoms to your primary care provider and then contact the Associate Health COVID-19 Call Center with a status update.***

If you have any questions regarding this exposure guidance, please contact the **Associate Health COVID-19 Call Center**:

Phone: (716) 447-6418

Email: AssocHealthCovid19@chsbuffalo.org