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Purpose:

The purpose of Disaster Management Alert & Travel Policy is to reduce the potential exposure and spread of infectious diseases within the Bermuda Hospitals Board’s workforce in order to preserve the health of our health care professionals and by extension our community. This Policy includes the definition of a Disaster Management Alert levels 1-4 that will communicate the level of readiness that BHB is required to maintain, and steps required to protect and preserve employees.

Application:

All employees, consultants, volunteers and physicians that work at the Bermuda Hospitals Board will be referred to as the Health Care Wealth (HCW) henceforth.

Bermuda Hospitals Board will take proactive steps to protect the workplace in the event of an infectious disease outbreak. It is the goal of the Bermuda Hospitals Board (BHB) during any such period to strive to operate effectively and ensure that all essential services are continuously provided and that Health Care Workers (HCWs) are safe within the workplace.


BHB is committed to providing authoritative information about the nature and spread of infectious diseases, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an illness or outbreak.

Policy Statements:

Disaster Management Alert Levels

BHB has a responsibility to be vigilant at all times with respect to potential emerging risks. From time-to-time, potential risks will arise and become actual threats. As potential risks transform into real threats BHB has an obligation to flex its resources to improve its ability to manage threats. One of the most significant threats is the risk of not having sufficient labor or the correct mix of resources to deliver patient care during a crisis.

The Disaster Management Alert Levels are designed to signal to individuals/HCWs risks related to the BHB’s operational environment and steps that must be taken to protect individuals in the workplace, in the local community and/or during international travel. The objective is not to intrude into HCWs’ private lives; however, the nature of infectious disease threats, potential pandemics or actual pandemics requires healthcare providers and workers to take precautions in their private lives to protect colleagues and patients.

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Alert Levels 1- 4 are indicative threat levels that place the organization and HCWs on notice of increasing threats to the organization’s ability to deliver care. As the threat level escalates, the organization and line managers are responsible for assessing and developing a resource plan including an HCW strategy to ensure adequate resources are available to manage the emergent threat.

Whilst the Alert Levels will be escalated or deescalated for the entire organization, each line manager will be responsible for managing their teams relative to their department operations, by ensuring they can supply the necessary level of HCWs to meet projected demands during the threat period.

Individuals or HCWs can anticipate that as the organization progresses through heightened Alert Levels the organization will have to apply increased levels of restrictions to support delivery of services. Whereas these restrictions, primarily with respect to vacation leave management, are extraordinary and temporary in nature and not intended to disenfranchise HCWs from their ordinary entitlements, they would be necessary to preserve the delivery of care.


Limiting Hospital Related Travel

All nonessential business travel should be avoided when BHB is placed on Alert Level -2 or above. HCWs who travel as an essential part of their job should consult with management on appropriate actions. HCWs on business travel should avoid crowded public transportation when possible. Alternative scheduling options, ride-share resources and/or parking assistance will be provided on a case-by-case basis. Contact Medical Concierge for additional information.

Business & Personal Travel to Jurisdictions With High COVID19 Positivity Rates

Upon return from overseas travel, HCWs will be responsible for disclosing accurate details of their travel history to the border authority and BHB (Line Manager and Employee Health Services (EHS)). The Ministry of Health (or designated Border Authority under the Quarantine Act) or BHB Employee Health Services may direct an HCW to be quarantined.

Positivity rates can be viewed at the John Hopkins University & Medicine Coronavirus Resource Centre – Testing Positivity and International Comparison web pages –(<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity>) and (<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/international-comparison>) to determine the level of risk related to acquiring the CoVid-19.

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It is the HCW's responsibility to review and understand quarantine rules that apply to jurisdictions that they intend to travel to and ensure they have sufficient vacation leave to cover quarantine requirements for outbound and inbound travel.

Returning to Bermuda (All Travel)


When returning to Bermuda to any port for travel of any sort (vacation, business or personal), all HCW shall comply with any Ministry of Health instruction (mandatory or voluntary) to submit for CoVid-19 testing requirements. HCWs will be responsible for booking tests via the Ministry of Health, listing the EHS Physician as the notifying physician and/or forwarding test results to Employee Health Services via email ehs@bhb.bm. Employee Health Services must be contacted before any BHB HCW returns to work and it is the HCW's responsibility to ensure EHS receives test results. The HCW (service provider or community physician where applicable) will provide EHS with any pre-travel test results

The Ministry of Health issued "[Safe Return to Work After Travel Guidance](#)" on August 13, 2020 which advises against non-essential travel off the island for all Bermuda residents. The Disaster Management Alert & Travel Policy as prescribed by the Government guidelines is "HCWs should not return to work until they receive a negative 14-day test result." Where applicable pre-travel tests when provided will be used by EHS to calculate eligible negative tests.

The guidance requirements are the minimum recommended for workplaces, but the Bermuda Hospitals Board has been permitted some latitude to accommodate clinical HCWs that are critical to operations.

Quarantine Requirements Post-Travel

The period of time that a person can become infected with SARS-CoV2 after being exposed is 14 days. As such the preferred period of time to quarantine after potential exposure is 14 days. All HCWs will be required to Quarantine from Days 0 to Days 8 after travel overseas. The requirements for Days 9 to Days 14 vary based on the roles and responsibilities of the HCW, location of travel and other factors determined by EHS:


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Days of Quarantine	Description	Compensation During Quarantine Effective September 14, 2020
Days 0 - 8	ALL Healthcare workers as defined in this policy will be on Quarantine – not permitted to return to work.	Employees will be compensated from the leave benefit identified on BHB's Travel Notification Form (TNF) used to cover overseas travel.
Days 9 -14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential HCWs (see pg. 6) can be cleared to return to work by EHS HCWs that can effectively work remotely can be permitted to do so by their manager. Non-Essential HCWs that cannot work from home will be required to continue to quarantine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If work resumes, remotely or otherwise, the employee will be compensated via regular salary. If quarantine continues the employee will be compensated via the leave benefit identified on the TNF.

Compensation During Post-Travel Quarantine:

Departure Date before September 14, 2020

Healthcare Workers with a departure date **before September 14, 2020**, who voluntarily comply with Ministry of Health COVID-19 testing protocols will be eligible to use the sick leave benefit during post-travel quarantine.

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Departure Date on or after September 14, 2020

Quarantining during or after travel has become the new norm for inter-jurisdiction travel, therefore quarantining at this juncture remains a by-cost of travel. **HCW's are reminded that the Ministry of Health and BHB advises against non-essential travel off island for all Bermuda residents.**

All HCWs with a departure date on or **after September 14, 2020** who require quarantine post-travel overseas, will be compensated via the leave benefit that the HCW identified on the TNF. As such:


- If the purpose of the travel was vacation leave the period spent in quarantine upon return to Bermuda will be paid as vacation leave.
- if the purpose of travel was medical leave the period spent in quarantine will be paid as medical leave
- if the purpose of the travel was business leave the period spent in quarantine will be paid as business leave
- If the employee travels on scheduled days off they will have the option to use vacation leave, time-in-lieu or unpaid leave for any required quarantine time

If a HCW does not comply with the Ministry of Health testing protocol, they will be expected to follow Government guidelines for persons refusing tests, and any quarantine required will be compensated vacation leave. If vacation leave is exhausted the HCW will be on unpaid leave.

Days 0 to 8 Quarantine Requirements

- all test results (Pre-arrival, Days 0, 4, + 8) to be submitted to ehs@bhb.bm
- HCW to complete daily self-monitoring and documentation of temperature and symptoms for 14 days after arrival.
- Remain off from work

From Day 0 to Day 8 of quarantine HCWs will be compensated according to the purpose of travel outlined on the Travel Notification form (TNF) (vacation, medical or business) effective for all departure dates **on or after September 14 2020.**

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Days 9 to 14 Quarantine Requirements

- all test results (Day 14) to be submitted to ehs@bhb.bm
- HCW to complete daily self-monitoring and documentation of temperature and symptoms for 14 days after arrival
- On Day 9, based on the roles and responsibilities of the HCW, location of travel and other factors. The HCW may be:
 - cleared to return to work as an essential HCW as defined in this policy
 - permitted to work remotely if they were working remotely prior to travel
 - required to continue to quarantine.

Where HCWs have voluntarily travelled to countries or jurisdictions within countries where Covid-19 positivity rates exceed 25%, 14 Days of quarantine will be required.

Day 9 Return to Work applies to the following Essential HCWs:

1. “The worker provides direct patient care and, without the worker, safe direct patient care delivery and/or worker safety would be compromised (e.g. nurse, physician, care aides, etc.).
2. The worker provides clinical support to direct patient care workers and, without the worker, safe direct patient care delivery and/or worker safety would be compromised (e.g. laboratory technicians, pathologists, pharmacists, etc.).
3. The worker provides non-clinical support to direct patient care workers and, without the worker, safe direct patient care delivery and/or worker safety would be compromised (e.g. housekeeping, supply delivery, dietary and food services etc.).
4. The worker provides administrative support to direct patient care workers and, without the worker, their duties would fall to the direct patient care worker. This would take the direct patient care worker away from providing direct safe patient care delivery and/or worker safety would be compromised (e.g. patient registration clerks, staffing clerks, unit assistants, ward clerks etc.).

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5. The worker provides critical environmental support services that support the delivery of direct patient care providers (e.g. physical plant engineers; information technology workers, etc.).
6. The worker provides direct support for the emergency response to COVID19 (e.g. disaster management, planning leads, etc.).”


All HCWs that do not fit into the above descriptions are considered **non-essential HCWs** and should be permitted to work remotely from Day 9 of quarantine only if they were working remotely prior to travel. Remote working requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the department manager.

Exception Quarantine for Critical HCWs

Certain critically essential HCWs arriving in Bermuda from overseas travel who are required to deliver urgent, critical and emergency clinical services as opposed to routine clinical service/activity can be cleared to return to work after two negative SARS-CoV2 test results. This is in line with Government guidance for visiting specialists providing service/technical assistance not available from other workers in Bermuda and which are critical to the health and well-being of the community.

In these cases, the HCW may be cleared to return to work by EHS if:

- Two test results (pre-arrival test + Day 0) have been submitted to ehs@bhb.bm
- HCW is asymptomatic
- HCW has not travelled to a region with a testing positivity rate greater than 25%
- Senior department leader (Director or higher) has confirmed via Travel notification form that HCW requires Exception Quarantine.
- HCW agrees to wear a surgical mask at all times unless higher levels of PPE is required for healthcare procedures being undertaken.
- HCW agrees to complete daily self-monitoring and documentation of temperature and symptoms for 14 days after arrival.

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- HCW agrees to inform their colleagues, patients and office staff of their travel history and quarantine process in advance of returning to the high risk setting so that informed decision making can be made by patients and/or co-workers for their own health protection.

If the pandemic risk continues to escalate, future versions of this policy may result in the reestablishment of the quarantine rules.


EHS Clearance to Return to Work Process

All HCWs returning to work at any point in the 14 Days post-travel, must be cleared by EHS before returning to work. HCWs will only be cleared if:

- Proof of all required test results have been received at ehs@bhb.bm
- HCW is asymptomatic
- HCW agrees to wear a surgical mask at all times unless higher levels of PPE is required for healthcare procedures being undertaken.
- HCW agrees to complete daily self-monitoring and documentation of temperature and symptoms for 14 days after arrival.
- HCW agrees to inform their colleagues, patients and office staff of their travel history and quarantine process in advance of returning to the high risk setting so that informed decision making can be made by patients and/or co-workers for their own health protection.
- Relevant HCW's reporting manager will be notified of clearance to return to work via email.

If a HCW becomes symptomatic or a test returns positive, the HCW will immediately cease work activities and notify the department manager and EHS. If a HCW is diagnosed with COVID-19 after post-travel exposure they will be compensated via the Pandemic Sick Leave (API Code 03A).

At the Disaster Alert Level 2, EHS will adopt the quarantine requirements outlined in this policy. In the event the BHB's Disaster Alert Level is escalated or there is a risk that a HCW has been exposed to jurisdictions with

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high positivity rates EHS may amend HCW screening and quarantine protocols as necessary. EHS may direct a HCW to cease working at any time.

Travel Notification Form

The Travel Notification Form (TNF) in Appendix I must be completed by all HCWs planning to travel in order to make BHB aware of dates and destination of travel and determine the type of quarantine required before returning to work.

HCW Responsibilities:

- Complete TNF when completing leave forms (vacation, business, medical)
- Submit the TNF to supervisor or manager as far in advance of departure date as possible for travel during approved vacation time as well travel on scheduled days off
- Seek confirmation from immediate supervisor or manager if Day 15 Return to Work (RTW) Day 9 RTW or Exception Quarantine will be approved

Department Manager Responsibilities

- Complete TNF
- Determine if the HCW qualifies for Day 15 RTW, Day 9 RTW or Exception Quarantine
- Secure confirmation via signature from their Director/VP if the HCW qualifies for Exception Quarantine
- Communicate decision to the HCW, preferably in advance of their departure
- Submit TNF to ehs@bhb.bm Subject: Travel notification form

Department Director/VP/Chief Responsibilities


- Complete the TNF on behalf of visiting specialists/technicians
- Consider and process ALL requests for Exception Quarantine

Community Based HCWs Responsibilities

- Submit TNF to the Department Chief who will submit to ehs@bhb.bm

Employee Health Services Responsibilities

- Receive all TNFs

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- Confirm the quarantine requirements – Day 15RTW, Day 9 RTW or Exception Quarantine

HCWs will not be permitted to change the type of leave to be taken on return to the island. For instance, if a HCW departs the island on vacation travel and is subject to quarantine upon return they will not be permitted to change the type of leave during quarantine to sick, until their quarantine period has ended.

Alert Level 1 - Normal Precautions

Alert Level 1 - is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is always a residual risk that an incident, natural disaster or other event may occur. BHB operates in a business as usual mode but actively engages in disaster readiness and preventive activities.

There is no special restriction on travel outside of Bermuda.


Business travel is subject to ordinary approval process.

Under any Alert Level, HCWs should consult the John Hopkins University & Medicine Coronavirus Resource Centre Public Health England or CDC Travel Advisory websites for potential travel warnings. Countries that have Positivity Rates of >10.0% or elevated travel warnings should be avoided. HCWs are advised to register their intended travel destinations with their home jurisdiction (such as UK, or American embassy). Registering with national embassies improves likelihood that in the event of a disaster your home jurisdiction can locate you, provide assistance and potentially extraction. For UK Nationals see: GOV.UK – [Registering with the Embassy](#).

Approval of vacation leave is subject to HCW's vacation bank and ability of Employer to grant time off based on unit work load.

Alert Level 2 - Pandemic Normal

Alert Level 2 – Pandemic Normal is triggered when the organization becomes aware of a potential threat that may affect the safe operation of the hospital. When Alert Level 2 is triggered, the organizational leadership and line managers should perform threat and business continuity assessments to determine the most appropriate plan to mitigate risks. In the case of a pandemic, Alert Level 2 may need to be activated for extended periods depending on the prevalence of the virus, in which case Alter Level 2 (Pandemic Normal) will be the baseline

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line for operating at disaster alert levels. Be aware of heightened risks to safety, and security when travelling to foreign countries and the positivity rate of the pandemic threat.

Manifest risks may be due to healthcare crises, war or natural disaster in Bermuda, the region or global. HCWS should use [John Hopkins University & Medicine Coronavirus Resource Centre](#), [Gov.UK – PHE Covid-19 Guidance](#), [CDC-Traveler’s Health](#), for guidance on international travel risks, unless specified otherwise by the BHB. Conditions in any country may change at any time. [BDAGov - Health Information](#) should also be viewed.

Business Travel


Business travel to areas that have positivity rates greater than 5% will be approved only if necessary and may be subject to cancellation by the CEO. Attendance to large-scale events such as conferences should be avoided and online alternatives should be used whenever possible.

Vacation Leave

Approval of vacation leave is subject to HCW’s vacation bank and ability of Employer to grant time off based on unit workload. Prior to approving such leave, it is the responsibility of the Line Manager to understand the totality of the risk environment to the best of their ability and curtail the approval of excessive vacation leave that may place the work unit at risk if there is a strong likelihood of the risk level elevating further. At BHB Alert Level 2, the approval of vacation leave is not prohibited but the number of approvals granted may be restricted based on service risks. Application may vary from department to department based on associated staffing risks. Nursing Departments may activate their Prime Time Vacation Policy.

Special Compassionate Vacation

For the period July 1st, 2020 until September 30th 2020, managers accommodate vacation requests of guest workers who need to travel home to visit their parents or child(ren) only. This purpose of this clause is to provide compassionate allowance for guest workers who have not had opportunity to visit parents or children since the beginning of the global lockdown in March and who may otherwise be precluded from visiting family members due to summer leave being dominated by persons with higher seniority. This policy also anticipates the risk that the second wave may affect Bermuda between October 2020 and March 2021. The HCW may only travel directly to the location of the family members and back to Bermuda, it is not to accommodate general leisure travel. If there is, dishonesty involved in making such application the HCW may be subject to disciplinary action. HCWs seeking accommodation are responsible for submitting their requests in writing to their managers, including information on the special circumstances, travel destination and dates of leave.

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HCWs on Special CoVid-19 Sick Leave Due to Chronic Diseases

EHS may recall HCWs placed on leave under COVID-19_GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES AT HIGHER RISK FROM INFECTION policy back to work at Alert level 2 or lower. HCWs with Chronic Diseases should continue to observe normal precautions both within and outside of the workplace. HCWs may reapply for protection under the policy if the BHB reinstates Disaster Alert Level 3 or if EHS and IPAC identify work areas with elevated risk levels. The policy may be suspended indefinitely if the Positivity level in Bermuda exceeds 25%.

Alert Level 3 – Elevated Caution


Alert Level 3 - means that there is an immediate and present risk that there is a major incident, natural disaster, conflict, healthcare crises such as pandemic or mass casualty, or economic disaster that is very likely to occur or has occurred elsewhere that will have detrimental impact on Bermuda or the BHB. Alert Level 3 - may or may not be accompanied by the convening of the Emergency Measures Organization, Public Health Emergency Response Team or other substantial threat declared by the CEO. The Elevated Caution period may persist post the actual incident or disaster to facilitate a recovery and return to a level of near normalcy.

Avoid personal travel due to serious risks to safety and security or to avoid placing the competent and safe management of BHB at risk.

All business travel will be cancelled subject to approval by the CEO. There will be no approvals of new vacation requests during the impact period of Alert Level 3. If the threat has a predictable impact date and the unit does not have sufficient coverage to manage operations safely, approved vacation may be cancelled as a last resort.

Line managers may contact staff that are on leave to ascertain if they are available to return to work to make up coverage shortfalls. Cancelling vacations and calling staff back to duty when on vacation has a negative impact on moral and significant cost impact. Line managers should exhaust every option prior to triggering these options. The Line Manager will be responsible for any cost justifications.

When the threat has a well-defined impact period, there is no need to discontinue the ordinary management of vacation leave.

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Alert Level 4 – High Risk Operational Lock Down

Alert Level 4 - This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks from an incident, natural disaster, healthcare crises such as pandemic or mass casualty, conflict or economic disaster that impacts Bermuda directly or indirectly. High Risk Operational Lock Down will be the period when the organization is at the epicentre of any external threat. [Note - Operational Lock Down, is separate and distinct from a Security Lock Down, which is ordinarily temporary.]

Avoid personal travel due to serious risks to safety and security or to avoid placing the competent and safe management of BHB at risk.

All business travel will be cancelled subject to approval by the CEO.

Approval of vacation leave during the impact period of Alert Level 5 will cease. If the threat has a predictable impact date and the unit does not have sufficient coverage to manager operations during the projected period of impact, approved vacation will be cancelled.

Line managers will contact staff that are on leave to ascertain if they are available to return to work to make up coverage shortfalls. Cancelling vacations and calling staff back to duty when on vacation has a negative impact on moral and significant cost impact. Line managers should exhaust every option prior to triggering these options.

Protecting the Workplace


Telecommuting (Working Remotely)

Telecommuting requests will be approved on a case-by-case basis. While not all positions will be eligible, all requests for temporary telecommuting should be submitted to your manager for consideration.

Staying Home When Ill

Many times, with the best of intentions, HCWs report to work even though they feel ill. We provide paid sick time and other benefits to compensate HCWs who are unable to work due to illness.

During an infectious disease outbreak, it is critical that HCWs do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing the following symptoms: Examples include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body

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aches, headache, chills and fatigue. HCWs should be improving symptomatically and be free from fever (fever = temperature greater than 100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) without the use of fever-reducing medications, for 48 hours before returning to the workplace. . HCWs who report to work ill will be sent home in accordance with these health guidelines.

Requests for Medical Information and/or Documentation

If you are out sick or show symptoms of being ill, the Sick Leave Policy or if appropriate the Quarantine Policy shall apply. As always, we expect and appreciate your cooperation if and when medical information is required as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Confidentiality of Medical Information


Our policy is to treat any medical information as a confidential medical record. In furtherance of this policy, any disclosure of medical information is in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel, and government officials as required by law.

Vacation Management

In the event the Disaster Management Alert Level is raised to Level 2, 3, or 4 and the organization is held at an elevated disaster readiness level for more than 30 days, the Executive Team may suspend the practice of cancelling vacation accrual balances that exceed the annual hours cap. This suspension will prevent HCWs that are normally at risk of losing their accrued vacation that exceeds the annual cap, from losing it because the HCW has been unable to take vacation.

Where accrued vacation balances of individual employees exceed 300 hours, during disaster alert levels, Managers, may approve accrued vacation leave or request employees to take vacation leave at any disaster alert level to reduce level of vacation accrual.

Where there are large quantities of accrued vacation balances, during disaster alert levels, Managers, may under special circumstances, approve accrued vacation at any time during the disaster alert levels.

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The suspension will continue until the end the BHB returns to Disaster Level 1, and up to a maximum of four months following the total period of suspension after returning to Disaster Level 1.

On an individual basis and with consent of the responsible Chief, managers may approve new vacation leave based on the contingency of the service and the level of immediate threat to the organization and the department.

Social Distancing Guidelines for Workplace Infectious Disease Outbreaks

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, BHB may implement these social distancing guidelines to minimize the spread of the disease among the staff.


During the workday, HCWs are requested to:

1. Avoid meeting people face-to-face. HCWs are encouraged to use the telephone, online conferencing, e-mail or instant messaging to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building.
2. If a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable, minimize the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one yard from each other if possible; avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands.
3. Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone nonessential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions.
4. Do not congregate in work rooms, pantries, copier rooms or other areas where people socialize.
5. Bring lunch and eat at your desk or away from others (avoid lunchrooms and crowded restaurants).
6. Encourage members and others to request information and orders via phone and e-mail in order to minimize person-to-person contact. Have the orders, materials and information ready for fast pick-up or delivery.

Outside activities

HCWs might be encouraged to the extent possible to:

1. Avoid public transportation (walk, cycle, drive a car) or go early or late to avoid rush-hour crowding on public transportation.
2. Avoid recreational or other leisure classes, meetings, activities, etc., where HCWs might come into contact with contagious people.

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Procedures:

- 1) The Executive Team will be responsible of declaring the changing the Alert Level for the organization based on best available information and projection of hospital's ability to cope.
- 2) HR will inform union partners of any change in Alert Level.
- 3) HCWs will be informed in any changes to Alert Level via Public Relations.

References:

- Quarantine Policy

Approval:


 Chief Operating Officer

Date: 3/9/2020.


 Vice President – Human Resources & OD

Date: 4/9/2020