

## **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES AND “CONTACTS” OF A CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE**

### **Introduction and Purpose of the Protocol**

To supplement the existing RU protocols and remind staff and students what needs to be done with when a staff member or student has confirmed that they have tested positive for COVID-19 and for those who are “contacts” of confirmed COVID-19 cases. To outline the various roles and responsibilities when there is a confirmed COVID-19 case and in respect of “contacts” of a confirmed COVID-19 case.

This protocol should be read in conjunction with all the institutional protocols related to COVID-19.

### **Definitions and Terminology**

#### **Confirmed COVID-19 Case<sup>1</sup>**

A person with an acute respiratory infection who has a laboratory diagnosis demonstrating infection with SARS CoV-2.

#### **“Contact” of a COVID-19 Case<sup>1</sup>**

A person who is in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 person, and this can be from 2 days before the symptoms begin in that COVID-19 case.

The contact with COVID-19 case is not “casual” contact. It is sustained contact with the index case for more than 15-minutes, and that being within 2 meters of the index case.

The contact may be in a family/intimate environment, or within a work/transportation/etc. space.

#### **Direct/Close Contact**

Direct/close contact means that you had face-to-face contact within 1 metre or were in a closed space for more than 15 minutes with a person with COVID-19. This contact happened while the person with COVID-19 was still “infectious”, i.e. from 2 days before to 14 days after their symptoms began. For example, you may be someone who: -

1. Lives in the same household as a person with COVID-19
2. Works closely in the same environment as a person with COVID-19
3. Sat in the same classroom as a person with COVID-19
4. Attended the same gathering as a person with COVID-19
5. Provided direct care for a person with COVID-19 in a healthcare setting without using the proper personal protective equipment

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6. Sat within two seats (1 metre) in any direction of a person with COVID-19 case in any kind of vehicle including buses, minibus taxis, etc.

### Quarantine

These are healthy people who either self-quarantine or are requested to quarantine by the employer because **one or more** of the risk criteria exists (outlined in the Institutional Framework for COVID-19). After 2 weeks the staff members may return to work provided that they have not experienced any symptoms associated with COVID-19.

### Isolation

This is for people who have been **diagnosed** with COVID-19. Isolation means that a person **may not leave their home/place of isolation at all** (or you are in hospital or a quarantine centre) until they have been declared fit to leave.

<sup>1</sup>Self-isolation entails: -

- a) Stay at home all the time for a 14 days. In addition, the Department of Health recommend the following: -
  - i) People who are asymptomatic may de-isolate 10 days after testing
  - ii) People who have mild symptoms may de-isolate 10 days after the onset of symptoms
  - iii) People who have severe symptoms may de-isolate 10 after clinical stability is achieved
- b) Where possible, stay in a separate room, and have as little contact as possible with other house members. No visitors.
- c) Where possible, use separate bathroom facilities and eating utensils and space.
- d) Always wear a medical mask.
- e) Family members should always wear masks.
- f) Strict attention to personal hygiene, washing hands, using either soap and water or 70% alcohol wipes / hand sanitizer should apply.
- g) Use the protocols for daily washing of house and environment, using soap and water, dilute bleach and/or 70% alcohol wipes / hand sanitizer.
- h) If home space is inadequate for physical distancing staff should contact a medical practitioner or public health officials to explore the possibility of being housed in a quarantine facility.
- i) Generally, those who have mild symptoms can remain at home. If the person becomes short of breath or develops other serious medical problems the person should consult the medical practitioner or go to hospital.

### What to do if a student/staff member is tested positive for COVID-19? (See Flowchart in attached Annexure)

- 1) The doctor or laboratory will register the case with the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) ([www.nicd.co.za](http://www.nicd.co.za)) and inform the provincial public health authorities.
- 2) Students must inform the Director: Student Affairs if they are COVID-19 positive.
- 3) Staff must inform the Acting HR Director and their line manager if they are COVID-19 positive.

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- 4) The person must immediately self-isolate for a minimum period of 14 days. They may need to self-isolate for longer if they are still ill (i.e. they have symptoms). The Department of Health has provided the following additional guidelines: -
  - a. People who are asymptomatic may de-isolate 10 days after testing
  - b. People who have mild symptoms may de-isolate 10 days after the onset of symptoms
  - c. People who have severe symptoms may de-isolate 10 after clinical stability is achieved
- 5) Staff members must apply for sick leave, while students must apply for leave of absence
- 6) The Health Care Centre will notify the local Department of Health in Makhanda and will assist the Department with tracing.
- 7) HR will notify the Provincial Chief Inspector from the Department of Labour.
- 8) Line Managers should work with the staff members to develop a list of all staff who have been in close/direct contact with the person who is COVID-19 positive.
- 9) The Director: Student Affairs and the Health Care Centre will work with students to develop a list of staff and students that have been in close/direct contact with the person who is COVID-19 positive.
- 10) Those who have been in close/direct contact with the person who is COVID-19 positive should be informed by either the public health officials or the person who is COVID-19 positive or by the line manager who has permission from the person who is COVID-19 positive.
- 11) Staff/student may generally (see point 4 for further guidelines) return to work/resume practicals after 14 days if they are not ill or have any symptoms. No further laboratory testing will be required, but the staff member/student should be cleared by a medical practitioner.
- 12) Staff and students will receive regular follow-up to enquire after their well-being should they test positive for COVID-19.
- 13) As soon as the staff/student has recovered the Acting HR Director (staff) and the Director: Student Affairs should be informed either by the staff member/student or by the Line Manager in the case of staff.
- 14) The staff member/student is advised to seek psychological support.
- 15) The Deputy Director: Residential Operations is responsible for managing the cleaning and disinfecting a building, residence, classroom, office or any other facility that the person who is positive for COVID-19 has been in and she should be contacted to determine the way forward. Please see the checklist in Appendix 1.

**What to do if student/staff member has been in Contact with a person who is confirmed positive for COVID-19? (See Flowchart in attached Annexure)**

- 1) If a staff member has been in close/direct contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 they should notify their line manager.
- 2) If a student has been in close/direct contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 they should notify the Director: Student Affairs.
- 3) The Line Manager (staff) and the Director: Student Affairs (students) should confirm that the COVID-19 person is a confirmed case.
- 4) The Line Manager (staff) and the Director: Student Affairs (students) should determine whether the staff member or student meets the “contact” definition above. If they meet the “contact” definition the staff member/student should self-quarantine immediately for 14 days even if they are not ill/showing symptoms.

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- 5) Staff should apply for COVID-19 special leave, while the student may apply for LoA. Whilst on this type of leave the University is entitled to ask staff members/students to perform tasks provided that these can be done on a remote basis.
- 6) Staff on COVID-19 special leave/student on LOA should self-screen twice a day including taking their temperature to assess possible infection with SARS CoV-2.
- 7) If the staff member/student experiences any COVID-19 related symptoms they should contact their medical practitioner or the Health Care Centre (046 603 8523 – office hours only) for advice and whether they should be tested. At this point staff should apply for sick leave.
- 8) If a staff member tests positive for COVID-19 they must notify the Acting Head of HR and their Line Manager immediately.
- 9) The staff member/student is advised to seek psychological support.
- 10) The process for someone who is confirmed for COVID-19 will apply as outlined above.
- 11) If no symptoms develop whilst a staff/student is in self-quarantine they may return to campus/the workplace after 14 days.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

<b>ROLE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>CONTACT PERSON</b>	<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>
Availability of quarantine space, cleaning and disinfecting a building, residence, classroom, office or any other facility if someone is found positive for COVID-19	Residential Operations	Deputy Director: Residential Operations, Jay Pillay  Ms Charmaine Ellery	<a href="mailto:jay.pillay@ru.ac.za">jay.pillay@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 801 2389  <a href="mailto:c.ellery@ru.ac.za">c.ellery@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 801 2391
Communication	Communications and Advancement	Manager: Communications, Veliswa Mhlope	<a href="mailto:v.mhlope@ru.ac.za">v.mhlope@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 484 0161
Chair: COVID-19 Task Team	Academic and Student Affairs	DVC: Academic and Student Affairs	<a href="mailto:m.monnapula-mapesela@ru.ac.za">m.monnapula-mapesela@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 928 2899
Communication	Communications and Advancement	Director: Communications and Advancement Luzuko Jacobs Manager: Communications, Veliswa Mhlope	<a href="mailto:l.jacobs@ru.ac.za">l.jacobs@ru.ac.za</a> or 073 795 2273 <a href="mailto:v.mhlope@ru.ac.za">v.mhlope@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 484 0161
Counselling (staff)	Human Resources Division	Manager: Institutional	<a href="mailto:t.mzizi@ru.ac.za">t.mzizi@ru.ac.za</a> or 071 160 5849

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ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY	CONTACT PERSON	CONTACT DETAILS
		Wellness, Thandi Mzizi	
Counselling (students)	Student Affairs Division	Head: Counselling Centre, Christine Lewis	<a href="mailto:counsellingcentre@ru.ac.za">counsellingcentre@ru.ac.za</a> or 046 603 7070 (08h00 to 16h30, Monday to Friday) Crisis Line - ER 24 0102053068 (for psychological emergencies)
Food Services related queries  Ensure food security for students	Residential Operations – Food Services	Manager: Conferencing and Events Charmaine Avery	<a href="mailto:c.avery@ru.ac.za">c.avery@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 801 2391
Facilities  Access points	Facilities Servicing  CPU	Davie van Dyk  Joel Mabotja	<a href="mailto:d.vandyk@ru.ac.za">d.vandyk@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 88 9589  <a href="mailto:j.mabotja@ru.ac.za">j.mabotja@ru.ac.za</a> or 067 055 2268
Health Care Centre	Student Affairs Division	Sister Heather Ferreira	<a href="mailto:h.ferreira@ru.ac.za">h.ferreira@ru.ac.za</a> or 046 693 8523 (office hours only)
Health and Safety	Registrar's Division	SHE Officer, Belinda Nomji	<a href="mailto:b.nomji@ru.ac.za">b.nomji@ru.ac.za</a>
Injury on Duty (IOD) Submissions to the Department of Labour	Human Resources Division	Manager: Total Rewards, Tandile, Nyati	<a href="mailto:t.nyati@ru.ac.za">t.nyati@ru.ac.za</a> or 078 157 1880
Notification to the Department of Health and  Staff queries  Monitor number of staff on campus	Human Resources Division	Acting HR Director, Susan Robertson	<a href="mailto:susan.robertson@ru.ac.za">susan.robertson@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 576 0172
Notification to the Department of Health  Tracing assistance with the Department of	Student Affairs Division – Health Care Centre	Sister Heather Ferreira and Sister Thamie Fanisi	Health Care Centre 046 603 8523 (office hours)

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ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY	CONTACT PERSON	CONTACT DETAILS
Health (students and staff)			
Overall student return and research environment	Research and Innovation	DVC: Research and Innovation Dr Peter Clayton	<a href="mailto:p.clayton@ru.ac.za">p.clayton@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 802 2968
Provincial Health readiness	Biochemistry and Microbiology	Prof Rosie Dorrington	<a href="mailto:r.dorrington@ru.ac.za">r.dorrington@ru.ac.za</a> or
Representative Unions  Encourage adherence to non-pharmaceutical measures by staff	NEHAWU and NTEU	Shop Steward – NEHAWU Tembani Ngindana Shop Steward – NTEU Ryno van Rooyen	<a href="mailto:t.ngindana@ru.ac.za">t.ngindana@ru.ac.za</a> or 078 124 6587  <a href="mailto:r.vanrooyen@ru.ac.za">r.vanrooyen@ru.ac.za</a> or 072 141 4911
Student queries  Encourage adherence to non-pharmaceutical measures by Res and Oppidan students  Monitor numbers of students returning to campus	Student Affairs Division	Director: Student Affairs, Noma Mrwetyana  Manager: Student Wellness Mandisa Ndabula	n. <a href="mailto:mrwetyana@ru.ac.za">mrwetyana@ru.ac.za</a> or 082 485 0271  or <a href="mailto:m.ndabula@ru.ac.za">m.ndabula@ru.ac.za</a> or

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## **Appendix 1**

### **ASSESSMENT OF SPACE FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTION WHEN SOMEONE WHO IS COVID-19 POSITIVE HAS BEEN IN THE SPACE**

Building/Facility	
Area/Room Number	
Date	
Contact Person	
Contact Details (email and cellphone number)	

### **CHECKLIST**

	YES	NO
Has this area been closed since the person who has COVID-19 last visited or used the facility		
Can this area be closed for 7 days? ( If yes, Routine Cleaning will apply)		
Does this space have to be used within 48hrs after a positive case of COVID-19 was declared? (If yes, Specialized Disinfection of area will be applied, and thereafter routine cleaning)		
Has the area been left closed for 24 hours before cleaning/disinfecting?		
Does this space have computers, printers and facsimile machines?		
Does this space have books, files and papers exposed to the environment?		
Does this space incorporate a kitchen / kitchenette?		
Does this space incorporate a staff rest room?		
Is this space carpeted?		
Does this space have tiled floors?		
Does this space have wooden floors?		
Are there any linen or laundry in the area (e.g. tablecloths, Uniforms, Lab coats)?		
Does this space have bathrooms?		
Is this a large flat floor space (Lecture Venue, Classrooms, Dining hall)?		
Is this a multi-level area (has stairs and / lifts)?		
Does this space have multiple entry and exit points?		
Does this space have several offices?		
Does this space have extended areas such as computer labs?		
Does this facility include a science lab?		
Does this facility have live experiments / animals?		
<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>		

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