

# COVID-19 Exposure Guide for In-person/Hybrid classroom or lab

## FACULTY AND STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Similar to the general population, a certain percentage of our students on campus have COVID or have been exposed to COVID, or think they may have COVID and are awaiting test results. We are encouraging students to reach out to their faculty to keep them updated, but any faculty communication back to the student, including what additional information may be asked of the student, must not violate federal law.

The Health Information Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) protects the privacy of an individual's medical records and information. Individuals are free to volunteer their information and they may also designate proxies (such as family members) and entities (such as insurance companies) who have access to their information, but we may not require that they provide information to us if we are not designates.

If a student divulges the information to a faculty member or TA, then Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) applies, not HIPAA. Since faculty and TAs do not have a health provider relationship with the student, the faculty member or TA should not alert the class, because that would be a violation of FERPA in the same way that divulging information about disability accommodations or grades is not allowed.

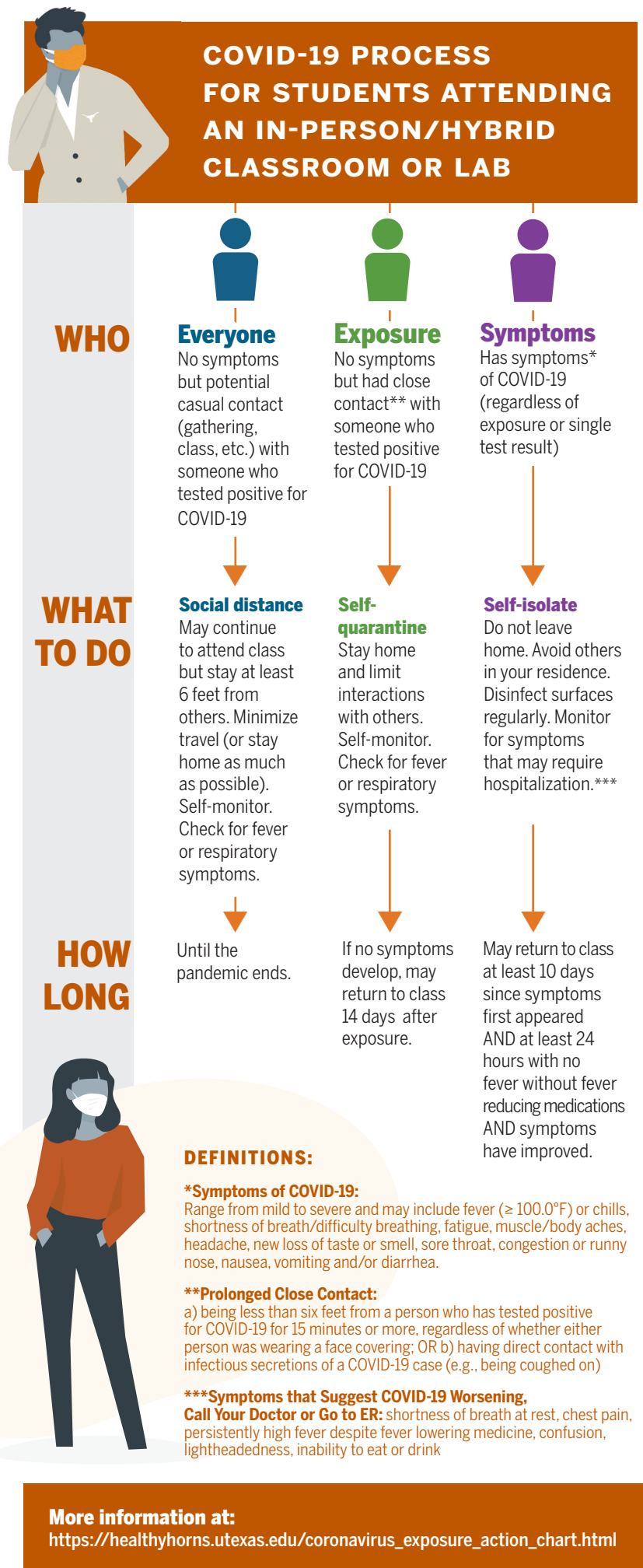
If a student divulges COVID information to a TA, then the TA may discuss this with the professor in the same way that they can discuss all student progress without violating FERPA. Either the instructor or the TA can report this to **Behavioral Concerns and COVID Advice Line (BCCAL)** depending on the TA's comfort with doing so. Once the case has been reported to BCCAL, HIPAA and FERPA both apply to the university, as the information is now part of the medical record of the student.

After the information is reported to BCCAL, **University Health Services (UHS)** will be notified and will follow up with the student. When the case is confirmed through a test (or information about a test already taken), UHS will determine who else needs to be notified of a positive case.

Please see the FAQ and Resources section of this document for additional guidance.


Note: If students, who have tested positive for COVID-19 and recovered, encounter another exposure within 3 months of initial exposure, they can continue with classes if they do not have symptoms. If they have another exposure and/or symptoms beyond 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19, then they will self-quarantine and contact UHS. It is recommended that they get tested again (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>)

Subject to change based on UHS and CDC guidelines.



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## Resources

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- ➔ **Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line (BCCAL)**  
<https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>
  - ➔ **Self-reporting form—to complete when contacting UHS**  
[https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6x3dWwTFMSqDjal](https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6x3dWwTFMSqDjal)
  - ➔ **What to do when there is COVID exposure**  
[https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus\\_exposure\\_action\\_chart.html](https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_exposure_action_chart.html)
  - ➔ **Proactive Community Testing**  
[https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus\\_proactive\\_testing.html](https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_proactive_testing.html)
  - ➔ **If you have COVID symptoms:**  
[https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus\\_recommendation.html](https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_recommendation.html)
  - ➔ **Social distancing, monitoring, quarantine, or isolation?  
How do they differ and how long do they last?**  
[https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus\\_exposure\\_action\\_chart.html](https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_exposure_action_chart.html)
  - ➔ **UHS COVID-19 Information**  
<https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus.html>
  - ➔ **Employee process for reporting**  
<https://hr.utexas.edu/sites/hr.utexas.edu/files/COVID-19-Reporting-Process-Infographic-English-Spanish.pdf>
  - ➔ **What happens if I think I might have COVID-19 as an employee of UT?**  
<https://hr.utexas.edu/sites/hr.utexas.edu/files/COVID-19-Reporting-Process-Infographic-English-Spanish.pdf>
  - ➔ **What should employees do if they get tested for COVID-19 or have symptoms?**  
<https://hr.utexas.edu/sites/hr.utexas.edu/files/COVID-19-Employee-Poster-Why.pdf>



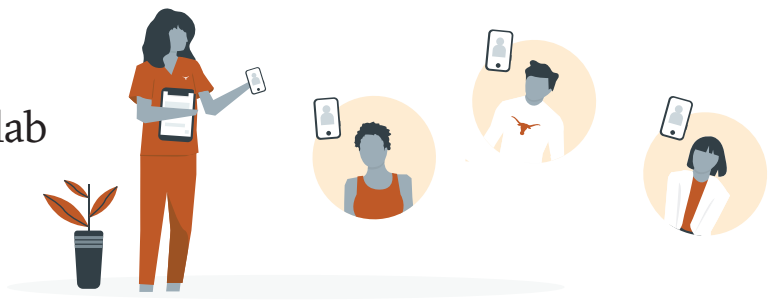
## INTERACTIVE MAP

Essential campus resources like indoor study spaces, COVID-19 testing sites, mask and hand sanitizer purchase locations, and more through our interactive map.

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?hl=en&mid=1rGl5rgRxcx\\_8PluHY10-LrKElw-3qVKC&ll=30.285387372637096%2C-97.73663516731334&z=17](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?hl=en&mid=1rGl5rgRxcx_8PluHY10-LrKElw-3qVKC&ll=30.285387372637096%2C-97.73663516731334&z=17)

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## FAQs



### **What to do if a student says that they have tested positive for COVID-19 or are waiting for their test results because they were exposed?**

Thank them for letting you know, that by sharing they have protected our school and that you will work with them to provide any needed accommodations as they recover or until they are able to return to class, and that you (if you are willing) and the school are always ready to help in any way that they can. Also inform the student that someone from the dean's/supervisor's office will be reaching out to them.

***Do not ask the student for any details of their illness, or with whom they have been in contact, or where they have been.***

***Do not give them any medical advice.*** UHS and the CSU Dean's Office coordinate these questions and information. If a student volunteers such information, thank them for it, but do not engage in any further conversation with them about it.

### **Whom to contact**

Immediately reach out to your department's supervisor.

### **Whom NOT to contact**

***Do not contact the other students in the class to inform them that one of their classmates has COVID and that they should isolate, or get tested etc.*** If the student who tested positive has been on campus in a class with other students, those students will receive two levels of communication from UHS—a general notice that one of their classmates tested positive, and a directed notice if they were identified as a possible close contact. The information in these notices is quite specific on next steps and any other communication or instruction might create confusion.

### **What to do if a student says that they may have COVID or think they have been exposed but the indications are that they haven't been tested?**

Fundamentally the same as above, but we recommend a few additional statements to the student. For example, you should say "Do please review the recommendations on <https://protect.utexas.edu/health-and-wellness/>." Also, say something along the lines of "We will of course excuse you from class/ accommodate your absence until you learn more."

Your CSU's Dean's/supervisor's office will also reach out to them to make sure that they follow the proper procedures.

### **What if a student receives one of the general notices that a student in their class has tested positive, but was not themselves identified as a close contact, yet nevertheless feels as though they should quarantine?**

Many students across campus are receiving such notices and reacting with alarm. We have heard instances where students are reading into these notices that they should be quarantining. The general notice recommends self-monitoring for individuals who were not identified as a close contact, it is not recommending quarantine. Let them know that you will support them, and that the decision is theirs.

### **What to do if several students in your class, after receiving a general notice that one of their classmates has tested positive, collectively feel as though they should quarantine.**

While you may certainly be willing to accommodate all of these students as they take it upon themselves to quarantine, we can also help assuage their fears by offering proactive community testing. Students should get tested 3-7 days following exposure. They can attend any of the [test sites](#) at a time that is most convenient for them.



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### **Sample General Notice sent by University Health Services to all classmates of a student who tests positive for COVID as well as to the Instructor of Record**

Subject: Important: Possible Exposure to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

I am writing to let you know that an individual in one of your classes held on date has tested positive for COVID-19. Public health professionals have made every effort to notify primary close contacts (those exposed for 15 minutes or more at a distance of less than six feet) that we know of and advised them to self-quarantine.

If you are only participating in remote/online learning or you have not interacted with other classmates in person recently, you can disregard this notice.

We were assured that social distancing and facial coverings were in use for the entire duration of the class. If you have interacted in person with other classmates, due to social distancing measures and the use of facial coverings, you are considered a casual or secondary contact and I advise you to self-monitor and to continue practicing social distancing. Self-monitor means you should monitor for fever by taking your temperature twice a day and remain alert for new or unexplained:

- cough,
- difficulty breathing,
- chills,
- muscle pain,
- headache,
- sore throat,
- loss of taste or smell.

If you develop any of the above symptoms during the self-monitoring period, you should self-isolate, limit contact with others, and seek advice by telephone from a healthcare provider to determine whether medical evaluation is needed. Students should call the UHS Nurse Advice Line at 512-475-6877.

Staff and faculty with UT Select insurance may contact the 24/7 Nurseline provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield at 888-315-9473 or seek care from UT Health Austin or their personal healthcare provider. If your healthcare provider recommends COVID-19 testing, please notify HealthPoint OHP at 512-471-4647.

Additionally, we encourage you to sign up for an appointment to get tested as a part of our Proactive Community Testing campaign:

- Participating in Proactive Community Testing significantly advances our ability to slow the spread of the virus at UT.
- The whole process takes about five minutes.
- The results are confidential but available to you if you want.
- Participation is voluntary.
- The test uses a painless saliva-based collection method.
- This test does not provide a clinical diagnosis and is not used for treatment purposes. Positive PCT test results are recommended to be followed up with a clinical test at UHS to confirm.

To schedule an appointment, [click here](#). For more information about the test, including what to bring and instructions for the day of the test, visit the University Health Services web page dedicated to Proactive Community Testing.