The information detailed in this document is intended to provide guidance for staff. It is important to note that this is a fluid situation and so this document will be updated and modified as needed. It is expected that all employees revisit frequently for the latest updates and information. This document will be kept on the Human Capital Services webpage.

**Question: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**
- Fever (over 100.0 Fahrenheit or higher) chills or shaking chills
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches.
- Cough not due to other known causes, such as chronic cough
  - Sore throat, when in combination with other symptoms
  - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, when in combination with other symptoms
  - Headache, when in combination with other symptoms
  - Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
  - Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies)

**Question: Who do I contact in HCS about COVID-19?**
Please contact HCS via email immediately. Be sure to email BOTH: Heather Emsley (hemsley@newbedfordschools.org) AND Maria Marcucilli (mmarcucilli@newbedfordschools.org)

**Question: What should I do if I am symptomatic?**
Any time that any staff member experiences COVID symptoms (see symptoms above) outside of work, even if vaccinated, staff are required to not report to work, enter their absence in AESOP and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to your immediate supervisor AND HCS (see above).

Any time that any staff member experiences COVID symptoms (see symptoms above) during work, even if vaccinated, staff are required to inform their supervisor so coverage can be arranged (if applicable), go home and immediately email a brief explanation of your situation to your immediate supervisor AND HCS (see above).

**Question: If I am symptomatic what type of test can I get?**
We accept PCR, rapid and at-home test results. Please be prepared to send a photo of your test result via email to HCS.
**Question: If I test COVID 19 positive, do I need a negative test to return to work?**
No, once you have tested positive you are able to return to work once:
- You are asymptomatic (no symptoms) or symptoms are resolving and you have completed the 5-day isolation period; AND
- You have not experienced a fever for 24 hours; AND
- You will remain masked at work when around others for a total of 10 days since you first became symptomatic or tested positive if asymptomatic (no symptoms); AND
- HCS has confirmed you are cleared to report to work.

If you have symptoms that do not show improvement, your isolation period may be extended to 10 days.

**Question: How will I get paid if I’m out of work for COVID related reason (symptomatic, positive)?**
- You will use accrued paid time off (Sick, Personal, Vacation – if applicable) to cover your absence.
- If you do not have accrued paid time off or do not have enough accrued paid time off to cover your absence the remaining time will be unpaid.

**Question: Do I have to quarantine if I believe I was exposed to COVID-19?**
Employees that believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19 are NOT required to quarantine. Employees that believe they have been exposed, but remain asymptomatic (symptom free) are required to wear a mask for 10 days following the exposure. Employees are strongly encouraged to test on day 5 following exposure. If an employee becomes symptomatic or tests positive they would follow the guidance detailed above.

**Question: What should I do if I get COVID symptoms directly after getting the vaccine or a COVID booster?**
Staff that experience minor to moderate COVID like symptoms are permitted to report to work. The MA DPH defines mild to moderate symptoms after vaccination as fever of not more than 100 degrees, headache, chills, body aches, fatigue that begin after vaccination and resolve within 48 hours. However, if you develop other symptoms or a fever of more than 100 degrees, even when being vaccinated, must follow the same protocols as listed above. Staff can opt to be proactive when scheduling their vaccine and decide to schedule a rapid test too as a precaution. This way if the staff member does experience side effects synonymous with COVID symptoms, they have the negative results on hand that clears them to return to work.

**Question: Do I have to send HCS proof that I have been vaccinated/boosted?**
Sending proof of vaccination and boosters to HCS is strongly encouraged. Proof of vaccination (such as a picture of your vaccination card) can be emailed to Mary Gomes at mrgomes@newbedfordschools.org. This can be done during work hours or outside of work hours. All proof of vaccinations received will be stored in the employee’s confidential medical file.
**Question:** I am feeling anxious and stressed about COVID-19. Is there support for me?

We all have times when we worry. During times of uncertainty it is only natural that we may need someone to talk with now and then, or a referral to a reliable resource. The District provides a free Employee Assistance Program (EAP) called All One Health. All employees and their family can access All One Health EAP for confidential consultation or support anytime, day or night. EAP clients can continue to either email the office or call (508) 990-0777 to set up an appointment. An EAP counselor will respond in a timely manner and offer a phone or video options. Each caller will receive reassurance of the confidential nature of this contact. Any instructions will be given to the caller at the time of their call.

If you have specific employee/employer questions, please contact your supervisor or Human Capital Services at (508) 997-4511 ext. 14352.