

## **CAC AmeriCorps COVID-19 Management Plan**

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### **Overview:**

COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus, is a virus newly discovered in early 2020 that has rapidly spread throughout the globe resulting in strained medical infrastructure and over 300k deaths in the US alone as of December 2020. It is readily communicable between people and can be spread by asymptomatic carriers. Direct contact with respiratory fluids is the primary vector of transmission and limiting potential exposure to these fluids is essential. Symptoms are similar to those of a cold or flu; fever, cough, and shortness of breath and may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. A vaccine for this virus has been developed by Pfizer and approved for emergency use by the FDA in December. Other companies have vaccines in different stages of development and approval with rollout beginning in December 2020. As these vaccines become available, CAC AmeriCorps encourages our staff, members, and community to receive these treatments, as available, to help limit and manage the transmission and impacts of this virus. Limiting the speed of disease transmission is a priority. Most COVID-19 patients will fully recover, however, there is a small risk of the disease being fatal, especially in elderly and immunocompromised individuals with lingering and potential, long-term consequences that are yet to be fully understood.

### Symptoms Compared to Other Common Conditions

Symptom	COVID-19	Common Cold	Flu	Allergies
<b>Fever</b>	<b>Common</b>	Rare	Common	Sometimes
<b>Dry Cough</b>	<b>Common</b>	Mild	Common	Sometimes
<b>Shortness of Breath</b>	<b>Common</b>	No	No	Common
<b>Headaches</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	Rare	Common	Sometimes
<b>Aches and Pains</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	Common	Common	No
<b>Sore Throat</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	Common	Common	No
<b>Fatigue</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
<b>Diarrhea</b>	<b>Rare</b>	No	Sometimes*	No
<b>Runny Nose</b>	<b>Rare</b>	Common	Sometimes	Common
<b>Sneezing</b>	No	Common	No	Common

\* Sometimes for children

Sources: CDC, WHO, American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

**The safety of our participants, staff, partners, and the communities we serve are of the utmost importance.** In response to COVID-19, CAC AmeriCorps continues to, work to identify changes necessary in program design, risk management, logistics, training, admin, and support of our members during their placement with partner organizations. These pandemic-specific policies and procedures will be kept up to date as federal, state, and/or local guidance evolves and as risks associated with COVID-19 are further clarified.

#### 5 Key Points

1. **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public space, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Alternately, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
2. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.
3. **Maintain social distancing** of 6' and avoid crowded places and mass gatherings.
4. **Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover** when around others. If you are in a private setting and do not have a cloth face cover, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
5. **Clean and disinfect frequently** touched surfaces daily.

**Areas of Concern:**

CAC AmeriCorps has a limited regional presence where our organization places members with service sites within our multi-county service area. CAC AmeriCorps' placements primarily involve individual placements but, in some cases, teams of up to 5 individuals for the 2021-2022 service year. Partners include local and federal government entities as well as non-profit organizations, many of which have their own policies and procedures addressing COVID-19. CAC AmeriCorps has several different areas of concern for COVID-19 infection among its staff, members, partners, and the general public.

Our response to this virus is expected to have both anticipated and unanticipated impacts beyond immediate health and safety concerns. Staff should be mindful of their decision making.

**Required Conditions for Operations**

All of the following conditions must be met for operations to resume and transition from existing remote service activities or telework/service.

- Applicable local, state and/or national restrictions allow resumption of activities per our program model. This would include restrictions allowing necessary travel, requirements regarding self-quarantine after traveling, social distancing, stay-at-home orders, among others.
- Local medical facilities have available capacity to handle any care resulting from program operations and our resumption of operations will not place an unnecessary additional burden on the local health care system.
- Partners approve of our operations resuming and can provide supportive service spaces for our members that allow for the program, hygiene, behavior, and communication mitigations expressed in this document.

Operations may be shifted to teleservice/work or suspended if any of the above conditions are no longer met.

**If You Feel Sick or Unsafe Stay Home and Contact CAC AmeriCorps**

If staff or members find themselves in circumstances where they are sick and displaying [symptoms of COVID-19](#) or if they are unsafe about the situation at a site, they should stay home and contact the CAC AmeriCorps Office at (865)546-3500.

## **Mitigation Approaches:** **Program**

### Partner Orientation

For the 2020-2021 service year, before members arrive, all partners will attend a newly updated partner orientation that will include information drawn from the *CAC AmeriCorps COVID-19 Management Plan*. Partners/host sites will be expected to agree with several core elements of this plan related to the 5 key points described on page 2 of this document.

### Pre-Screening, Monthly Health Reports, and Site-Specific Requirements

CAC AmeriCorps will work closely with incoming participants, pre-screen all participants, identify travel plans, and ensure that participants complete health check-ins on a monthly basis as part of the existing progress reporting process.

- Members will certify by signing the Member Service Agreement (MSA) that they are aware that the risks of contracting COVID-19 cannot be fully mitigated for and that they will adhere to the guidance of this document and any local, state, and federal requirements.
- Staff and participants will also carefully review and adhere to any local or state guidelines that are in place and work closely with partners if this guidance requires additional measures to be put in place.

### CAC AmeriCorps Staff Contact with Members / Corps Gatherings

CAC AmeriCorps traditionally brings large groups of individuals together from across the country to make differences in East Tennessee communities. As long as this document is in effect, physical interactions between staff, partners, and members will be scaled, until further notice, to reflect local, state, federal, and agency level guidance. This may involve in-person meetings with planned social distancing, meeting in smaller groups, and other measures.

- Staff will exercise social distancing with each other, partners, and members wearing cloth face coverings / masks when not securely distanced at their work space or alone in a vehicle.
- A maximum of 2 visitors may be physically present in the CAC AmeriCorps Office at any given time with face masks. It is important to communicate in-person visits with staff ahead of time to assure staff is available and prepared to host.
- Staff will pre-clean and post-clean surfaces anticipated and actually used by visitors.
- Site Visits that have historically been conducted in-person **may** be conducted utilizing a teleconferencing format if a suitable space is not available for an in-person visit. A suitable space must allow for social distancing and the wearing of face masks.
- All Corps Meetings that have historically been conducted in-person **may** be conducted utilizing a teleconferencing format.
- Orientation, that has traditionally involved significant in-person activities including overnight stays in dorm/camp-like settings will be held using a

hybrid format with a portion of material being presented online and a portion in smaller, in-person groups of 10 or fewer individuals.

- Days of Service, that have historically been composed of large physical/in-person service activities, will be broken up to be no larger than 10 people who will allow participants to physically distance from each other or alternatives that can be completed electronically. Under some circumstances, Days of Service **may** be made optional.
- CAC AmeriCorps members **will not** participate in sheltering operations in support of the American Red Cross during the 2021-2022 service year.

#### CAC AmeriCorps Vehicle Usage & POV Usage During Service

CAC AmeriCorps manages a small fleet of trucks, vans, and sedans for the purposes of CAC AmeriCorps and partner support. In addition, members and staff will often operate personal vehicles on behalf of the organization they are supporting.

- Only CAC AmeriCorps members and staff are allowed to operate CAC Vehicles.
- In all instances where vehicles (CAC and Personal) are being operated as part of the CAC AmeriCorps program, either by staff or members, vehicle occupants **will** wear face masks if there are 2 or more people.
- In addition, there should be no more than 2 occupants, per row, in any vehicle conducting activities on behalf of CAC AmeriCorps or site partners regardless of whether the vehicle is a truck, sedan, or van. This generally involves leaving the middle seat on a row vacant.
- Commonly touched surfaces within the interior of CAC AmeriCorps vehicles will be cleaned before and after every use using.

#### Modifications to Existing Policies Regarding Teleservice, Emergency Leave, Etc.

During the COVID-19 Event, CAC AmeriCorps has adapted its teleservice policy, emergency leave policy, and other policies to allow for the maximum flexibility provided by AmeriCorps and Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee in regards to these areas.

#### **Hygiene**

- Post informational posters on hand washing and infectious disease prevention in CAC AmeriCorps Office.
- Wash hands regularly with soap and warm water. Use hand sanitizer where hand washing stations are not available.
  - Make hand washing and sanitizer resources easily accessible in all areas of CAC AmeriCorps operation.
- Wash hands after using the restroom, interacting with others, touching common surfaces, and before eating, drinking, etc.
- Avoid touching your face without first washing your hands.
- Avoid common physical greetings such as shaking hands, hugging, etc.

- Limit social group sizes to 10 or fewer where possible.
- Sanitize common surfaces such as coffee pots, door knobs, faucets, public computers, etc. regularly.
  - CAC AmeriCorps office will sanitize common surfaces at the start of each business day as long as they remain open.
  - CAC AmeriCorps offices are cleaned regularly by professional cleaning staff.
- Sanitize fleet vehicles before and after use, particularly control interfaces, door handles, and armrests.
- Dispose of group event/project food that are no longer in their original sealed packaging after the event/project conclude. **Do not distribute leftovers to staff, participants, or the public.**



- In light of evidence that indicates asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic carriers of COVID-19 can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms, the CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public setting where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. CAC AmeriCorps members will be issued, washable, cloth face masks to wear at their site, in the community, and at all CAC AmeriCorps related activities.

- First aid equipment such as thermometers should be sanitized between each use to prevent the spread of disease between individuals.

### **Behavior:**

- Individuals showing symptoms of potential COVID-19 infection are advised to self-isolate to reduce the risk of spreading the disease to others, get tested, and follow the guidance of public health professionals.
  - In offices: Remote work/service is advisable where practical. CAC AmeriCorps is temporarily modifying its sick leave policy so that individuals too ill to perform their service are not adversely affected.
- Unnecessary travel should be avoided wherever possible.
  - Office Staff: Postpone non-essential meetings or conduct them via phone or web conference.
- Avoid activities and behaviors that may weaken your immune system such as lack of sleep and excessive alcohol consumption.

- Avoid or use additional precautions when visiting public gathering spaces.
  - Travel to gathering spaces should be limited to the essential - procuring food and medicine, attending doctor appointments, etc.
- Stagger operations to minimize the number of individuals simultaneously working in the same space.
- If Covid-19 continues to spread CAC AmeriCorps may consider temporarily suspending or modifying operations in areas deemed to be high risk. Be advised that this is a dynamic situation and mitigation measures will be modified as appropriate.

**Communication:**

- CAC AmeriCorps originally presented this COVID-19 Management Plan to the CAC AmeriCorps Advisory Committee composed of partners, alums, second year members, and members of the community we serve to secure input on the document.
- CAC AmeriCorps has made significant investments in electronic communication infrastructure to mitigate for in-person exposures to staff, members, and the communities we serve. This includes access for all members to the Basecamp communication platform to help strengthen distance-based communication systems as well as Zoom web meeting systems.
- In all cases, CAC AmeriCorps messaging will emphasize the importance of basic hygiene, social distancing, and similar mitigation approaches to managing COVID-19.
- Suspected and confirmed COVID-19 infections among staff and members will be reported to CAC Human Resources.
- If a member or staff is confirmed to have COVID-19, CAC AmeriCorps will inform fellow employees, members, partners, and other community members, as necessary, of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and (HIPAA)
- CAC AmeriCorps has conducted all-staff briefings on this management plan where the plan is reviewed, questions may be asked, and suggestions for improvement can be made.

**Ongoing Action Items:**

- **For Office Locations**
  - Procure and make available the following to staff and members, as needed:
    - CDC Approved Disinfectant Supplies
    - Cloth Face Masks
  - Schedule staff briefing on Covid-19 management plan.

- Schedule CAC AmeriCorps Advisory Committee and Staff briefing on COVID-19 management plan.
    - Collect feedback and questions.
    - Conduct staff briefings on regular basis as situation develops
  - Maintain CDC informational posters in conspicuous locations.
    - Print in color for increased visibility.
  - Daily wipe down/sanitization of shared surfaces at close of business.
  - Dispose of excess food from project and group events - do not distribute or reuse.
  - Continue to use Basecamp & Zoom communication tool.
- **For CAC AmeriCorps Partner Locations**
- Have members familiarize themselves with the local Agency management plan.
  - Share and encourage best practices as appropriate.
  - Solicit and forward feedback and questions to the Human Resources Director.
- **For Vehicles**
- Procure and utilize CDC approved cleaning materials regularly.

## Appendix A. Use of Cloth Face Coverings

# Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

## How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings

Cloth face coverings should—

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

## CDC on Homemade Cloth Face Coverings

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

## Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How regularly?

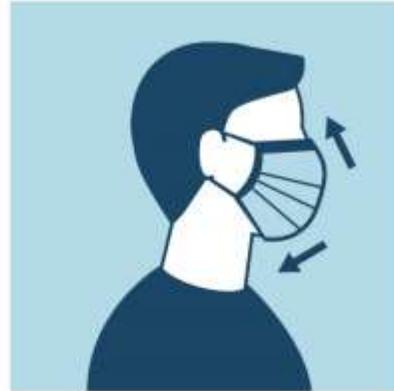
Yes. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.

## How does one safely sterilize/clean a cloth face covering?

A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a cloth face covering.

## How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their cloth face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.



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[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)