Communicating COVID-19 exposure to members of the NAU Community

All supervisors are strongly encouraged to share the message below with all employees in their units (this message is also on the NAU HR COVID-19 Site).

NAU is working to help protect the health and safety of each member of our campus community. Because COVID-19 is impacting everyone’s daily lives, it is important that all NAU employees be aware of the protocols NAU has put into place, including how employees will be informed of positive tests in their area. NAU has adopted many measures to mitigate the risk to our community, including:

- Adopting the NAUFlex model of instruction;
- Requiring employees and students to wear masks;
- Promulgating guidelines on physical distancing on campus and in our buildings;
- Requesting that everyone frequently wash their hands in accordance with CDC guidelines; and
- Ensuring thorough cleaning of common spaces.

Because we all need to help protect our campus and community, all employees (including student-employees) are required to immediately report to their supervisor any situation where an employee’s close personal contact (e.g., household member, intimate partner, or caretaker) has symptoms and is awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test, or has tested positive for COVID-19. All employees are also required to immediately report to their supervisor and via the Covid-19 Reporting Form if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, have symptoms and are awaiting the results of a test for COVID-19, or have tested positive for COVID-19. Health and safety information for our students can be found at the Covid-19 Student Health and Safety site.

Campus Health Services (CHS), will provide supervisors with information regarding employees who are experiencing symptoms or who have tested positive for COVID-19. Campus Health or the Coconino County Health Services Department will also provide supervisors with appropriate guidance about notifying an employee of any potential exposure to another individual who has symptoms of COVID-19, or who has tested positive for COVID-19. Supervisors are not to conduct their own investigations, and should communicate with their own supervisors regarding any concerns that arise.

All emails sent to COVIDReport@nau.edu are reviewed by CHS. CHS has investigators who are working closely with the Coconino County Health and Human Services Department to conduct exposure investigations whenever an individual member of our campus receives a positive test. This collaboration with the County is intended to ensure consistency in providing the necessary notifications to individuals who might have been exposed to COVID-19. In each situation, CHS or the County will therefore contact any member of our campus community who—pursuant to the guidelines from the CDC—might have been exposed to an employee, student, or any member of the community who tested positive for COVID-19.

Importantly, to comply with all relevant privacy laws and to maintain appropriate confidentiality, no personal or identifying information will be shared with others in the workplace unless necessary to protect the health and wellness of the NAU community.

Also importantly, if a co-worker is not in the workplace, or is working remotely (even temporarily), employees should not assume that the co-worker either has tested positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to COVID-19. While some co-workers might be working remotely because they are self-isolating (such as when a family member is awaiting test results), other co-workers may be working remotely because they have an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or they may be working remotely because their supervisor has arranged for telework to help promote physical distancing on campus (examples include staggered schedules or having employees temporarily work in another location).