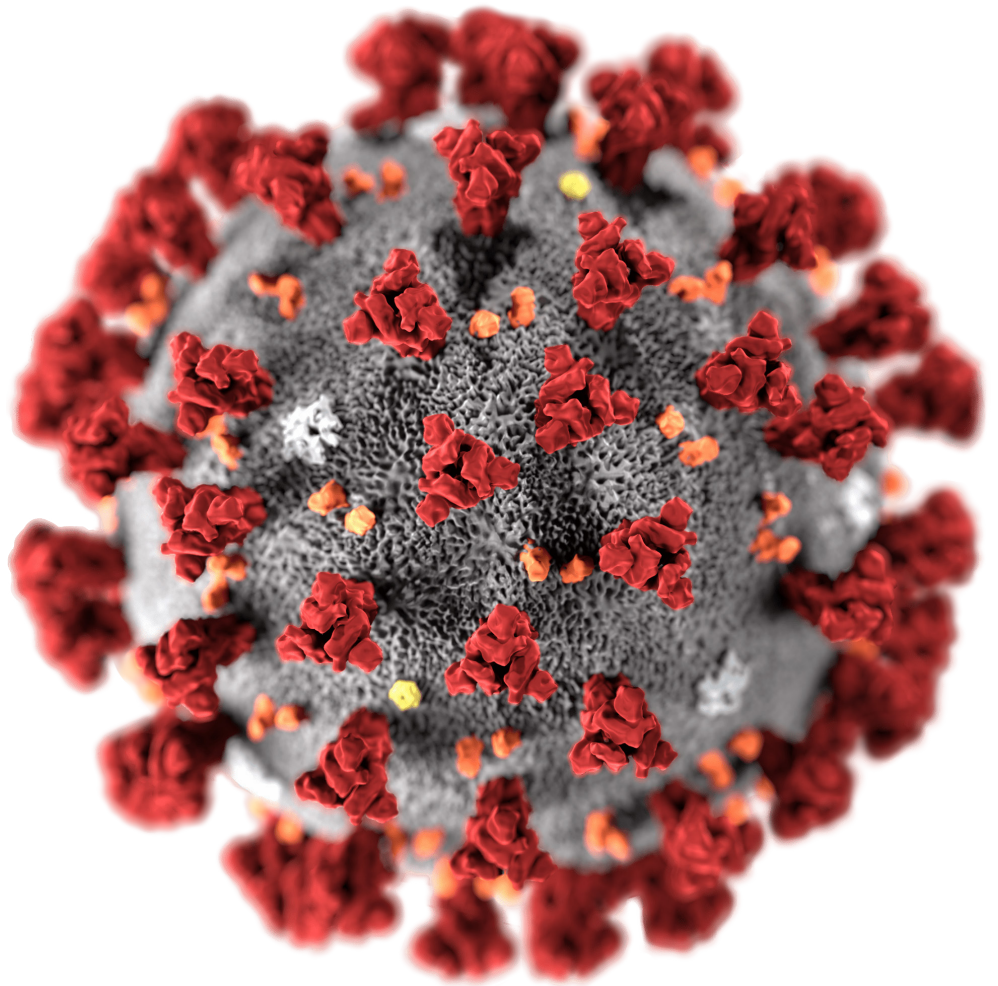


The Coronavirus:

What Employers Should Know

February 2, 2020



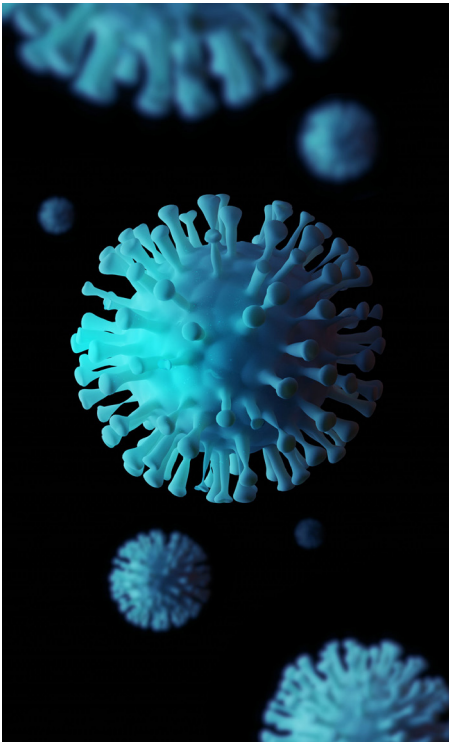
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The Coronavirus: What Employers Should Know

Employers must contend with many issues that occur outside of the workplace and out of their control. The outbreak of the Coronavirus is a perfect example of why every employer should have a pandemic preparedness program in place for the safety of their employees. With the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus, ReedGroup is providing this information to support its clients in responding to this major health event.



Background

The Coronavirus is a respiratory illness whose origins can be found in a large family of viruses common to different species of animals. Unfortunately, this species of virus can also affect humans. The Novel Coronavirus "2019-nCoV" is currently responsible for the outbreak of illness that was first discovered in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.

The virus is spread from person-to-person contact and currently those most at risk are people who have traveled from China within the last 21 days. Several cases of 2019-nCoV have been reported in the US, the majority of which have been imported. However, that is changing daily and it is important that employers and employees continue to monitor the CDC website and information for updated reports and any changes to quarantine protocols.



What ReedGroup is Doing

ReedGroup will be working with its clients to ensure employees who are facing concerns regarding the Coronavirus are appropriately advised to contact their health care provider and routed to their employer representative for information regarding applicable leave laws or pay policies.

ReedGroup is sharing this information in conjunction with the leave management services it provides to its clients. ReedGroup is not engaged in rendering public health activities or services and is only providing this in response to the health risks this event may pose to its client's employee population.

How Should Employers Respond?

Employers should remain current on the facts and risks of 2019-nCoV by logging into the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

They should also communicate this information to its employees and refer them to the CDC website for ongoing guidance.

The CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to the impacted regions. Employers should review their travel requirements and determine if it's necessary at this time. Using sensitivity and good judgement, employers may encourage employees who have recently returned or been in contact with persons returning from the impacted regions, to follow the CDC guidelines on how to reduce the risk of spreading the illness.

Employers should assess exposure risks on a case-by-case basis. Again, using sensitivity and good judgment, to determine if an employee needs to remain out of the workplace for the 14-day incubation period. An employer may want to review its virtual or work from home policies to see if they would be applicable for these situations.

It is important that cases be assessed individually and that any employer protocols be implemented consistently across the organization. The employee may be entitled to certain protected leaves under the law and the company's own internal leave programs, so a thorough review of the applicable leave policies should be conducted.



Respect for the employee's privacy is also very important, so any applicable policies in this regard should be reviewed as well.

There are also legal implications. Employees impacted by the virus, may be entitled to protections under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as myriad state and municipal leave laws. The employer's human resources and legal departments should be engaged to review its leave policies to determine the protections impacted employees may have.

As events continue to change and as more information develops, employers should remain current by referencing the Centers for Disease Control website as often as possible.

For More Information

General Information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019>

Travel Advisories:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019/travelers/communication-resources.html>

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