

From: Thiede, Kurt <thiede.kurt@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 4:06 PM
To: R5 ALL EPA <R5_ALL_EPA@epa.gov>
Cc: Newton, Cheryl <Newton.Cheryl@epa.gov>; Sanders, Amy <Sanders.Amy@epa.gov>; Liebau, Joseph <Liebau.Joseph@epa.gov>
Subject: Region 5 COVID-19 Update

Dear Region 5 colleagues,

I want to share some important updates with you. As of today, Region 5 has had three reported incidents of potential exposure to COVID-19. The first employee reported that they had potential exposure in their community to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 over the weekend; the employee is experiencing flu-like symptoms as of today. The other two employees self-reported that an immediate family member and/or individual they had potential contact with had a cough or flu-like symptoms. All employees have not returned to the office since reporting their situations. We are asking anyone who was in close proximity (within 6 feet) of the employees to continue teleworking and self-monitor for symptoms. If these employees identify you as someone they were in contact with, we will be reaching out to you to inform you and to encourage you to continue teleworking and following the CDC guidance about COVID-19 to prevent illness and recognize symptoms, including practicing good hygiene and social distancing whether at work or home.

While, as of today, **we don't have confirmation that any employee, contractor, or enrollee in the Chicago Regional Office has been diagnosed with COVID-19, we continue to encourage everyone to telework.** If you have questions or concerns, speak with your supervisor and please continue to review and follow the CDC guidance about COVID-19 to prevent illness and recognize symptoms, including practicing good hygiene and social distancing whether at work or home.

Also, I wanted to highlight the EPA intranet site with coronavirus guidance and information - ><https://workplace.epa.gov/covid19/index.html><. I encourage everyone to bookmark and check this site regularly, as materials are updated daily, including over the weekend. Yesterday, EPA posted a Frequently Asked Questions document. We will continue to share new information as it becomes available.

We know these are challenging and uncertain times. We recognize this is a quickly evolving situation and appreciate the information that staff are providing their supervisors about potential exposures or diagnoses. This information will continue to be managed confidentially. Please stay in touch with your supervisor and consider taking advantage of the EPA's employee assistance program, at the EAP website at ><http://intranet.epa.gov/ohr/benefits/eap/index.htm>< or call (888) 635-3202, which provides a variety of resources to you covering health, wellness, financial, resilience, and emotional well-being.

Thank you for your continued to commitment and resilience.

Sincerely,

Kurt

Kurt A. Thiede
Regional Administrator
U.S. EPA Region 5
[77 W Jackson Blvd](#)
[Chicago, IL 60604](#)
(312) 886-3000
thiede.kurt@epa.gov

