

**Subject: Coronavirus Update #6**  
**Sent: Tuesday, March 4, 2020 8:03 PM**  
**From: Wendy Bringas On Behalf Of Bo Boulenger**  
**To: DG-BHSF Everyone; DG-BT Everyone Automated**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Florida Department of Health has announced there are three cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in our state— two in Hillsborough County and one in Manatee County. In total, the number of COVID-19 cases in the U.S. has surpassed 100. As we continue to closely follow the latest information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), I want to provide an update.

**Clinical Guidance:**

While there have not been any presumed positive cases in Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward or Palm Beach counties, this is an evolving situation and we continue to follow the CDC's guidance to ensure we are taking all the measures necessary to protect our patients and our employees and their families.

Baptist Health will continue to provide the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees who are providing direct patient care, including N 95 respirators for those with cases that require the use of specialized respiratory protection. Baptist Health currently has adequate supplies of PPE in stock; however, it is important to help conserve this supply. Only employees who require this protection should be using it; and these items should not be taken home.

Our Emergency Preparedness team, led by Luis Collado, have updated our PPE training and guidance for all staff and are conducting "train the trainer" sessions this week. In addition, the course material will be available online through BHU beginning tomorrow.

While some of our laboratory testing panels do include diagnostic tests for certain coronaviruses (which can be quite common), currently, only the Department of Health can test for COVID-19. We use the attached screening guidelines from the CDC and the Florida Department of Health to identify patients who may need to be tested. The protocol is to immediately notify the Department of Health when patients who may meet the testing criteria arrive at our facilities; and the Department of Health determines whether a patient gets tested. If the patient does not require hospitalization, per CDC guidelines, the patient may be asked to self-quarantine at home under the guidance and monitoring of the Department of Health.

**Patient Privacy:**

As news about COVID-19 continues to evolve, we know that many in our community and around the country are anxious for additional information. It is important for us all to remember the importance of maintaining our patients' privacy and confidentiality. At no time should any matters relating to our patients be discussed outside of patient care. This is our obligation under HIPAA and privacy breaches will not be tolerated.

**Occupational Health Screening Process:**

Employees, volunteers, students, contractors or members of the medical staff who have been in contact with someone who is either suspected to have or confirmed to have

COVID-19 or are returning from travel to **China, South Korea, Italy, Iran or Japan** ([countries included in the Level 3 & 2 Travel Health Notice, per the CDC](#)), must stay home and call Baptist Health's Occupational Health Office immediately at (786) 596-2345. To ensure a safe working environment for everyone, those who are returning from travel to the above named countries will be removed from work for 14 calendar days and will need to receive clearance from Occupational Health before reporting to work. Please note that any travel to countries listed on the CDC's Travel Health Notice is discouraged.

Please note that changes to this process may take place according to CDC and/or State Department recommendations, so please continue to pay close attention to all Baptist Health communications on the matter. You may also email [EmployeeCVInfo@baptisthealth.net](mailto:EmployeeCVInfo@baptisthealth.net), a confidential inbox for employees' personal health concerns specific to coronavirus.

**Additional Resources:**

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the [CDC website](#). In addition, CDC guidance for healthcare professionals can be found [here](#). You can also click on the banner on the Baptist Health intranet page, and on Baptist Health's [Resource blog](#).

I will continue to provide important updates with you as needed. Any other communication to employees, medical staff or the public about this issue must go through our Corporate Marketing & Communications Department and our Coronavirus taskforce leaders: Dr. Mark Hauser, Dr. John Braden, Faith Solkoff, Luis Collado and Anexis Lopez.

Thank you for your ongoing attention and cooperation.

**Bo Boulenger**

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