

# Covid-19 Resources for UIC Employees - January 2022

Please note that this guide was compiled by SEIU 73 Union Stewards for the purpose of advising and assisting members in navigating COVID19 concerns in their worksite at UIC. As the pandemic continues, some of these guidelines, policies, and recommendations may change. We will always strive to provide up to date information for members.

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## What to do if you have a COVID19 Related Concern

“Respect Us. Protect Us. Pay Us.” It’s been more than a year since our historic strike and our demands haven’t changed. As COVID numbers continue to spike at UIC, the University has placed the blame for this on its own employees, citing holiday parties and community transmission. Yet in many places, UIC has failed to provide social distancing, refused work from home and failed to do proper temperature and Covid-19 screenings. It’s important for employees to know what to do to protect ourselves, our coworkers, and our families. It’s time that we work together and make sure our voices are heard.

If you have a concern about the disaster pay or a safety issue in your department, you need to do three things:

**1) Educate** - Familiarize yourself with policies & practices. Use the resources linked in this guide to get started.

**2) Document** - Write everything down.

- Use the [Covid Tracking Form](#) to report problems. *(Note: This form is for SEIU’s informational purposes only., Personal information will not be shared with UIC. SEIU will use this information to track safety concerns across the campus. This form does not replace grievances, or seek to provide immediate assistance)*
- File a complaint with the Illinois Department of Public Health ([IDPH](#)). *(Note: If patient safety is threatened; examples include an overwhelmed Emergency Department and unsafe staffing levels)*
- File a complaint with Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)).
- Report inappropriate manager conduct by filling out this form [here](#) ([En español](#)).

**3) Advocate** - Take steps with your coworkers to fight back against unsafe and unfair practices in your department. Here are some tips to get you started:

- *Make demands in writing.* Send emails and letters to your leadership team about your concerns.

- *Be proactive!* Don't wait to reach out to your manager about a problem.
- *Consider the 3 Ws.* **W**hat is the problem? **W**hy does it matter? **W**hat should be done about it?
- *Be specific.* Broad and general statements are not as powerful as detailed reasoning and personal testimony.
- *Work together.* Encourage your coworkers to sign onto emails before you send. This helps show strength, unity and coordination, which makes all the difference in a worksite issue fight.

Right now it is crucial that we all advocate for our own safety.

### Explaining the Internal Disaster Differential: UI Health

Please read UI Health's communication about the Internal Disaster Differential [here](#) for a more detailed explanation. Both differentials are *in addition* to the negotiated pay differentials in the contract.

To qualify for Disaster pay, you need to meet the following criteria:

1. Be assigned to work in person at the UI Health Hospital or Clinics.
2. You must be providing direct clinical and patient care services, or interacting with patients in a clinical setting. Clinical care for the purpose of these differentials may include such activities as face-to-face contact with patients, direct contact with patient specimens, bedside patient duties, assistance in patient procedures, moving patients between rooms, interactions with patients in patient rooms, and front desk duties involving face-to-face interactions with patients.
3. Hours worked must fall within the dates specified below.

Note: Any **College of Medicine & College of Dentistry** employee *assigned to work in a UI Health Hospital or Clinic* is also entitled to the same disaster pay retroactive to December 26th 2021.

Employee groups providing clinical patient care services on-site	Differential for Reassignment	Differential for Clinical Patient Care/Services	Dates eligible for differential (including retroactive pay)
Non-Exempt (hourly) SEIU	\$3.00	\$5.00	12/26/21 to 2/5/22
Non-Exempt (hourly) Respiratory Therapists	\$3.00	\$10.00	12/26/21 to 2/5/22
Exempt (salaried) SEIU – Max Rates	\$240/bw	\$400/bw	12/26/21 to 2/5/22
Building Service Workers & Housekeepers assigned to work in UI Health Hospital/Clinics	\$3.00	\$5.00	1/9/22 to 2/5/22

**If you meet the above criteria and are NOT getting disaster pay**, the first step is to reach out to your direct supervisor/leader and your HR representative. Share the definition above with them, and explain how your work fits under the definition above. If you don't get a response, or if your supervisor/leader is still denying

you disaster pay, then reach out to your Union Rep or a Union Steward - look at the [UIC Updates page](#) for contact information if you need it.

## Temporary Covid-19 Paid Leave

Read the full explanation of policy on UIC's website [here](#).

From October 1st 2021 until further notice, UIC is providing a limited amount of paid leave for employees who meet the following criteria:

1. Employee is subject to a Federal, State, or local isolation order. For the purposes of this leave, isolation uses the definition from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and means when the employee has been infected with the virus, even if they don't have symptoms.
2. Employee is obtaining a COVID-19 vaccination, including vaccine boosters;
3. Employee is recovering from any injury, disability, illness, or condition related to the vaccination.

To apply for this leave, you need to [fill out this form](#) and send it to the HR Office/Leave Office corresponding to your campus.

Chicago: 312-413-3490 or [uichrleaves@uillinois.edu](mailto:uichrleaves@uillinois.edu)

UI Hospital & Health Sciences System: [uihloa@uic.edu](mailto:uihloa@uic.edu)

## Familiarize yourself with the Centers Disease Control Prevention Guidelines & Definitions

Like many employers, UIC is referring to the [latest guidelines from the CDC](#) in determining Covid-19 safety protocols and responses. If there is a safety concern in your area, your first step should be to look at the latest CDC guidelines. If you identify specific guidelines that are not being followed, we encourage you to bring those safety concerns to the attention of your direct supervisor/leader. Be sure to fill out the [Covid Tracking Form](#) as well (you can fill out more than once). Also report safety issues and violations to the Illinois Department of Public Health ([IDPH](#)) and [OSHA](#).

Each Covid-19 case has specific circumstances, so the response procedure may vary case to case. That's why it's important to understand the difference between the terms "Quarantine" and "Isolation" as defined by the CDC so you can understand for yourself what the appropriate next step may be.

- If you were in close contact with someone who has confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19, follow the University Health Services (UHS) guidelines for testing and [Quarantine](#) orders. Employee Testing Centers do not require an appointment.
- If you test positive for Covid-19, [Isolate](#) as instructed by UHS and CDC guidelines.

## Proactively Communicate with [University Health Services](#)

If you are experiencing symptoms, make sure that you go directly to University Health Services to get tested. In order to receive additional paid leave, you need to have a work status report from UHS ordering

you to isolate or quarantine. It is important that you also continue to follow your department sick leave policy as stated at the bottom of your Work Status Report.

If you have health related concerns about any of the decisions from UHS, contact your Primary Care Provider (PCP) for assistance. If you are being ordered to return to work, but are still experiencing symptoms or new members of your household have tested positive, follow up with your PCP. If your PCP orders you to isolate or quarantine longer, be sure to submit that information to UHS immediately and fill out the union's [Covid Tracking Form](#).

If you do not have symptoms, but there have been recent exposures or outbreaks of Covid-19 in your work area, be proactive and go take a saliva test. Find information for saliva testing at UIC [here](#).

### Teleworking & Rotational Shifts

Again, know the CDC guidelines for social distancing and enforce those guidelines in your department. If employees are not able to properly social distance in your office, then reach out to the leader/supervisor in your area and advocate for your department to return to teleworking and/or a rotating shift schedule. If your department violates the CDC guidelines for social distancing, fill out the [Covid Tracking Form](#) and report the matter to [IDPH](#) and [OSHA](#).

Read the University's Telecommute guidelines [here](#) (Note: UIC Login credentials required).

### Other Links & Resources

- [Report an issue with your manager to the union using the Manager Conduct Report Form](#)
- [Report an issue to the Environmental Health & Safety Office at UIC](#)
- [File an OSHA Complaint](#)
- [File an IDPH Complaint](#)
- [Illinois Department of Public Health mental health resources](#)
- [Contact Information for the Illinois Department of Public Health](#)
- <https://www.findhelp.org/>
- [Employee Assistance Program Health Resource](#)