

2 April 2020

Preserving the privacy and confidentiality of COVID-19 infected UN personnel and dependents

As described in the document on “Instructions for reporting COVID-19 cases https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/coronavirus_casereporting_requirements_2020-03.pdf”, personal details on COVID-19 infected individuals and their dependents must remain **strictly confidential**. Their confidentiality must also be maintained while performing contact ¹*tracing. UN medical personnel performing contact tracing will disclose the minimum amount of information to achieve the objective of the contact tracing.

Known contacts are informed that they may have come into contact with a COVID-19+ individual and through what outlet (e.g. workplace, school, work, concert, etc.). UN Medical personnel should be aware of local Public Health reporting requirements of COVID 19+ cases. If required, only basic patient information will be released to the local public health authorities.

In making any public announcement of COVID-19+ cases involving UN personnel or their dependents, managers must avoid releasing any information until the affected staff members and their contacts are themselves first notified. Care must be taken to not release any personal details that would allow these individuals and their dependents to be identified.

Staff members who through a third party or other means become aware of the identity of a colleague infected with COVID-19 are required to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the affected staff member. Infected individuals as well as their families whose identity has been revealed through rumours and hearsay may suffer from stigmatisation, causing them additional unnecessary distress. Staff members who have been identified as close contacts of an infected individual **do not** require to know the identity of that individual to protect themselves. They should follow the personal hygiene protective measures recommended and quarantine or isolate themselves as directed by health officials.

¹ *: A “close” contact is a person who experienced any one of the following exposures during the 2 days before and the 14 days after the onset of symptoms of a probable or confirmed COVID-19 + case.

1. Face-to-face contact with a probable or confirmed case within 1 meter and for more than 15 minutes.
2. Direct care for a patient with probable or confirmed COVID-19 disease without using proper personal protective equipment
4. Staying in the same close environment as a COVID-19 patient for any amount of time. This includes sharing a workplace, classroom or household or being at the same gathering.
5. Other situations as indicated by local risk assessments.