

April 28, 2023

To Department Heads and
Department Heads within the Administrative Bureau

Executive Vice President (for Education and Student Support)
Executive Vice President
(For Human Resources, Personnel Administration, Environmental Security and Facilities)

Notification about how Tohoku University will respond to the change in the legal status of
COVID-19 under the Infectious Diseases Act as of May 8

On March 14, we sent a notification entitled 'Notification about how Tohoku University will respond to the change in the legal status of COVID-19 under the Infectious Diseases Act'. This notification stated that the Japanese government had decided that, as of May 8, COVID-19 would be downgraded and be classified as a 'Category V' infectious disease like seasonal influenza.

What follows are details of how those at Tohoku University should act if they fall ill after May 8. Please inform all those within your department of these changes.

Furthermore, we are approaching Golden Week, when people move about much more than normal, so we would like to ask everyone to keep in mind the basic measures to help prevent the spread of infection that are appropriate depending on the situation.

1. How those who fall ill after May 8 should act

(1) Those who have tested positive (including instances where individuals have tested positive using a self-test):

In principle, those who test positive can decide for themselves whether they should refrain from going outside; the measures indicated on the next page are recommended.

Period during which those who are infected are recommended to refrain from going outside

Because the risk of infecting others is especially high for the first five days after the onset of symptoms, infected individuals should refrain from going outside for five days (*2), with the day on which symptoms first appeared being considered as Day 0 (*1), and

If the individual still displays symptoms on Day 5, they should refrain from going outside until a further 24 hours have passed after their condition has finally improved (their fever has subsided, their throat is no longer sore, they are no longer coughing up phlegm, etc.). Those with severe symptoms should consult a doctor.

(*1) If the individual is asymptomatic, the date of their sample being collected should be considered Day 0.

(*2) If you have no choice but to go outside during this period, ensure that you have no symptoms and wear a mask while out.

How should those who become infected act around other people?

Until 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms, there remains the possibility that those who were infected can infect others, so care should be taken not to spread an infection to anyone else. Nonwoven fabric masks should be worn and anyone recently infected should refrain from coming into contact with those at a high risk of becoming gravely ill, such as the elderly.

If, after 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms, anyone who has been infected is still displaying signs of being infected, such as coughing and sneezing, they should be considerate to others by, for instance, wearing a mask.

What should university employees do about attending work?

It is recommended that employees refrain from coming to work during the 'Period during which those who are infected are recommended to refrain from going outside' indicated above.

What should students do about attending the university?

In accordance with the School Health and Safety Act, infected students will be suspended from attending the university until five days have passed since the onset of symptoms and one day has passed since their symptoms have subsided.

Students who do not consult a medical institution and who determine by themselves that they are positive using, for example, a home testing kit, will be considered to have tested positive. Therefore, a certificate from a medical institution is not necessary in respect of being suspended from attending.

As much as possible, consideration will be given to students with respect to classes, etc. (including regular examinations) during the suspension period. Please consult with the teacher in charge or the appropriate academic affairs office.

(2) Instances other than those indicated in the above '(1) Those who have tested positive'

In principle, it is up to the individual who feels ill to decide for themselves whether they should stay at home, but it is recommended that they refrain from coming to the university if they have symptoms.

The guidelines with respect to returning are that individuals with symptoms should wait until they have recovered (their fever has subsided, their throat is no longer sore, they are no longer coughing up phlegm, etc.)

(3) The 'Flow Chart of Measures to Combat the New Coronavirus (for those in poor health)' and the Q&A for those who are infected with the Coronavirus

The following will no longer be in effect after May 7:

- Flow Chart of Measures to Combat the New Coronavirus (for those in poor health) (revised on April 1, 2023)
- The Q&A for those who are infected with the Coronavirus (revised on September 26, 2022)
- The Q&A on masks, the reporting of positive cases, close contacts (added on March 14, 2023)

From May 8, 2023, please refer to these documents instead:

(Attachment 1) Flow Chart of Measures to Combat the New Coronavirus (for those in poor health) (May 8, 2023)

(Attachment 2) The Q&A for those who are infected with the Coronavirus (May 8, 2023; in Japanese only)

2. What individuals should do if someone who lives with them tests positive

From May 8, close contacts will not need to be identified, so even if someone within the same household tests positive, it will be up to the individual to decide whether or not to refrain from going outside. The following measures are recommended:

If someone living with you tests positive, please stay in separate rooms if possible, and ensure that only a few people take care of the ill individual.

If you go outside, be especially aware of how you are feeling for the following five days, with the day on which the individual first tested positive being regarded as Day 0.

Since it is possible for symptoms to develop as late as the seventh day, in addition to taking basic measures to help prevent the spread of infection during this period, such as by washing hands and maintaining ventilation, nonwoven fabric masks should be worn and anyone recently infected should refrain from coming into contact with those at a high risk of becoming gravely ill, such as the elderly. If you have any symptoms, refer to how you should respond if you were to have tested positive.

3. Measures to help prevent the spread of infection

In terms of basic measures to help prevent the spread of infection, we continue to recommend ventilation, maintaining a distance from other people, avoiding the 3 C's, and the washing and disinfecting of hands, etc.

If you come into contact with elderly people or individuals with chronic illnesses who are at high risk of becoming gravely ill, be even more stringent in taking measures to help prevent the spread of infection.

Please refer to the information flyer (Attachment 3).

4. Other matters

With respect to the wearing of masks, etc., every individual's judgment with regard to this matter should be respected within each department.

If there are any changes to the content of this notice, a separate notification will be issued.

A separate notification will be issued with respect to the hiring of employees.

For your reference:

Notification about how Tohoku University will respond to the change in the legal status of COVID-19 under the Infectious Diseases Act (March 14, 2023)

https://www.tohoku.ac.jp/japanese/newimg/newsimg/news20230314_notification_en.pdf

From the MHLW: Q&A about medical treatment following the changes in effect from May 8 under the Infectious Diseases Act (in Japanese)

<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/001087451.pdf>

Contact details for the above matters

For employees:

Safety and Health Management Section

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For students:

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