

## **Students' Rights & Responsibilities for Clinical Placements: COVID19 Pandemic**

All University of Delaware students who are going into a clinical placement during the COVID19 pandemic have rights and will be treated fairly whether or not they choose to enter into the placement; but they also have a responsibility to adhere to guidelines of their respective clinical program if they do choose to enter into the placement. The rights and responsibilities listed in this document are specific to the current circumstances of the COVID19 pandemic and are in addition to the typical rights and responsibilities a student would have going into any clinical placement.

### **Student Rights**

The University is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under local, state and federal law. All students have the right to defer their clinical placements in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The University will work with students who elect to defer their clinical placements to help them complete their academic requirements in an efficient way. Deferring a clinical placement may delay graduation. In order to determine whether they should defer their clinical placements, students should be aware of the following:

1. There is a risk of contracting COVID-19 while in a clinical setting. The most effective way to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 is to engage in appropriate physical distancing measures as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). In a clinical setting, the most effective way to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 is by wearing properly Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and engaging in other measures recommended by the CDC.
2. COVID-19 affects people in different ways, but generally the symptoms of COVID-19 may include fever, cough, difficulty breathing and a new loss of the sense of taste and sense of smell.
3. Even young, healthy individuals may experience serious consequences from COVID-19 including hospitalization, the need for a ventilator and potentially death. Individuals with pre-existing conditions may be at greater risk for serious complications from COVID-19 including death. Students should consult with their treating physician if they have pre-existing health conditions or any questions about their individual risks regarding COVID-19.

In addition, to promote a safe and healthy clinical experience during this pandemic, if students voluntarily choose to participate in their clinical placement at this time, they have the right to:

1. Participate in proper training and have access to appropriate PPE and supplies specific to COVID-19 pandemic for the clinical environment in which they are assigned. Such training shall be documented by the clinical site and the University.
2. Expect that the training site for their clinical placement adheres to all applicable federal, state and local laws, as well as CDC guidance, concerning patient-provider interactions during this pandemic.
3. Ensure personal safety within the clinical learning environment and have access to site-specific information that can reasonably inform such decisions regarding personal safety.
4. Communicate concerns regarding safety practices at a given clinical site to the Department/School course instructor and/or clinical coordinator such that action and/or

resolution can occur in a timely fashion. Interruptions in matriculation will follow established program policies that govern interruptions or disruptions in timely progression.

5. Choose to participate, refuse or terminate placement at an assigned clinical site which they feel is a danger to their personal safety. Students may defer placement altogether until a later date for personal health and safety reasons (including family/household member issues). Students will not incur academic penalty or adverse action if the refusal or self-termination decision occurs while in good academic standing (prior to or during the experience) for reasons directly related to maintenance of personal safety.
6. Re-assignment at a different clinical facility as permissible by program policy and procedures in qualifying situations as noted above. All effort will be made to resume clinical training at a time coinciding with the next clinical start date, if not sooner. Students must understand that while every effort will be made for rapid return to a clinical placement, refusal and/or termination may delay matriculation and/or graduation.
7. Be informed by the facility of a change in health status (i.e. testing positive for COVID-19) of any patient with whom the student has been in direct contact.

### **Student Responsibilities**

All University students have the responsibility to:

1. Be aware of the manner in which COVID-19 is transmitted and take appropriate steps to minimize the risk to themselves and their patients/clients.
2. Be aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and risks posed if one contracts COVID-19.
3. Be aware of the availability of COVID-19 vaccines and their eligibility to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, as well as any risks associated with the vaccine.
4. Provide maximal patient/client safety by adhering to the highest level of physical distancing, travel restrictions and pathogen risk reduction outside of clinical practice.
5. Disclose any travel that potentially jeopardizes the intent of physical distancing guidance.
6. Adhere to Centers for Disease Control guidelines for use of PPE in the clinical setting. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>.
7. Immediately communicate concerns regarding safety practices at a given clinical site to their department/school's course instructor and/or clinical coordinator.
8. Report to the Department/School course instructor and clinical coordinator if they have COVID-19 symptoms and/or have been exposed to persons with COVID-19, whether in the clinical setting or other environment. If this occurs, students should follow the current public health department protocol for COVID-19 exposures which may require the student to quarantine.
9. Comply with all applicable policies, procedures, and rules of the clinical site/facility, including those temporarily in place due to the pandemic, which may include pre-screening for fever and other symptoms prior to entering the clinical site/facility.
10. Make arrangements for a location where the student can self-quarantine for 14 days if potentially exposed to COVID-19.

I have read this statement of Students' Rights & Responsibilities for Clinical Placements: COVID-19 Pandemic and understand the information conveyed in it. I have raised any questions I have prior to signing.

Please initial one of the options and then sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to defer my clinical placement.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to move forward with my clinical placement at this time. I understand the risks associated with being in a clinical setting at this time and understand I may withdraw from my placement as outlined above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date