



Return to Work Recommendations for Non-Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19

Who this is for: Employers, employees and public health officials making decisions about non-healthcare personnel returning to work who have been diagnosed with a confirmed case of COVID-19, or who have a suspected case of COVID-19 (e.g., developed cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fever), but did not get tested or who are awaiting test results.

Symptomatic persons with confirmed COVID-19 can return to work after:

- At least 24 hours have passed since recovery, which is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath and others); **and**
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Asymptomatic persons with confirmed COVID-19 can return to work after:

- At least 10 days have passed since the positive laboratory test and the person remains asymptomatic.
- Asymptomatic persons who test positive and later develop symptoms should follow the guidance for symptomatic persons listed above.

Symptomatic persons with suspected COVID-19 who did NOT get tested can return to work after:

- At least 24 hours have passed since recovery, which is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath and others); **and**
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Asymptomatic persons with known exposure* to a person with COVID-19 can return to work after:

Quarantining for 14 days. If a person is tested for COVID-19 during the 14-day quarantine period, a negative test result would not change or decrease the time a person is monitored.

Definition of Exposure An employee can be exposed to COVID-19 when he/she has been in direct contact with the secretions (droplets) of someone who has COVID-19 (being coughed or sneezed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.). Close contact means that he/she has been within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more.

Quarantine

The Quarantine date starts from the last known exposure to someone who has COVID-19. The period restarts if the employee has further close contact with a person while he/she is sick (e.g., co-worker, neighbor, or friend). The last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date he/she had close contact.

If the employee lives with someone who has COVID-19 (e.g., roommate, partner, family member), and that person has isolated by staying in a separate bedroom **and** the employee has had no close contact with the person since they isolated, the employee's last day of quarantine is 14 days from when the person with COVID-19 began home isolation.

If the employee continues to have close contact with a person who is ill, the employee will have to restart the quarantine from the last day he/she had close contact with anyone in the house who has COVID-19.

If the employee lives in a household where he/she cannot avoid close contact with the person who has COVID-19, the employee should avoid contact with others outside the home while the person is sick, and quarantine for 14 days after the person who has COVID-19 meets the criteria [to end home isolation, which means](#): At least 24 hours have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath and others); **and** at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

For more information on quarantine recommendations <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

When returning to work, employees should:

- Wear a face covering if physical distancing cannot be maintained in the workplace, per current CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
 - Cloth face coverings are appropriate for persons who are not healthcare personnel and are recommended by CDC to help prevent asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 in settings where physical distancing cannot be practiced.
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette in [CDC's interim infection control guidance](#) (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles).
- Self-monitor for symptoms, and seek re-evaluation from a healthcare provider if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen.



When Can I Return to Work After COVID-19?

It depends on whether you tested positive, have symptoms, are suspected of having COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone who tested positive. **This guidance is for non-healthcare personnel.**

Tested Positive & Symptoms

Employees with positive COVID-19 test and symptoms

Wait 24 hours after fever ends and other symptoms have improved AND wait at least 10 days after the symptoms first appeared.

Tested Positive No Symptoms

Employees with no symptoms but tested positive for COVID-19

Wait at least 10 days after positive COVID-19 test, if the person remains symptom-free.

If symptoms develop after a positive test, employees can return to work after at least 24 hours after fever ends and other symptoms have improved AND wait until at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Suspected Symptoms

Employees suspected of having COVID-19 because of symptoms, but who did NOT get tested for COVID-19

Wait at least 24 hours after fever ends and symptoms have improved AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Close Contact

Employees with no symptoms but a known exposure to a person who tested positive for COVID-19

Employees must quarantine for 14 days. Even if they test negative for COVID-19 during those dates, they must still quarantine for the full 14 days.

