

As required by current NC Executive Orders, all businesses must follow the most recent guidance from NCDHHS available online at <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance#businesses>.

Respond to Sick Employees

Businesses that have an employee with COVID-19 are not automatically required to close, but should take steps to prevent the spread of illness to other employees and customers. Businesses may *choose* to close for a short time to clean the facility, if they are unable to properly staff their business, or out of an abundance of caution.

Send sick people home

- People who appear to have symptoms of COVID-19 or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home. Be sure that they are wearing a mask until they leave the facility. Restaurants should consider checking symptoms of employees daily upon arrival to work. Use the checklist or flowchart at: <https://transylvaniahealth.org/covid-19-resources>.
- Make sure your sick leave policies support employees who may need to stay home for several days. Employers should NOT require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or return to work.

Clean and disinfect your facility

- If a person with COVID-19 has been in your facility within the past 7 days, follow the CDC guidance at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html.

Notify and monitor other employees

- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but must maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Identify employees who were in "close contact" (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) to the person with COVID-19. These employees should remain at home for up to 14 days* after their last contact with the sick person. Other employees should self-monitor for symptoms and strictly follow all prevention steps for 14 days but can continue working. (For critical infrastructure workers, see additional guidance for people who may have been exposed at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html.)
- Advise all employees who had any exposure to the person with COVID-19 to seek testing 5-7 days after their last exposure or immediately if they have symptoms. Call the TPH nurse line at 884-4007 for help finding a test.

Allow Employees to Return to Work

Sick employees with a positive COVID-19 test or who were not tested can return to work when:

- It has been at least 10 days since they first had symptoms AND
- They have not had a fever for 24 hours without any fever reducing medication AND
- Their other symptoms have improved.

Sick employees with a negative COVID-19 test result *who were NOT identified as a close contact to someone with COVID-19* may be allowed to return to work when:

- They have not had a fever or other symptoms for 24 hours, unless a healthcare provider or local health department requires them to continue to stay home for longer.

Employees who did not have symptoms, but tested positive for COVID-19 can return to work when:

- It has been at least 10 days since the date of their first positive test AND
- They continue to have no symptoms (no cough or shortness of breath) since the test.

*Employees who were close contacts to someone with COVID-19 can return to work when:

- 14 days of quarantine have been completed OR
- 10 days of quarantine have been completed with no symptoms reported during daily monitoring OR
- 7 days of quarantine have been completed with no symptoms reported during daily monitoring and a negative result on a diagnostic test taken no earlier than 5 days after the last contact.

Employees who are fully vaccinated and have no symptoms may not need to quarantine (discuss this option with public health contact tracing staff). If quarantine is ended before day 14, the person must continue to monitor their symptoms daily and must strictly follow all prevention steps including wearing a face covering, social distancing, and avoiding groups of people until 14 days have passed after their last exposure. A full 14-day quarantine will be used in group living settings. Test-based criteria will only be used if testing does not create a burden on test capacity and requires a diagnostic test such as PCR or antigen test.