COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS　　　　　　1/12/22

See NCDHHS guidance for businesses at https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance.

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.

CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting to reduce the spread of COVID-19 is available at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html.

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 should immediately be separated from others and sent home. Be sure they are wearing a mask until they leave the facility. Employers should NOT require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work.

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 maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Close contacts should be sent home and other employees should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days.

> **Employees with <u>symptoms</u> who had a <u>positive COVID-19 test</u> or were not tested should STAY HOME FOR 5 DAYS after their first symptoms or first positive test (day 0).** They can return after 5 days if symptoms are resolving AND they have not had a fever for 24 hours without any fever reducing medication.They must continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days (days 6-10) and should avoid places where they cannot wear a mask (such as while eating) and people at high risk for severe illness. If they are unable to wear a mask or if symptoms persist, they should stay home for the full 10 days.
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> **Employees who had <u>no symptoms</u>, but <u>a positive COVID-19 test result</u> should STAY HOME FOR 5 DAYS after their first positive test (day 0).** They can return after 5 days.They must continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days (days 6-10) and should avoid places where they cannot wear a mask (such as while eating) and people at high risk for severe illness. If they are unable to wear a mask or if symptoms persist, they should stay home for the full 10 days.*If they develop symptoms, follow the guidance above.*
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> **Employees who had <u>symptoms</u> of COVID-19 and a <u>negative COVID-19 test result</u> should STAY HOME WHILE SICK.** They can return to work when they have not had a fever without fever-reducing medications and have felt well for 24 hours, unless a healthcare provider or other health guidance requires them to continue to stay home longer. *If they had close contact to someone with COVID-19, they must also meet the criteria below before returning to work.*

Employees identified as <u>close contacts</u> who are <u>NOT up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccinations</u> should STAY HOME FOR 5 DAYS after their last close contact (day 0). They should seek testing for COVID-19 at least 5 days after the last close contact or immediately if they develop symptoms of COVID-19. *If they receive positive test results or develop symptoms, they must stay home until they meet the criteria to return to work for people with COVID-19.* They can return to work after 5 days, but should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 5 additional days (days 6-10) and should avoid places where they cannot wear a mask (such as while eating) and people at high risk for severe illness. If they are unable to wear a mask, they should stay home for the full 10 days.

Employees identified as <u>close contacts</u> who <u>ARE up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccinations</u> should WEAR A MASK FOR 10 DAYS after their last close contact (day 0). *Employees who have received all recommended vaccine doses, including booster shots if eligible, do not need to quarantine after a close contact to someone with COVID-19, as long as they have no symptoms.* They should seek testing for COVID-19 at least 5 days after the last close contact or immediately if they develop symptoms of COVID-19. *If they receive positive test results or develop symptoms, they must stay home until they meet the criteria to return to work for people with COVID-19.*

Employees identified as <u>close contacts</u> who <u>had COVID-19 in the past 90 days</u> should WEAR A MASK FOR 10 DAYS after their last close contact (day 0). *Employees who had a positive viral test within the past 90 days and have recovered and remain without symptoms do not need to quarantine or be tested after a close contact to someone with COVID-19.*

FOR HEALTHCARE FACILITIES: Employees who return to work after having symptoms of COVID-19 must wear a facemask at all times while in the facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or until 14 days after symptoms first began, whichever is longer. They must follow strict hand and respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette as usual, and should not care for severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after their symptoms began. Employees should self monitor for symptoms and seek re-evaluation from their medical provider if symptoms come back or get worse.