

**GUIDANCE FOR
EMPLOYERS AND THE
COMMUNITY
REGARDING COVID-19
INFECTION AND
EXPOSURE**



Guidance for Employers and the Community Regarding COVID-19 Infection and Exposure

The purpose of the guidance is to help employers and community members determine next steps when being notified that a person has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has been exposed to a person diagnosed with COVID-19. This guidance is not intended to replace medical evaluation or any other recommendations by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

All information is subject to change.

Background

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infection caused by a virus that can spread from person to person through respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. While it is primarily spread by coming into close contact (about 6 feet) of a person who is infected with COVID-19, it may also be spread by touching a surface with the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes.

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. This includes staying home as much as possible, avoiding close contact with others, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surface and washing your hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

EPA-approved disinfectants can be found online at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>. Bleach solutions (for example, 1/3 cup bleach added to 1 gallon of water) and 70% alcohol solutions are also effective alternatives if the EPA-approved disinfectants are in short supply.

Anyone who is ill should stay home. Symptoms of COVID-19 include, but are not limited to:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever (generally defined as 100.4 °F)
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19, but some people are at higher risk for more severe illness, including hospitalization and death. Persons who are at higher risk include those who are over 65 years of age and people with serious underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled. More details regarding people who may be at higher risk can be found online at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>.

Please contact the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health at (800) 722-4794 if you have questions regarding this guidance or other questions about COVID-19 in San Bernardino County. Visit the San Bernardino County Public Health COVID-19 website at <https://sbcovid19.com> for additional resources.

IF AN EMPLOYEE TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19



See Exposed Employee Guidance for additional information regarding exposed employees.

Based on the CDC's [Return to Work Criteria for Healthcare Personnel](#) and [Discontinuation of Home Isolation](#).

RETURNING TO WORK

Infected employees who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 may **not** return to work until they meet the CDC criteria for discontinuation of isolation.

Symptom / Time-Based

Determine if the patient has had symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection (regardless if before or after testing)

No Symptoms

At least 10 days have passed since with or without a test result

AND

No symptoms have developed since positive test result

Symptoms

Infected employee must have no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours

AND

Infected employee must have improved, resolving symptoms

AND

At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Recovered employee may return to work. Employee should follow all recommendations by their healthcare provider and Public Health, maintain good hygiene practices and continue to self-monitor for any symptoms.

NOTE: Positive tests results do not necessarily mean that the Infected Employee is still infectious to others. There are reports of patients having positive tests for week and months after no longer being infectious.

Based on the CDC's [Return to Work Criteria for Healthcare Personnel](#) and [Discontinuation of Home Isolation](#).

IF AN EMPLOYEE'S CLOSE CONTACT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19, BUT EMPLOYEE DOES NOT HAVE ONGOING EXPOSURE



Based on the CDC's [Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#).

IF AN EMPLOYEE'S FAMILY MEMBER OR HOUSEHOLD MEMBER TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19, BUT EMPLOYEE HAS ONGOING EXPOSURE



Based on the CDC's [Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#).

IF AN EXPOSED EMPLOYEE PROVIDES CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND/OR ESSENTIAL SERVICES



Based on the CDC's [Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Exposed to COVID-19](#). Industry-specific guidance may be available at CDC's [COVID-19 Website](#).

IF AN EXPOSED EMPLOYEE TESTS NEGATIVE AND DISPLAYS NO SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

A negative result does **not** eliminate the possibility of the exposed employee from developing symptoms at a later date.

Exposed employee should continue to follow their quarantine instructions, even if the test result is negative.

Follow "If an Employee's Family Member, Household Member or Close Contact Tests Positive for COVID-19" flow chart guidance, including guidance for critical infrastructure essential services and self-monitor for symptoms.

Be aware that in some instances, a positive case will be released from isolation faster than an exposed employee will complete their quarantine. The 10-day quarantine is the period in which the patient should continue to watch for symptoms in case they have been infected.

If exposed employee develops symptoms at any time, exposed employee should be instructed to contact their healthcare provider. If the exposed employee provides critical infrastructure essential services and is at work at the time symptoms start, the exposed employee should be sent home immediately.

Based on the CDC's [Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#) and [Discontinuation of Home Isolation](#).