

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF AN EMPLOYEE IS SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED TO HAVE COVID-19

In most cases, you do not need to shut down your facility. But do close off any areas used for prolonged periods of time by the sick person:

- Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting to minimize potential for other employees being exposed to respiratory droplets. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- During this waiting period, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in these areas.

Follow the CDC cleaning and disinfection recommendations:

- Clean dirty surfaces with soap and water before disinfecting them.
- To disinfect surfaces, use products that meet EPA criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.
- Always wear gloves and gowns appropriate for the chemicals being used when you are cleaning and disinfecting.
- You may need to wear additional personal protective equipment (PPE) depending on the setting and disinfectant product you are using.

In addition to cleaning and disinfecting, employers should determine which employees may have been exposed to the virus and need to take additional precautions:

- Most workplaces should follow the Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure.
- Critical infrastructure workplaces should follow the guidance Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19.

Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation and have consulted with a healthcare provider and state or local health department.

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, 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).

**PLEASE CONTACT TULARE COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT FOR ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN EMPLOYEES ARE QUARANTINED/ISOLATED

Isolation Letter: The Tulare County Public Health Department will notify confirmed cases directly, discuss isolation requirements and send a packet. The packet includes an isolation letter, materials on the precautions individuals must take, a symptom monitoring schedule, and instructions on following up with the health care provider, if their symptoms worsen.

Will the employer be notified of positive test result? PH will release positive test results based on an effort to protect the community. Employers are notified in an effort to prevent the spread of Covid 19 at their facility. All close contacts to a positive case must quarantine to prevent the spread of Covid 19 at their facility. The employer is notified and the risk assessment process is initiated by a business liaison.

Will the employer be notified of negative test result? Negative test results do not meet criteria as a threat to public safety, so generally we do not release that information. The prescribing physician is provided negative test results and has a private conversation with their patient. Employers can obtain a release of information from their employee to obtain test results (positive/negative).

What if my employee has a negative test result, can they work? If an individual has come into contact with a confirmed positive case and tested negative, the individual must still quarantine.

Clearance Letter, When can my employee return to work?

- For a confirmed positive case, the employee is expected to isolate. You can expect to have your employee return to work under the following conditions:
 1. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared,
 2. No fever (temperature above 100.4 F) for 3 full days, without the use of fever reducing medicine, and
 3. Other symptoms have improved.
- For a contact to a confirmed positive case, the employee is expected to quarantine. You can expect to have your employee return to work under when the individual meets the following criteria:
 1. At least 14 days have passed since exposure date,
 2. No fever (temperature above 100.4 F) for 3 full days, without the use of fever reducing medicine, and
 3. Other symptoms have improved.

Please note: There may be other factors that may extend an employees return. PH will issue a clearance letter

Will PH notify the employer that the employee can work? The Public Health Department will release the patient from isolation and issue a letter which indicates that the individual may resume regular activities to the individual.

The employee can share this information to their employer directly. If the employer would like to receive information, they need to obtain a release of information form prior to releasing Public Health Information.

Is retesting necessary? At this time, the Public Health Department is using time and symptom based procedures to provide clearance. Testing kits are limited and encourage testing to identify new individuals that may be medically vulnerable and provide services to medically vulnerable populations. PH is not encouraging re-testing patients after the isolation period, as long as the individual has met the clearance criteria.

In addition, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is not recommending re-testing due to the prolonged detection of the virus without viability of further infection. The employer may request additional criteria be met prior to an individual returning to work.

What if the employer wants the employees tested? Individuals needing to be tested can be referred to their primary care provider and other commercial testing sites.