



GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS AND SUPERVISORS FOR MANAGING COVID-19 EXPOSURES IN THE WORKPLACE FOR NONESSENTIAL BUSINESSES.

The Lexington-Fayette County Health Department (LFCHD) is following guidance from Healthy at Work, FDA, and CDC regarding the management and follow-up of COVID-19 exposures that occur in the workplace.

1. What do I do when one of my employees has COVID-19?

If an employee has tested positive for COVID-19, instruct that employee to stay home. Contact LFCHD at (859) 899-2222 to report the case and discuss necessary follow-up steps. If your employee is a Fayette County resident, you can verify with the LFCHD that they tested positive by sending a message to covidverify@lfchd.org or calling (859) 899-2222. Fayette County residents who test positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 should be contacted by an investigator from the health department who will question them about their date of symptom onset and whereabouts while contagious. In turn, they should receive an isolation order from LFCHD to remain at home until they are no longer infectious. As the investigation proceeds, you can help LFCHD by identifying the dates and times the employee worked and compiling a list of other employees who may have been exposed to the case.

2. How are COVID-19 exposures in the workplace assessed?

Determination of whether exposures to COVID-19 have occurred in the workplace will depend on the following information:

- The date the employee started having symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19
- The dates the employee worked while infectious (the infectious period includes the 2 days prior to the onset of symptoms or 2 days prior to testing, if the case does not have symptoms)
- The length of the exposure (i.e., number of days/hours worked while infectious, how long it has been since the exposure(s) occurred)
- The extent to which other employees or patrons had close contact with that employee while infectious. Close contact is defined as being <6ft from the case for ≥ 15 minutes or more indoors and/or <6ft of the case for ≥ 30 minutes or more outdoors, regardless of if masks were worn.

3. When do employees need to be quarantined?

When a COVID-19 exposure is known to have occurred, employees who have been identified as having had close contact with that employee while infectious (close contact is defined as being <6ft of the case for >15 minutes or more indoors and/or <6ft of the case for >30 minutes or more outdoors, regardless of mask wearing) should be sent home and remain off work and self-quarantine for 14 days following their last exposure to the case (e.g., if the exposure occurred on 7/1, the exposed person may return on 7/16). These employees should be provided with the COVID-19 Workplace Exposure Notification Sheet and instructed to contact their local health department with questions.

4. What if an employee is exposed to COVID-19 outside of work?

If an employee has had close contact to a diagnosed COVID-19 case outside of work, they should remain home on quarantine. In the event that the case is a household contact and the employee is having ongoing exposure to the case, the quarantine period may be longer than 14 days. Unless the employee exhibits symptoms¹ or tests positive for COVID-19, there is no need to quarantine other individuals in the workplace.

5. When can a quarantined (exposed) employee return to work?

Employees who have had close contact with a known COVID-19 case may return to work when 14 days have passed since their last exposure to that case, if the employee has not developed symptoms of COVID-19. Testing negative² for the virus during the quarantine period does not shorten the quarantine, because contacts could develop disease any time up to and including day 14. Employees who have been exposed to COVID-19 are not required to have a negative test before returning to the workplace if they have completed the entire quarantine period without symptoms, however a negative molecular test² at the end of the quarantine period may provide reassurance that the individual does not have asymptomatic infection.

6. When can an employee who tests positive for COVID-19 (case) return to work?

Any employee who is diagnosed as having COVID-19 should remain off work until they receive written clearance to return by the local health department where the individual resides. The length of time that an individual with COVID-19 must remain in isolation will vary based on the individual's symptoms, but is usually between 10-20 days. Employees who are able to telework from home may do so if they feel well enough to perform tasks remotely. It is not recommended that employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 be retested before returning to work.

7. When should employees be tested for COVID-19?

All employees who have symptoms¹ of COVID-19, should not work until their symptoms resolve or they receive another diagnosis for their symptoms. If an employee has been tested for COVID-19, it is recommended that the employee stay home while those results are pending. Routine surveillance testing² of employees without symptoms is not recommended by the health department at this time. If routine testing is to be performed, employers should prepare for the possibility that some staff may test positive, requiring isolation and quarantine of the workforce. Employees who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 are not recommended to be retested if it is within 3 months of their initial illness/test date.

8. If employees are wearing masks, can they continue to work?

Unfortunately, it can be impossible to avoid close contact in some work settings. Though masks are important to wear and likely reduce the risk of transmission, at this time, the guidance on isolation of COVID-19 cases and quarantine of exposed employees does not differ if the employee is wearing a mask.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

² A positive result on any FDA-authorized assay, such as a PCR or rapid antigen test can detect the virus that causes COVID-19 and is indicative of current infection. A negative result on a PCR test indicates that no virus was detected on the day of testing. Negative results from a rapid antigen test (e.g., Sofia) are not reliable for ruling out current infection.

9. When do other employees and patrons need to be notified?

Employees who are identified as working during the same shift as a known COVID-19 case should be notified of their possible exposure even if they do not need to quarantine. Depending on the circumstances of the workplace environment and nature of the business, notification of patrons may be considered.

10. How should the workplace be cleaned following an identified case of COVID-19 at the worksite?

Affected areas where the case worked should be closed off and cleaned using approved household disinfectants. Guidance for cleaning in the workplace after a case is identified can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

11. If a case of COVID-19 is identified at the workplace, does my business need to close, at least temporarily?

When a COVID-19 exposure has occurred in a workplace, the business does not necessarily need to close, unless the business is not able to close off affected areas and thoroughly clean the workplace without shutting down or the business lacks the on-site personnel to continue operations.

12. Where can I get help or answers to questions?

Kentucky Healthy At Work guidance

https://govsite-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/doZ6ExfIRFyWGQBmxT4M_Healthy%20At%20Work%20Reqs%20-%20Restaurants%20and%20Bars%20-%20Final%20Version%203.0.pdf
https://govsite-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/PuhOvvxS0yUyilXbwvTN_2020-7-10%20-%20Minimum%20Requirements.pdf

FDA guidance

<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/what-do-if-you-have-covid-19-confirmed-positive-or-exposed-workers-your-food-production-storage-or>

CDC guidance

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>

Email LFCHD at covidresponse@lfchd.org or call LFCHD at (859) 899-2222.