



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT AN EMPLOYEE TESTING POSITIVE OR BEING EXPOSED TO COVID-19

This document contains [a grid to help you know what actions you need to take](#) for a variety of employee illness scenarios.

Please note: this guidance is not intended for health care personnel. This guidance is not all inclusive. If you have additional questions, we recommend consulting with your human resources or legal departments.

I HAVE AN EMPLOYEE WHO TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Do I need to contact La Crosse County Health Department about this employee?

No, you do not need to contact us. You will need to follow the Reduce Transmission Among Employees guidance from [CDC](#). This section discusses what to do with employees experiencing symptoms and those that have tested positive.

Do I need to shut down my facility if the employee was at the facility while contagious?

No, you do not need to shut down, but you do need to clean which might mean closing areas of the workplace for about 24 hours. See "[How do I need to clean my facility...](#)" below for more information.

What steps should I take after an employee of my facility tests positive for COVID-19?

- Follow [CDC guidelines](#) for cleaning your facility. When possible, do not reopen until cleaning has been completed.
- Do not allow employee testing positive or other employees with close contact to come to work.
- Our department may not contact you if you have had an employee who tests positive for COVID-19, due to capacity or surges of cases. Regardless of contact from our department, you should notify employees who were exposed and are close contacts so they can begin their quarantine period as needed.
- See [APPENDIX A](#) for resources to assist with contact tracing in your facility.

Do I need to notify customers or clients?

If the employee with the positive test had close contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more) with any customers or clients, those individuals should be notified. La Crosse County Health Department may work with you to do this. This is required under statute 252.03(1).

Does a business with a positive employee need to notify the general public?

No.

How do I need to clean my facility after an employee tested positive for COVID-19 and was at work while contagious?

If an employee tested positive for COVID-19 and worked while contagious, it is recommended to thoroughly clean this space using [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) effective against COVID-19. According to CDC, the following cleaning and disinfecting should be performed in your facility:

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
 - Companies do not necessarily need to close operations, if they can close off affected areas.
- **Open outside doors and windows** to increase air circulation in the area.
- **Wait 24 hours** before you clean or disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.

- Clean and disinfect **all areas used by the person** who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines.
- [Vacuum the space](#) if needed. Use vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particular air (HEPA) filter, if available.
 - Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night, for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms.
 - Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
- Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
 - Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- If more than 7 days since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
 - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.

When can an employee with a positive COVID-19 test return to work?

Employees with a positive test may return to work when they meet *all of* the following criteria:

- They have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
- Their other symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours
- It has been at least 10 days since their symptom onset

OR

- If the person had no symptoms of any kind, they may return 10 days after the date they were tested.

We recommend against requiring employees to have a negative COVID-19 test before returning to work. People with COVID-19 may have positive test results for weeks after they recover but are not contagious after they meet the criteria above. Requiring a negative test places an unnecessary burden on the employee and may prevent you from providing services due to extended employee absences.

Does an employee need a clearance letter from Public Health before they can return to work?

No, employees do not need a clearance letter before returning to work. Those who need a letter can visit our website at lacrossecounty.org/covid19.

What if the employee diagnosed with COVID-19 is asymptomatic? When can they come back to work?

Employees that are asymptomatic but had a positive test or diagnosis for COVID-19 should:

- Self-isolate and monitor their health for 10 days.
- If they have no symptoms, they may return to work 10 days after the date they were tested.
- If they develop symptoms during the 10 days, they should extend isolation precautions for at least 10 days from the date of symptom onset and must meet the following criteria before returning to work:
 - It has been at least 10 days since their symptoms started.
 - They have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
 - Their respiratory symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours

I HAVE AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

When can an employee that has had close contact to someone COVID-19 return to work?

[Close contact](#) is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected person for 15 total minutes or more starting from 48 hours before illness onset - OR – having physical contact (handshake, hug), - OR - having direct exposure to coughs, sneezes, or bodily fluids. The 15 minutes does not need to be continuous (e.g., three 5-minute periods would count).

La Crosse County Health Department still recommends that close contacts quarantine at their home for 14 days following an exposure. **Quarantine for full 14 days after the time of an exposure remains the safest strategy for preventing asymptomatic transmission of SARS-CoV-2**, as the incubation period for the COVID-19 virus is 2-14 days. However, the WI Department of Health Services allows for shortened quarantines if an employee does not develop symptoms of COVID-19 in the timeframes listed below.

A shortened quarantine is only an option if a contact can do *all of the following* for 14 days after an exposure, including in the workplace:

- Symptom monitoring for 14 days
- Correct and consistent mask use
- Physical distancing of 6 feet at all times
- Hand and cough hygiene
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Avoid crowds
- Adequate indoor ventilation

Additionally, employers that wish to bring employees back before 14 days must do all of the following:

- Implement active monitoring of employees
- Ensure physical distancing at all times
- Require masks for employees
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Plan to ensure if an employee develops symptoms, all other staff members can be easily identified for contact tracing

If **all** the above non-pharmaceutical interventions cannot be obtained at your workplace, a shortened quarantine is not an option and employees must remain at home for 14 days following an exposure.

Providing that all above non-pharmaceutical interventions can be implemented, employees who have been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person may return to work when they meet the following criteria:

1. **With a test:** Employees can return to work **after day 7** ONLY if the result of a COVID-19 test is negative and no symptoms are reported during daily monitoring. A pending test on day 7 is not sufficient. The test must be collected within 48 hours of the end of quarantine, meaning a person can be tested at the earliest on day 6 or day 7 following exposure. Daily symptom monitoring, and all other interventions above, must continue through day 14.
2. **Without a test:** Employees can return to work **after day 10** without testing IF no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. Daily symptom monitoring, and all other interventions above, must continue through day 14.

If any symptoms, even mild, develop during the 14-day monitoring, the employee must immediately isolate at home and seek COVID-19 testing. If the employee is unwilling or unable to access testing, they must stay home and avoid others until all of the following have been met:

- It has been at least 10 days since their first symptoms began.
- They have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
- Their other symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours

Employees do not need a clearance letter before returning to work.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19 AND THE WORKPLACE

Should I require all my employees to be tested for COVID-19 before they can work?

No. La Crosse County recommends against requiring employees to be tested before being able to work, unless they are using a negative test to shorten a quarantine period. A test only tells us if a person has COVID-19 on the day they are tested.

Furthermore, La Crosse County does NOT require negative COVID-19 test result(s) to return to work after testing positive. This is because people with COVID-19 may have positive test results for weeks after they recover but are not contagious after they meet the isolation criteria. Requiring documentation or proof of a test puts an unnecessary burden on staff and delays when an employee is able to start work. As always, any employee who is sick or has symptoms should not be at work.

What should an employer do to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in their facility?

Employers should:

- Allow employees to work remotely, communicate virtually, and limit in-person meetings and gatherings
- Stagger work schedules and rearrange workspaces to allow physical distancing to be maintained
- Provide employees proper PPE (gloves, masks, etc as defined by job duties and risk of exposure), handwashing supplies, and hand sanitizer
- Ensure that all employees are wearing a face covering or mask at all times when around others
- Have policies written for hygiene, cleaning, and protective measures
- Train employees on:
 - [their employee illness policy](#)
 - what the symptoms for COVID-19 are
 - what to do if they test positive
 - what to do if they were exposed
 - the importance of frequent hand washing or sanitizing
 - the importance of heightened cleaning and sanitizing protocols
 - the importance of physical distancing
 - when to wear PPE and
 - the proper way to put on, wear, and take off PPE

What are the [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 that I should have my employees self-monitor for prior to coming to work?**

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Cough | 6. Sore throat |
| 2. Shortness of breath | 7. New loss of taste or smell |
| 3. Fever $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ | 8. Nausea |
| 4. Chills | 9. Vomiting |
| 5. Muscle pain | 10. Diarrhea |

**This list is not all-inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been noted.

Will my business be contacted if one of my employees tests positive?

Our department may not contact you if you have had an employee who tests positive for COVID-19, due to capacity or surges of cases. If you are notified by an employee that they have tested positive for COVID-19, we ask that you follow the guidance provided in this document for next steps and best practices.

Regardless of contact from our department, you must notify employees who were exposed and are close contacts so they can begin their quarantine period as needed. See resources for notifying employees and contact tracing in [Appendix A](#).

If our department does contact you, we may also ask for the names, addresses, or phone numbers for employees who had close contact with the employee who tested positive. You are required to comply with these requests under statute 252.03(1).

Due to HIPAA, it is important not to share any unnecessary information on the positive person with other employees from the workplace, but instead provide general information about the employees' exposure and guidance provided by the health department to prevent the spread of the COVID-19. Only discuss with those employees whose exposure has been deemed as a close contact.

What is the definition of close contact?

[Close contact](#) is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected person for a prolonged period (15 minutes or more) starting from 48 hours before illness onset—OR – having direct exposure to coughs, sneezes, or bodily fluids – OR – having direct physical contact with an infected person (handshake, hug). The 15 minutes does not need to be continuous (e.g., three 5-minute periods would count). Although, wearing a cloth face covering reduces the risk of transmission, it does not completely remove the exposure risk when in close contact and does not change the quarantine requirements for close contacts.

When and how should I clean my facility?

At this time, it is strongly encouraged that all businesses clean on a more frequent basis and it is recommended that all high-touch surfaces are cleaned every 2 hours or after every user when possible.

The CDC has information on [cleaning in a facility](#).

How can La Crosse County help if we think someone is coming to work sick?

It is, overall, a bad business practice for the employer to allow any person to work when sick and goes against all the CDC's COVID-19 guidance. We are not performing enforcement on businesses that are allowing people to work when sick; however, if there is a confirmed communicable disease identified for one of the employees, enforcement may be ordered.

Does the business with an outbreak need to notify the general public?

In cases where a large amount of people working in an establishment test positive or a high risk exposure means that close contacts are not easily traceable, La Crosse County may need to notify the general public that an exposure at that business might have occurred. See how we decide [here](#).

RESOURCES:

[La Crosse County Employee Illness Agreement template for COVID-19](#) and return to work guidance

FDA Guidance: [What To Do If You Have a COVID-19 Confirmed Positive Worker or Workers Who Have Been Exposed To a Confirmed Case of COVID-19](#)

DEFINITIONS:

Asymptomatic: A person showing no symptoms.

Close Contact:

- Someone who was within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive person (regardless of PPE) for *15 minutes or more total* – 15 minutes does not need to be continuous (e.g., three 5-minute periods would count)
- Direct exposure to coughs, sneezes, or other body fluids. (example: contact with a dirty tissue, sharing a drinking glass, food or towels, or person items)
- Direct physical contact with someone with COVID-19 (example: hug, kiss, handshake)
- Someone who stayed overnight for at least one night in a household with an infected person
- Case is considered infectious starting from 48 hours before positive test or symptoms began, whichever occurred first
- Although wearing a mask or cloth face covering reduces the risk of transmission, it does not completely remove the exposure risk when in close contact and does not change the quarantine requirements for close contacts.

Non-pharmaceutical interventions: Actions, apart from getting vaccinated or taking medicine, that people should take to help slow the spread of an illness.

Isolation: To separate a sick person with COVID-19 from people who are not sick. People can end isolation when the following criteria are met:

1. They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications)
2. Their other symptoms have improved
3. It has been at least 10 days since their symptom onset

Self-monitor: An employee shall monitor for the following symptoms daily prior to reporting to work. If an employee has any of these symptoms, they shall stay home, and immediately report to employer:

1. Cough
2. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
3. Fever ≥ 100.4 F
4. Chills
5. Muscle pain
6. Sore throat
7. New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all-inclusive. [Other less common symptoms](#) have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Quarantine: To separate and restrict the movement of a person who was exposed to COVID-19 in case they become sick. Most people can end their quarantine 14 days after the last time they were with the person with COVID-19. A shortened quarantine timeline is an option under certain circumstances. Household contacts who are unable to completely separate from a case may require quarantine longer than 14 days. [See all conditions here.](#)

Recovered: A person is considered recovered and no longer infectious when:

1. At least 10 days have passed since their first symptoms appeared AND
2. At least 24 hours has passed without a fever, without fever-reducing medication AND
3. Other symptoms have improved.

Notification Procedures:

Due to HIPAA rules and regulations, we will not disclose a positive case to the entire staff. After public health has interviewed the employee who tested positive, we will determine if any other employees that may have been exposed (close contact) and work with the health department to contact these individuals for quarantining.

*NOTE: There may be times when our health department is not able to contact all positive cases and close contacts. See more info above at ["Will my business be contacted if one of my employees tests positive?"](#)

If there are multiple positive employees within the workplace, this does not necessarily mean that we have a workplace outbreak. Due to community spread of COVID-19, someone can be exposed in a variety of settings beyond work. Most important to know is that every positive case is reported to the health department, and the health department will contact us if they determine through their tracing if there are workplace exposures and/or if this is a workplace outbreak. We will follow the health department's guidance and recommendations for our workers safety.

Doctor's note or Public Health release to work not needed

If an employee tests positive, public health recommends against requiring employees to have a doctor's note or a Public Health release letter to return to work, as this is an unnecessary burden during an emergency response for a communicable disease like COVID-19.

Public Health also recommends against requiring negative COVID-19 test results before returning to work. People with COVID-19 may have positive test results for weeks after they recover but are not contagious after they meet the symptom criteria above. Requiring negative tests for returning to work places an unnecessary burden on the employer and may prevent employees from providing services due to extended employee absences.

A doctor's note is not accepted to exempt an employee from isolation or quarantine.

COVID-19 SCENARIOS AT THE WORKPLACE

POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS FOR RETURNING TO WORK

This guidance is not all inclusive. If you have additional questions, we recommend consulting with your human resources or legal department, or contacting us by email at covid19@lacrossecounty.org.

Employee Scenario	Policy	Return to Work Requirements
<p>A. Employee has no symptoms (asymptomatic) and has tested positive for COVID-19</p>	<p>Do not allow employee to come to work. Arrange for delivering paycheck to employee.</p> <p>Employee shall stay home and monitor for symptoms. If the employee has no symptoms, they can return 10 days after the day of their positive test.</p> <p>If during the 10 days the employee becomes symptomatic, then they must continue to stay home for at least 10 more days from the date of the symptom onset and meet all the following before returning to work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications) 2. Their other symptoms have improved 3. It has been at least 10 days since their symptom onset 	<p>Doctor's note or Public Health release NOT required to return to work</p>
<p>B. Employee is sick with symptoms of COVID-19, but has not yet been tested</p>	<p>Do not allow employee to come to work. Arrange for delivering paycheck to employee.</p> <p>Recommend employee be tested. Employee shall stay home until all of the following apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications) 2. Their other symptoms have improved 3. It has been at least 10 days since their symptom onset <p>If employee is tested, stay home until test results return. Follow Scenario D or E, depending on test results.</p>	<p>Doctor's note or Public Health release NOT required to return to work.</p>
<p>C. Employee is sick with symptoms of COVID-19, has been tested but not yet received the test results</p>	<p>Do not allow employee to work. Arrange for delivering paycheck to employee.</p> <p>Stay home until test results return. Follow Scenario D or E, depending on test results.</p>	<p>Doctor's note or Public Health release NOT required to return</p>
<p>D. Employee is sick with symptoms of COVID-19, has been tested and test results came back negative</p>	<p>Employee does not have COVID-19. Follow standard employee illness protocols for returning to work. Example: 24 hours fever-free, or 48 hours after last episode of vomiting or diarrhea, or when on antibiotics for at least 24 hours, or as approved to work by a doctor</p>	<p>A negative lab result or copy of the negative lab result is not required to return to work. A doctor's note may be required to return to work based on medical condition and business illness policy.</p>

<p>E. Employee is sick with symptoms of COVID-19, has been tested and test results came back positive</p>	<p>Do not allow employee to work. Arrange for delivering paycheck to employee.</p> <p>Employee shall stay home until all of the following apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It has been at least 10 days since their first symptoms appeared 2. They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications) 3. Their other symptoms have improved 	<p>Doctor's note or Public Health release NOT required to return to work.</p>
<p>F. Employee had COVID-19 in the past and now has another positive test.</p>	<p>Employee may continue to work and does not need to isolate if the positive tests occurred within 90 days of each other. Other employees are not at risk. People who have COVID-19 can test positive for many weeks after they recover and are no longer infectious.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>G. Employee has been in close contact with someone who shows symptoms but has not been tested</p>	<p>Employee can continue to work and self-monitors symptoms daily</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>H. Employee has been in close contact with someone with symptoms who is waiting on test results</p>	<p>Employee can continue to work and self-monitors symptoms daily.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>I. Employee has been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 (symptomatic or asymptomatic)</p>	<p>Do not allow employee to work. Arrange for delivering paycheck to employee.</p> <p>Our department still recommends a 14-day quarantine, as this is the safest strategy for preventing asymptomatic transmission of COVID-19.</p> <p>If workplace can ensure ALL non-pharmaceutical interventions can be followed and employee agrees to adhere to them strictly, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With a test: Employees can return to work after day 7 ONLY if the result of a COVID-19 test is negative and no symptoms are reported during daily monitoring. This means they can return to work on day 8. A pending test on day 7 is not sufficient. The test must be collected within 48 hours of the end of quarantine, meaning a person can be tested at the earliest on day 6 or day 7. Daily symptom monitoring must continue through day 14. 2. Without a test: Employees can return to work after day 10 without testing IF no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. This means they can return to work on day 11. Daily symptom monitoring must continue through day 14. <p>If symptoms appear within 14 days, stay home until all of the following apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It has been 10 days since their symptom onset 2. They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications) 3. Other symptoms have improved 	<p>14 days after an exposure is still the recommended quarantine timeline.</p> <p>On day 8 with a negative test and no symptoms.</p> <p>On day 11 with no test and no symptoms.</p> <p>In either shortened scenario, symptom monitoring must continue for 14 days.</p> <p>If they become symptomatic, must follow the symptom criteria for returning to work.</p> <p>Doctor's note or Public Health release NOT required to return to work.</p>

<p>J. Employee is living with someone who tested positive for COVID-19</p> <p>Household contact guidance depends if the positive COVID-19 person can completely isolate in their household. This includes separate rooms, bathrooms, and no contact of any kind with other household members.</p> <p>If positive COVID-19 person is able to completely isolate, quarantine can begin on the day of an employee's last exposure with their household member.</p>	<p>Do not allow employee to work. Arrange for delivering paycheck to employee.</p> <p>If employee is <u>unable to have complete separation</u> from the person who had a positive COVID-19, the employee must stay home the entire time their household member is considered infectious, and their quarantine date begins on the day their household member is considered recovered. At the earliest with quarantine timelines, this is 17 days.</p> <p>The health department still recommends a 14 day quarantine, but shortened may be allowed if your employee can complete all non-pharmaceutical interventions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> With a test: Employees can return to work after day 7 ONLY if the result of a COVID-19 test is negative and no symptoms are reported during daily monitoring. This means they can return to work on day 8. A pending test on day 7 is not sufficient. The test must be collected within 48 hours of the end of quarantine, meaning a person can be tested at the earliest on day 6 or day 7. Daily symptom monitoring must continue through day 14. Without a test: Employees can return to work after day 10 without testing IF no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. This means they can return to work on day 11. Daily symptom monitoring must continue through day 14 <p>If symptoms appear within 14 days, stay home until all of the following apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> It has been 10 days since their symptom onset They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications) Other symptoms have improved 	<p>14 days after an exposure is still the recommended quarantine timeline.</p> <p>On day 8 with a negative test and no symptoms.</p> <p>On day 11 with no test and no symptoms.</p> <p>In either shortened scenario, symptom monitoring must continue for 14 days.</p> <p>If they become symptomatic, must follow the symptom criteria for returning to work.</p> <p>Doctor's note or Public Health release NOT required to return to work.</p>
<p>K. Employee is a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 at work.</p> <p>You must notify all close contacts within your workplace.</p>	<p>Do not allow employee to work. Arrange for delivering paycheck to employee.</p> <p>Our department still recommends a 14 day quarantine, as this is the safest strategy for preventing asymptomatic transmission of COVID-19.</p> <p>If workplace can ensure ALL non-pharmaceutical interventions can be followed then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> With a test: Employees can return to work after day 7 ONLY if the result of a COVID-19 test is negative and no symptoms are reported during daily monitoring. This means they can return to work on day 8. A pending test on day 7 is not sufficient. The test must be collected within 48 hours of the end of quarantine, meaning a person can be tested at the earliest on day 6 or day 7. Daily symptom monitoring must continue through day 14. // <i>Continued on next page</i> 	<p>14 days after an exposure is still the recommended quarantine timeline.</p> <p>On day 8 with a negative test and no symptoms.</p> <p>On day 11 with no test and no symptoms.</p> <p>In either shortened scenario, symptom monitoring must continue for 14 days.</p> <p>If they become symptomatic, must</p>

	<p>2. Without a test: Employees can return to work after day 10 without testing IF no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. This means they can return to work on day 11. Daily symptom monitoring must continue through day 14</p> <p>If symptoms appear within 14 days, stay home until all of the following apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It has been 10 days since their symptom onset 2. They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications) 3. Other symptoms have improved <p>If employee is tested, stay home until test results return. Follow Scenario D or E, depending on test results.</p>	<p>follow the symptom criteria for returning to work. Doctor's note or Public Health release NOT required to return to work</p>
L. Employee previously was diagnosed with COVID-19, and now has is considered close contact.	<p>Employee may continue to work and does not need to isolate if they had a positive PCR test within the last 90 days. Other employees are not at risk. People who have COVID-19 can test positive for many weeks after they recover and are no longer infectious</p>	
M. Employee is a close contact to someone who has been exposed to another positive person	<p>Employee can continue to work and self-monitors symptoms daily.</p>	N/A
N. Employee lives with or cares for someone who is has been exposed to another positive person	<p>Employee can continue to work and self-monitors symptoms daily</p>	N/A

EMPLOYEE HEALTH REPORTING AGREEMENT

FOR COVID-19 Response

People with COVID-19 have a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

Employees should self-monitor daily for these COVID-19 symptoms:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Cough | 6. Sore throat |
| 2. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | 7. New loss of taste of smell |
| 3. Fever $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ | 8. Nausea |
| 4. Chills | 9. Vomiting |
| 5. Muscle Pain | 10. Diarrhea |

This list is not all inclusive. Other [less common symptoms](#) have been noted.

Employees must report if they are diagnosed with COVID-19:

- By a positive lab test, or
- Diagnosis from a health care provider (without lab testing)

Employees must also report COVID-19 Exposures:

- Living with a person that has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or
- Having close contact with a person that has been diagnosed with COVID-19

I understand the rules about health reporting and agree to:

1. Self-monitor prior to reporting to work each day.
2. Report symptoms, positive diagnosis or exposure to COVID-19 to the Person-in-Charge.
3. Follow the exclusions and/or restrictions that may be required of me.

I understand and agree to follow all best practices adopted by my business to prevent the spread of COVID-19 including but not limited to:

1. Communicate virtually whenever possible.
2. Limit in-person meetings and gatherings.
3. Practice frequent hand hygiene.
4. Wear PPE (cloth face coverings, masks, gloves, eye protection, etc.) required by my employer.
5. Maintain social distancing with other employees, customers, and clients.
6. Follow heightened cleaning and sanitizing of workspace and equipment.

Employee Name (please print) _____

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

Person in Charge Signature _____ Date _____

WORK RULES FOR ILL EMPLOYEES

The Person-in-Charge must help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by teaching new hires and all employees the importance of not working when sick.

Exclusions and Restrictions

Employee is not allowed to work in the establishment.

	What should the employee do?	When can the employee return to work?
If you have been diagnosed and are symptomatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, call your healthcare provider for advice and to discuss testing. Isolate yourself in your home, and do not go out when you are sick. Practice excellent hygiene and if you have others in your home, isolate yourself in one room (if possible). Cover coughs and sneezes. Do not share personal household items. Clean your hands often. Clean all "high-touch" surfaces like doorknobs often. Wear a mask when around others in your household. Monitor your symptoms and call your health care provider if symptoms worsen. 	<p>Stay home and avoid others until you have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 hours without a fever (without fever reducing medicine), your symptoms improve, AND it has been 10 days since the first day you had symptoms. <p>Employers should screen employees before allowing return to work, but should not make employees provide a negative COVID-19 test.</p>
If you have a positive COVID-19 viral test and are asymptomatic (have no symptoms)	<p>A. Stay home.</p> <p>B. Monitor your health for fever, cough, and shortness of breath for 10 days.</p> <p>C. Call your health care provider if symptoms worsen.</p>	<p>Asymptomatic individuals with lab-confirmed COVID-19 should remain in isolation until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 days have passed since the collection date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms. <p>NOTE: patients who develop COVID-19 symptoms during this period should extend isolation precautions for at least 10 days from the date of symptom onset (see above).</p>
<p>If you may have been a close contact exposed to a person with COVID-19 but are not sick</p> <p><i>Close contact is defined as closer than 6 feet, for 15 minutes or more total – OR – direct exposure to coughs, sneezes, or other body fluids</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home. Do not go to work until your quarantine period is complete. Monitor your health for fever, cough, and shortness of breath for 14 days after your last contact with the sick person. La Crosse County Health Department recommends a 14-day quarantine period, but a shortened quarantine may be an option if certain criteria are met and it is approved by your employer. 	<p>Our department recommends a 14-day quarantine period. A shortened quarantine may be an option. Please consult with your employer.</p> <p>NOTE: patients who develop COVID-19 symptoms or test positive during this period should extend isolation precautions for at least 10 days from the date of symptom onset (see above).</p>

Employees with no known exposure to COVID-19, not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, and have not tested positive for COVID-19 may work unrestricted as long as all best business practices are followed.



LA CROSSE COUNTY
Health Department
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Appendix A: Guidance for Businesses to Help with Contact Tracing of Positive COVID-19 Cases Among Staff

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

General Overview

COVID-19 has the potential to spread rapidly once it enters an environment in which groups of people from different households congregate, of which many business places can be susceptible. The potential for COVID-19 to spread among staff can be very disruptive to business operation and economic function, making preventive measures of the utmost importance. One of the most essential prevention activities is quick identification of cases and their close contacts, and excluding them from the workplace, to ensure that additional staff are not exposed requiring quarantine.

Purpose: It is the goal of the health department to connect with all cases and contacts within 48 hours of their being identified to us in order to provide guidance complete contact tracing. During times of increased cases, the health department may not have capacity to reach all cases as quickly as we would like or all close contacts. For this reason, we are seeking to partner with the business community through a modified process that helps us reach more people faster, through which we can help protect our community and business community and keep our economy functional.

This guide is meant to assist local businesses in achieving this goal.

Local Resources

La Crosse County Public Health Department

- Coulee COVID-19 Collaborative: <https://lacrossecounty.org/couleecovid19>
- Contact Information:
 - General COVID-19 Inbox: covid19@lacrossecounty.org
- Contact Information for urgent matters that cannot wait after hours, all weekends, all holidays:
 - Non-Emergency Dispatch 608-782-7575

State Resources

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Business, Employers and Workers

- Website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/employers.htm>

Wisconsin Economic Development Foundation

- Website: <https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/covid-19-response/>

National Resources

Centers for Disease Control

- Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>

PART II: ACTIONS WHEN A FACILITY HAS A POSITIVE EMPLOYEE

As soon as a positive test is identified in an employee, the facility should immediately undertake actions to identify others at risk and prevent the spread of disease. To aid in this process, the following checklist has been developed:

Checklist for Facilities Handling a Staff Member Who is Positive for COVID-19

Action Item	Key Person	Date/Time Completed	Notes
1 Exclude the person who is positive from work. All positive cases MUST be excluded from the workplace until they are discharged from isolation.			
2 Notify business leadership and management (and facility medical consultants if applicable).			
3 Determine exposure risk period for the person with a positive COVID-19 test (see document below).			
4 Send the email template contained in this guide to the positive case. This contains instructions and a link to the COVID-19 Case Intake Form. The actions in the email and submission of the form should be completed within 24 hours.			
5 Complete the facility-part of the contact tracing process by filling out a line list (sent under separate cover). Email the completed line list to the La Crosse County Health Department at covid19@lacrossecounty.org . Enter the subject line "Confidential: [Business Name] Line List [CASE INITIALS] [MM/YY]" to ensure it is quickly identified.			
6 Notify all staff close contacts of their exposure. Close contacts should be asked to quarantine for 14 days following their most recent exposure to the infectious case. In very specific circumstances, quarantine may be shortened (see elsewhere in this document). Facility should send the email template for contacts contained in this guide.			

Step 3: Determine Case's Exposure Risk Period

Answer the following questions in order to determine the exposure risk period of the staff or resident with the positive COVID-19 test:

- a) Case's date of symptom onset: Date _____
- b) If asymptomatic, date of positive test (when test was done): Date _____
- c) 48 hours before symptom onset or positive test: Date _____
- d) Dates in the facility from 48 hours before symptom onset or positive test (date of C, above) to the most recent shift/time:

Date _____
Date _____
- e) Exposure risk period is from 48 hours prior to symptom onset or positive test (date of C) through date of most recent shift/time in building (most recent shift date of D).

For example, staff member EAC:

Last updated December 10, 2020

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Date of symptom onset: | June 12 |
| 2) N/A | |
| 3) 48 hours before symptom onset: | June 10 |
| 4) Shifts in facility: | June 10
June 11 |
| 5) Exposure risk period: | June 10 through June 11 |

Step 4: Case Intake Process

For any staff member with a positive COVID-19 lab test who lives in La Crosse County, the facility should send the following email to the staff member. Other than filling in the **name**, please do not alter this email in any substantive way. It is the Health Department's goal to still call each case. During times of peak case activity if capacity is overwhelmed, this may not be possible. For this reason, ensuring that the staff member receives this email and completes the case intake form—which includes isolation guidance and collects information about locations of community exposure—is essential. The template that you should complete and send to the employee is below:

Dear **_____**,

We have been asked by the La Crosse County Health Department to send the following communication to any positive staff member who lives in La Crosse County.

It is our understanding that through laboratory testing, you have been shown to be positive for 2019-novel coronavirus (COVID-19). It is the goal of the La Crosse County Health Department to reach all positive cases to provide guidance within 48 hours of a case being reported to our department. During times of high case volume, we may be unable to reach cases in this time frame. For this reason, please take the following actions immediately (no later than 24 hours of receipt of this email):

1. Complete the LCHD case intake form here: <https://hipaa.jotform.com/lchdphn/case-intake-form>
2. Notify any non-work-related close contacts that they have been exposed to COVID-19. (Note: Your employer will notify work-related close contacts about exposure in partnership with the health department.)
 - o NOTE: "Close contact" is defined as having been directly exposed to bodily secretions (including through activities such as coughing, sneezing or singing) – OR – being within 6 feet of a positive case for 15 minutes or more cumulatively while that person was infectious. Someone is infectious for the 48 hours before they develop symptoms, or if you were tested before your symptoms started, the 48 hours before the positive test specimen was collected.
3. Ask all close contacts identified above to complete the following contact intake form within 24 hours: <https://hipaa.jotform.com/lchdphn/contact-intake-form-lchd>

As a reminder, COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease. Although some people have very mild to no symptoms, others (of all ages) may develop severe symptoms. **For this reason, you must remain in isolation while you recover.**

You may be **released from isolation** after ALL of the following criteria are met:

1. it has been 10 days since symptoms started
2. you have had no fever for 24 hours without using medication that would reduce the fever (such as Advil or Tylenol), AND
3. other symptoms you had have improved.

Note that your employer cannot shorten your isolation time. If you have questions about isolation, please contact the health department.

Isolation means that you should not leave your house. As such, you may not come to work in person. You should separate yourself from other household members for the entire duration of your isolation period. You should try to avoid using common spaces such as a bathroom or kitchen. If you must share a common space with others, wear a mask at all times while you are outside of your room and clean all surfaces that you touch before returning to your room.

Please note that your household members must be in quarantine following their last exposure to you. The safest duration of quarantine is 14 days. A shortened quarantine of 7 or 10 days (see below) is only an option if a contact can do *all of the following* for 14 days after an exposure, including in the workplace:

- Symptom monitoring for 14 days
- Correct and consistent mask use
- Physical distancing of 6 feet at all times
- Hand and cough hygiene
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Avoid crowds
- Adequate indoor ventilation

Providing that all the above non-pharmaceutical interventions can be implemented, household members may be eligible for a shortened quarantine through one of the following options:

1. **With a test:** Close contacts can be discharged from quarantine **after day 7** ONLY if the result of a COVID-19 test is negative and no symptoms are reported during daily monitoring. A pending test on day 7 is not sufficient. The test must be collected within 48 hours of the end of quarantine, meaning a person can be tested at the earliest on day 6 or day 7 following exposure. Daily symptom monitoring, and all other interventions above, must continue through day 14.
2. **Without a test:** Close contacts can be discharged from quarantine **after day 10** without testing IF no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. Daily symptom monitoring, and all other interventions above, must continue through day 14.

NOTE: If you cannot separate from them completely, their quarantine period will not end until 14 days after you are discharged from isolation.

If you develop severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing or a high fever that cannot be controlled with medication, you should seek medical care. Remember to call the facility or provider before you go in. Notify all personnel with whom you interact that you are positive for COVID-19 so that they can keep you and their staff as safe as possible.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact our department by emailing covid19@lacrossecounty.org or call (608) 785-9872.

The La Crosse County Health Department wishes you a speedy recovery.

Step 5: Facility-Based Contact Tracing

After a business identifies a positive case in a staff member, they should undertake facility-based “contact tracing.” Contact tracing is the process that identifies those who were exposed to the positive case when they were infectious. By identifying these individuals and quarantining them, you will help to limit the risk of further infections in your workplace and in our community.

NOTE: Just because two people stood in the same room when one was contagious does not make them close contacts. “Close contacts” mean that someone was standing within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more – OR – had direct exposure to coughs, sneezes or other bodily fluids.

As part of this process, if a business identifies that there are close contacts who were exposed in the workplace, the business should complete a “Line List” (template at the end of this document), detailing each person in the business place who was exposed to the case based on honest communication with the case and review of workflow and observation. **During these conversations, it is essential that you do NOT name the positive case to his/her coworkers. The person’s privacy is protected by law and should be respected.** Facilities should send the completed form to the La Crosse County Health Department within 24 hours. To ensure that this email is easily identified, please enter the subject line “Confidential: [Business Name] Line List [CASE INITIALS] [MM/DD].” For example, if my business was “La Crosse County” and I interviewed a case name John Doe, the subject of my email would be “Confidential: La Crosse County Line List JD 9/25.”

Step 6: Send Close Contacts the Contact Intake Form

Any staff member who is determined to be a close contact should be sent the following email which includes a link to the “La Crosse County COVID-19 Contact Intake Form,” and asked to complete it within 24 hours of receipt. Other than filling in the **name** and **exposure date**, please do not alter this email in any substantive way.

Dear _____,

Through contact tracing, you have been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of 2019-novel coronavirus (COVID-19). You were exposed on [date(s)]. We have been asked by the La Crosse County Health Department to send the following communication to any staff member who is a close contact of a positive case.

It is the goal of the La Crosse County Health Department to contact close contacts to provide guidance, but during times of high case volume, we may be unable to do so. **For this reason, please complete the LCHD contact intake form within 24 hours of receiving this email, which contains important instructions and frequently asked questions :** <https://hipaa.jotform.com/lchdphn/contact-intake-form-lchd>

As a reminder, COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease. Although some people have very mild to no symptoms, others (of all ages) may develop severe symptoms. 40-50% of infections come from an exposure to someone who does not yet have symptoms. **For this reason, you must remain in quarantine. The safest duration of quarantine is 14 days.** A shortened quarantine of 7 or 10 days (see below) is only an option if you can do *all of the following* for 14 days after your exposure, including in the workplace:

- Symptom monitoring for 14 days
- Correct and consistent mask use
- Physical distancing of 6 feet at all times
- Hand and cough hygiene
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Avoid crowds
- Adequate indoor ventilation

Providing that all the above non-pharmaceutical interventions can be implemented, you may be eligible for a shortened quarantine through one of the following options:

1. **With a test:** You can be discharged from quarantine **after day 7** ONLY if the result of a COVID-19 test is negative and no symptoms are reported during daily monitoring. A pending test on day 7 is not sufficient. The test must be collected within 48 hours of the end of quarantine, meaning a person can be tested at the earliest on day 6 or day 7 following exposure. Daily symptom monitoring, and all other interventions above, must continue through day 14.
2. **Without a test:** You can be discharged from quarantine **after day 10** without testing IF no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. Daily symptom monitoring, and all other interventions above, must continue through day 14.

Quarantine means that you should not leave your house, except to seek medical care if necessary. If you do leave your house for medical care, notify the facility/provider before you head in that you are a close contact and in quarantine.

Because you are in quarantine, you may not come to work in person. You should separate yourself from other household members as much as possible for the entire duration of your quarantine period. You should try to avoid using common spaces such as a bathroom or kitchen. If you must share a common space with others, wear a mask at all times while you are outside of your room, stay 6' away from others in your household, and clean all surfaces that you touch before returning to your room.

Please note that your household members do NOT need to be in quarantine if they were not exposed. If, however, you develop symptoms, every member of your household who has been around you in the 48 hours before you develop symptoms should also quarantine until you can be tested.

Close contacts who do not have symptoms can only access testing through National Guard sites; up to date schedules of testing locations can be found on the Health Department's website. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, tiredness/fatigue, headache, loss of taste or smell, and digestive symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. If you develop symptoms, even if they are very mild, you should be tested; you can be tested with symptoms by calling your local provider or through a community testing site.

If you have questions about quarantine, please contact the health department by emailing covid19@lacrossecounty.org or call (608) 785-9872.

Name of Close Contact	Phone Number	Date of Interaction	Add all time that these two people spent within 6' of each other when the case was infectious. Enter in minutes.	Does this person have symptoms?	Has this person been tested?	Has this person been sent the contact intake form? IF YES: Date?
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__
			_____ minutes	Yes / No	Yes _____ / No Date	Yes / No Date: __/__/__

Business Line List Template

