



Positive Cases in the Workplace: *How employers can help limit the spread of COVID*

Employers can prepare and respond to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 by taking the following actions:

1. Refer to the link below for guidance from the California Department of Public Health

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Workplace-Outbreak-Employer-Guidance.aspx#>

2. Determine cleaning or disinfection that may be needed. Refer to the link below for guidance to help you determine appropriate actions:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

3. Determine which employees may have been exposed to the virus and meet "close contact" criteria.

- Review CDC definition of a "close contact" or "**6-15-48**"
 - Persons who are within 6 feet of an infected person, for at least 15 minutes, starting from 48 hours before symptoms of the illness.
 - For persons who test positive, but have no symptoms, this period is 2 days prior to testing date plus 10 days. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/contact-tracing.html#:~:text=For%20COVID%2D19%2C,the%20patient%20is%20isolated.>
- Workers who were wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) during their interaction with a positive case may not be considered contacts. Guidance can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html>

4. Create a list of all employees that have positive tests or are close contacts

- List name, date of birth, phone number, dates that the employee worked with the positive staff, dates of symptoms, county of residence, shift hours, and job assignment.
- The list identifies employees who should quarantine for 14 days and will assist the Public Health Department in a contact investigation.

5. Inform the health department by phone if there are 3 or more positive cases or employees with symptoms in your workplace: (805)681-5280. **Assure that positive employees isolate** at home and do not report to work. This flyer provides more information:



6. Inform employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace

- Employers must maintain confidentiality of employees with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection when communication with other employees as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Follow the [Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](https://publichealthsb.org/) and instruct the potentially exposed close contacts to:

- Stay home for 14 days after their last contact with the COVID-positive employee.
- Maintain at least 6-foot distance from others in the home, telework if possible, and self-monitor for symptoms. Additional information can be found here: <https://publichealthsb.org/>
- If symptomatic close contacts should be tested for COVID-19 when possible, but will still need to quarantine for 14 days even if the test is negative.
- Contacts who develop symptoms should promptly notify their medical provider. They should be evaluated for infection and for the need for medical care.
 - Provide employees with information about what to expect after they are sent home (e.g., instructions about testing, sick leave rights under federal, state, and local laws and company policies, return-to-work requirements, etc.).

7. If you are a critical infrastructure industry and have a workforce shortage consult with the Public Health Department.

- The health department may consider allowing an employee in a critical infrastructure industry who had close contact to a confirmed case to continue to work if the essential operations of the workplace would be compromised by quarantine of the employee and no alternate staff can perform the same role.
- [Critical infrastructure](#) workplaces should consult with the health department before allowing close contacts to continue work activities, and follow the guidance on [Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19](#).
- Employers in critical infrastructure have an obligation to manage potentially exposed workers' return to work in ways that best protect the health of those workers, their co-workers, and the general public.