Process for COVID-19 Exposure at Work

How to handle symptoms and household exposures?

1.

Does employee have symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes, symptoms:

The employee should isolate at home and contact their primary care provider or nearest urgent care facility for direction. The provider may or may not determine a COVID-19 test is necessary. Follow employer's sick leave policy.

If the employee tests positive or is presumed positive due to recent known exposure, the employee is excluded from work until:

- 24 hours with no fever (without fever-reducing medication) AND

- Symptoms have improved AND

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared.

2.

Are they a household member or close contact* of a person with symptoms or a pending COVID-19 test?

Yes:

Household members and other close contacts of a either a quarantined person or a symptomatic but undiagnosed person may continue to attend work and should monitor for symptoms. They do not need to be excluded. If symptoms develop, they should call their medical provider to be tested for COVID-19. If their household member or contact tests positive, they should follow step 3 if the contact was within 48 hours of positive test or development of symptoms.

3.

Are they a close contact of a known COVID+ case?

Yes, close contact:

The employee is excluded from the workplace until 14 days past last known exposure to COVID+ person. If one or more negative tests are received, it does not change the length of the quarantine period, and does not allow them to return to work early.

If the answers to the above questions are "no", and the person is not being isolated or quarantined for COVID-19, the employee may go to work.

This is a summary document that may not cover all scenarios. If you are concerned about a less common COVID-19 exposure situation at workplace, please contact the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce at relaunch@lansingchamber.org or (517) 853-6442.

EXAMPLE

Bob's desk is next to Fred. Fred gets sick with COVID-19. Bob needs to be quarantined, even though he is healthy at this time. Bob sat in the lunchroom often, and Fred did not. Therefore, the employees in the lunchroom who were near Bob (but not Fred) do not need to be quarantined. Hopefully, Bob will not get sick and will be back to work in two weeks.

*A close contact is - someone who was within 6 feet of a person who is sick for 15 minutes or more (can be cumulative) within a 24-hour period. This can be anytime during the sick person's isolation or two days before the person got sick. This is regardless of face mask use.

NOTE: Neither a letter nor a test is recommended as an employer requirement to enter or release a person into or from isolation or quarantine. Upon request, however, the health department can issue an official letter or other documentation. To request a letter, see hd.ingham.org/coronavirus

Ingham County Health Department
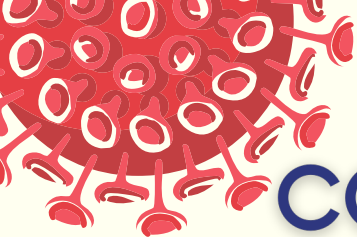
COVID-19 Privacy and Contacts

What happens when someone at work gets COVID-19?

1. **The employer and health department learn about someone with COVID-19 (someone diagnosed with COVID-19 is a "case").**

PRIVACY IS IMPORTANT

Only a select few at the workplace will know the identity of the person. They help figure out who were close contacts to the case. The person's identity is kept confidential to respect their privacy.

The employer must report the case to the Ingham County Health Department per MIOSHA. The case should be reported at: hd.ingham.org/coronavirus ICHD is prioritizing outreach/follow-up regarding outbreaks and high risk settings.*
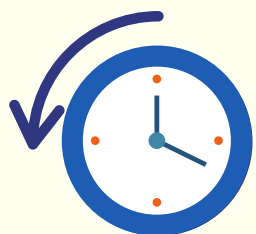
If the employee was in the workplace in the past 7 days, the employer should thoroughly clean and disinfect the workplace (the areas the employee was in), using an EPA approved COVID disinfectant.

2. **Close contacts are identified and notified.**

What is a close contact? It typically is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes. The time may be cumulative over a 24-hour period. Mask usage does not change this.

A person with COVID-19 is considered contagious starting 2 days (48 hours) before they started having symptoms. If they never have symptoms, they are considered contagious starting 2 days (48 hours) before their COVID-19 test was performed.

Close contacts are at risk of getting sick. They must be identified and be in quarantine.
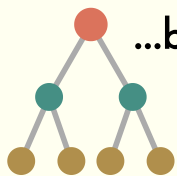
...but what about contacts to close contacts?

Since close contacts are not yet known to be infected, the contacts to those contacts do not need to be in quarantine and do not need to be identified or contacted.

3. **If the employer has additional questions...**

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce is providing technical support. Please contact the Chamber at relaunch@lansingchamber.org or (517) 853-6442.

*High risk settings include: child care facilities, K-12 schools, and colleges and universities, and congregate living facilities.

Ingham County Health Department

How does COVID-19 spread?
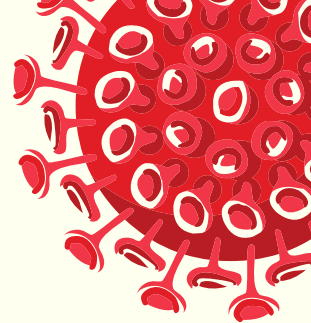
DROPLETS

Respiratory droplets are small particles that enter the air when we cough, sneeze, laugh, sing, yell, and talk. Basically, they are little flecks of spit. Droplets tend to settle out of the air after traveling several feet from the person that released them. Droplets can also spread directly by kissing or sharing personal items like drinks, vape pens, silverware, or other things that go from one person's mouth to another. This is the most likely mode of transmission.

We can reduce the spread of respiratory droplets to each other by wearing face coverings, avoiding large crowded groups, and staying more than 6 feet apart from each other.

AEROSOLS
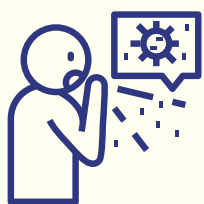
Aerosols are even smaller particles that are created when we breathe, talk, sing, sneeze, or cough. They are lighter and can stay in the air much longer than respiratory droplets but dry up more quickly.

We can reduce the spread of aerosols by increasing outdoor air ventilation or filtering air that is being recirculated.

OBJECTS

Objects can spread the COVID-19 virus when respiratory droplets or aerosols settle on them, leaving germs behind or if someone has the coronavirus on their hands from touching their nose or mouth than touches an object. This is the least likely mode of transmission.

We can reduce the spread of COVID-19 via objects by frequent handwashing, not touching your face, frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces, and use of automatic or touchless controls.

What are the chances of catching COVID-19?

While the definition of a close contact for COVID-19 is being within 6 feet of an infected person for 15 minutes (cumulative) or more, other factors can also come into play.

INTENSITY OF EXPOSURE

The intensity of exposure refers to how much virus you were exposed to.

- Was the sick person really contagious when you were exposed to them?
- Were they coughing and sneezing without a mask on versus having no symptoms with a mask on? Did you kiss them?
- Did you share personal items like a drink or a vape pen?
- Did you sit right next to and have a face to face conversation with them or were you 6 feet away with your back to them?

The more virus you are exposed to, the more likely you are to get sick.

DURATION OF EXPOSURE

The duration of exposure refers to how long were you exposed. If you were in a conference room with someone contagious for COVID-19 for 6 hours a day while they were contagious for several days, yet your seat was not within 6 feet of them, you may still have had a long enough duration of exposure to that person, particularly to aerosols and objects in that room.

PERSONAL HEALTH

Your personal health, like how good your immune system is, also plays a part in whether or not you will get infected, as does whether you were using all the COVID-19 risk reduction methods possible.

AGE

Age also seems to play a part in risks for COVID-19. Children may be at lower risk of both catching and spreading COVID-19 to others, both to other children and to adults.

Ingham County
Health Department

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When an employee should stay home or be sent home

1. **DOES EMPLOYEE HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?**
(If new, different, or worse than any longstanding conditions)

- ONE of the following:
    - New or worsening cough
    - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
    - New loss of taste or smell
    - Temperature 100.0 F or signs of fever (chills/sweating)

OR

- TWO or more of the following
    - Chills
    - Muscle aches
    - Headaches
    - Sore throat
    - Diarrhea
    - Nausea or vomiting
    - Congestion or runny nose

2. **HAS EMPLOYEE HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS COVID-19 OR HAD A POTENTIAL EXPOSURE?**

In the past 14 days has the employee:
- Had close contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more) with a person with confirmed COVID-19?

If "YES" to any in question 1, employee should stay out of work and isolate at home. Testing is recommended.

If "YES" to question 2, employee should stay out of the workplace and quarantine. Testing may be sought and is recommended if symptoms develop. It may be permissible for a critical employee to work during quarantine if there are no symptoms under guidance from the local health department.

STOP Employees should not go to work if they have started to experience symptoms of COVID-19. If they start having symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, they need to be sent home.

Ingham County Health Department

COVID-19 Decision Tree for Employees

Are symptoms of COVID-19 present?
Symptoms include:
One or more of the following: Cough, Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, Loss of taste/smell, or Fever
OR Two more of the following: Chills, Muscle aches, Headaches, Sore throat, Diarrhea, Nausea/vomiting, Congestion/Runny nose

YES

NO

YES branch

Has the employee tested positive for COVID-19?
Per MIOSHA rule notify local health department.

YES — STOP
Employee must isolate. Isolation is a minimum of ten days plus at least 24 hours fever-free and with improvement of symptoms.

NO — **Has the employee been in close contact with a person who is positive for COVID-19?**

- **YES** — STOP
  Employee must quarantine. Testing highly recommended. Quarantine is for 14 days since close contact. A negative COVID does not end the quarantine.

- **NO** — STOP
  The employee should isolate at home and contact their primary care provider or nearest urgent care facility for direction. The provider may or may not determine a COVID-19 test is necessary. Follow employer's sick leave policy.

NO branch

Has the employee tested positive for COVID-19?

YES — STOP
Employee must isolate. Isolation is a minimum of ten days since the person was tested if no symptoms developed.

NO — **Has the employee been in close contact with a person who is positive for COVID-19?**

- **YES** — STOP
  Employee must quarantine. Testing recommended. Quarantine is for 14 days since close contact.

- **NO** — Follow prevention steps and watch for symptoms.

Ingham County Health Department

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