

## Return to Work Guidance for Businesses

October 23, 2020

This document is designed to help businesses and employers safely allow employees to return to work following a positive test for COVID-19, following self-imposed quarantine after being exposed to someone with the virus, or after experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

### What should a business do when an employee tests positive (or is suspected of having) for COVID-19?

- The employee should stay home and away from others until they have fully recovered (see below for return to work criteria).
- Other employees who had close contact\* should stay home for 14 days and monitor for symptoms
- The employee's workspace should be thoroughly cleaned.
- All employees should monitor their health for symptoms, not come to work if they develop any symptoms, and consult their doctor.

\*A close contact is a person who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes during a 24-hour period starting two days before symptom onset or two days before test collection date if asymptomatic until the case isolated.

### When can an employee return to the workplace?

**Symptoms:** An employee can be allowed to return to work when the following criteria are met:

- fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for at least 24 hours, and
- improvement in other symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), and
- at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

**Positive Test Result but no symptoms:** If the employee with the confirmed case of COVID-19 is asymptomatic, they can return to work after at least 10 days have passed since the collection date of the first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test as long as they remain asymptomatic.

**What are the recommendations for employees who had close contact to the case?** An employee who is not working remotely should stay home for 14 days after the last known close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. The employee should self-monitor for symptoms associated with COVID-19.

### What should a business or employer do to promote and maintain a safe workplace?

**Symptom and Temperature Checks:** Measure each employee's temperature and assess symptoms prior to them starting work. Ideally, temperature checks should occur before entering the facility.

**Face Coverings/Masks:** Issue face masks or can approve employees' supplied cloth face coverings, provide hand sanitizer and promote good hand washing practices.

**Social Distancing:** Modify the workplace as needed to allow at least six feet of space between employees. Common areas such as conference rooms and break rooms should be closed.

**Cleaning:** Increase the frequency of cleaning commonly touched surfaces in their facility(s). This includes workstations, countertops and doorknobs.

**Stay Home When Ill:** Implement policies that require all employees who are still working to monitor their health and stay home if they get sick.