



FocusCFO

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COV-19 Small Business Guide Responding to a Positive Test

CHECK LIST – POSITIVE EMPLOYEE COVID-19 TEST

29 APRIL 2020 UPDATE

Table of Contents

1.0 COVID-19 Test Results Classification.....	2
2.0 Source of Infection and Compensation.....	3
3.0 Identification of “Close Contact” Coworkers.....	4
4.0 Communication with “Close Contact” Workers	4
5.0 Communication with All Employees	5
6.0 Facility Decontamination	5
7.0 CDC and other Health Authorities Inquiries	6
Other Relevant Links / Attachments	7
- COVID-19 General Information	
- Steps to Prevent the Illness	
- General Tips	
- State of Ohio Actions if COVID-10 Infection at Workplace	
- Example Checklist	

Generally speaking we continue to navigate the new normal as it relates to the battle against the COVID-19 Pandemic. Employers should consider developing a checklist to handle the instance where an employee test positive for COVID-19.

Resources

Stay informed with reliable resources regarding the status of the pandemic.

[Link to CDC Website](#)

[Link to Ohio Department of Health Website](#)

[Link to EEOC Commission Website](#)

1.0 Test Results Classification

Out of an abundance of caution, employers should treat both a positive test results and “suspected but unconfirmed” cases of COVID-19 as the same.

OPTIONAL: Some employers may want to build in a physician review of the test results to deter potential fraudulent cases.

2.0 Source of Infection

The first step in the process is to categorize the infection based on known facts. Was it contracted at the workplace (contact with another positive employee) or outside the workplace.

INFECTION CONTRACTED INSIDE THE WORKPLACE:

- a. Record the infection as a medical case in the OSHA 300 log.
- b. Proceed to Steps for SOURCE UNKNOWN or INFECTION CONTRACTED OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE

SOURCE UNKNOWN or INFECTION CONTRACTED OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE:

- a. Check if employee is eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave (FFCRA)
- b. If so, place the employee on Emergency Paid Sick Leave (80-hours paid at regular earnings)
- c. Check if employee is eligible for FMLA leave.
- d. If so, start FMLA to run concurrent with Emergency Paid Sick Leave.
- e. If employee is not eligible for either (rare) or if they remain unable to work after 2-weeks, make the employee aware of what other types of leave they may be available such as paid time off (vacation or sick time).
- f. If employee has selected short-term disability insurance, review policy to determine when the employee is eligible.

3.0 Identify Close Contact Co-Workers in Past Two-Weeks

Ask the employee which coworkers they have been in “close contact” with within the prior two weeks. It’s important to ask this question even if the employee has been working from home over the past two weeks.

4.0 Advising Close Contact Employees

Given the sensitive nature of the topic, It is ideal to alert the coworker by phone or video conference. But since time is of the essence, if you can’t reach them personally, email them with “URGENT ACTION REQUIRED” subject line.

Either way, your **message is the same**: *“Someone in our workplace has tested positive for Covid-19, and they have identified you as a close contact according to the CDC definition. We are here to support you. If you are at work, please prepare to leave as quickly as you can. Once you get home — or if you are already working from there — find a place to self-isolate, monitor yourself for any symptoms, and talk to your doctors. How can I support you in doing all this?”*

Follow up all conversations with an email confirming the message and the following information:

- a) Tele medicine information and local testing site information, for cases where they don’t have a doctor
- b) Information on continued pay policy
- c) Information on Employee Assistance Program or other resources, if available
- d) DO NOT PROVIDE EMPLOYEE’S NAME

5.0 [OPTIONAL] Company Wide Communication

In the case of smaller companies, it may be prudent to have a all hands video conference to discuss with the total team of employees.

Respect the confidentiality of both the positive-tested employee and anyone in the close-contact group. Then simply give them the facts: *“The person tested positive on a certain date and is now self-isolating. The close contacts have been told and were asked to leave the workplace and self-isolate. If you were not already told you were a close contact, then you are not one. If you have questions about Covid-19 or your situation please call your doctor and look at the CDC website. The company is here to support everyone during this difficult time, and we all send our best wishes to the people affected.”*

6.0 Initiate Decontamination Protocol

In cases where the employee or the close contact coworkers have been in the operations/offices in the prior two-week, consideration should be given to the following:

- a) If possible, ceasing operation and quarantining the facility for 3-days.
- b) Having the employees’ workspace, immediate surrounding areas and common spaces (breakrooms, elevators, entry/exit doors, timeclocks, restrooms, ect.) professionally cleaned, if you don’t have a resource consider Clean Harbors (855) 487-7221; deconservices@cleanharbors.com
- c) Notify known third parties (customers, vendors and others) that the employee(s) may have been in contact with over the prior two-weeks.

7.0 CDC / Public Health Authorities

Respond as required to inquiries from the CDC and local health authorities. In this instance, the employer is obligated to disclose the identity of the employee(s).

- a) Immediately report employee or customer infection to the local health districts. Use the following link to identify local health district
<https://odhgateway.odh.ohio.gov/lhdinformationsystem/Directory/GetMyLHD>
- b) Work with local health department to identify potentially exposed individuals to help facilitate appropriate communication/ contact tracing.

Attachment 1

Symptoms

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

The following symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure**.

- Fever [1]
- Cough [1]
- Shortness of breath/ difficulty breathing [1]
- Chills / shaking chills [2]
- Sore throat [2]
- Loss of smell /taste [2]

[1] only one symptom indicates suspected infection

[2] requires at least two of these symptoms to be present

How COVID-19 Spreads

The virus is thought to spread mainly from the following:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Steps to Prevent Illness - Take steps to protect YOURSELF

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands

Avoid close contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Steps to Prevent Illness - Take steps to protect OTHERS

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Stay home if you're sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.

Cover coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Wear a facemask if you are sick

- If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room.
- If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

Clean and disinfect

- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

General Tips – Keeping the Workplace Safe

Encourage employees to do the following:

Practice good hygiene

- Stop handshaking –use other noncontact methods of greeting
- Clean hands at the door and schedule regular hand washing reminders by email
- Create habits and reminders to avoid touching their faces and cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, and handrails regularly
- Increase ventilation by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning

Be careful with meetings and travel

- Use videoconferencing for meetings when possible
- When not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces
- Consider adjusting or postponing large meetings or gatherings
- Assess the risks of business travel

Revisit Workplace Arrangements

- Where possible, increase the distance between workers
- Where practical, utilize messenger, shared files and phones versus face-to-face collaboration
- Ensure cafeteria staff and their close contacts practice strict hygiene

Stay home if...

- They are feeling sick
- They have a sick family member in their home

State of Ohio – Actions if COVID-19 Infection at Workplace:

Responsible RestartOhio

Actions if Covid-19 Infection at Workplace:

- Immediately report employee or customer infections to the local health district.
- Work with local health department to identify potentially exposed individuals to help facilitate appropriate communication/contact tracing.
- Shutdown shop/floor for deep sanitation if possible.

#IN THIS TOGETHER **Ohio**

 **MIKE DEWINE**
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

Ohio | Department of Health

coronavirus.ohio.gov

