

# Managing Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in the Workplace



**For essential businesses and organizations that continue to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic, Washtenaw County Health Department recommends:**

- Screen everyone. Check employees for fever or other symptoms if they will enter facilities or buildings.
- Maintain 6 feet of distance between people.
- Emphasize frequent and proper hand washing. Make sure sinks are well supplied.
- Work remotely whenever possible.
- Do not share space or equipment. If this is not possible, have employees wash their hands before and after using shared equipment. Clean and sanitize equipment between uses.
- Any employee with cold symptoms or underlying health conditions should stay home or work remotely.

## **What do I do when my employee shows up to work ill?**

If an employee comes to work ill, or becomes ill while at work, they should be directed to go home immediately, even if their symptoms are mild. If they are having trouble breathing or cannot keep fluids down, have them contact their doctor right away. COVID-19 symptoms are very similar to the symptoms seen in a typical cold or flu. However, it is best to be cautious. Take care not to over-react in order to prevent panic among your team. Consider alternative work options like teleworking if your employee is well enough to do so.

## **What should I do if visitors or customers have symptoms of illness, such as coughing or sneezing?**

You and your employees should follow social distancing guidance and maintain at least a 6-foot distance from anyone, especially those who are having symptoms. If your employee must be closer to the customer, advise them to minimize time spent with symptomatic customers to less than 10 minutes, if possible. Be sure to provide the public with tissues and trash receptacles. Have a no-touch hand sanitizer dispenser near customer entrances, if feasible.

## **One of our employees just tested positive for COVID-19. What should I do?**

Instruct the employee to stay home and [self-isolate](#). They should not return to work for at least 7 days after symptoms first started **and** 72 hours after fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medicines **and** symptoms have improved, whichever is longer. Offer telework assignments if the employee is well enough to work. **IMPORTANT:** You must protect the confidentiality of your employee. Legally, you cannot identify the employee by name. DO NOT disclose to other staff or third persons the name or other personal or health information of the employee who tested positive for COVID-19.

Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment and other elements of the work environment of the employee along with frequently touched surfaces and objects such as doorknobs/pushbars, elevator buttons, restroom doors, etc. Use EPA-approved disinfectants and use according to label instructions.

If the employee had been working while ill, identify co-workers and individuals that the employee may have come into contact with and advise them to [self-quarantine](#) at home for 14 days. **A close contact is defined as those individuals who had been within 6 feet of the affected employee for greater than 10 minutes while the employee had symptoms.**

**One of our employee’s family members has a “suspected” (but unconfirmed) case of COVID-19. What should we do?**

Employees who have been close contacts to a suspect or known case of COVID-19 should be in [self-quarantine](#) at home for 14 days. If they develop symptoms while in quarantine, then they should follow the return to work guidelines noted above (7 days after symptoms started and 3 days after fevers have resolved and symptoms improved, whichever is longer).

**One of our employees has a “suspected” (but unconfirmed) case of COVID-19. Should I send everyone home?**

You would follow all the same steps outlined above for an employee who tested positive for COVID-19. Identify co-workers and individuals that the employee may have come into close contact with while ill and advise them to [self-quarantine](#) at home for 14 days. A close contact is defined as those individuals who had been within 6 feet of the affected employee for greater than 10 minutes while the employee had symptoms.

**One of my employees has self-reported that they came into contact with someone believed to be positive for COVID-19. What should I do?**

Review the nature of the exposure. If the contact occurred within 6 feet of the ill individual for more than 10 minutes, then the employee should [self-quarantine](#) at home for 14 days from the date of the contact. Offer telework if feasible.

**One of our employees just found out that they were exposed to COVID-19 after interacting with a member of the public (or vendor, or contractor). What steps do I take?**

Review the nature of the exposure. If the contact occurred within 6 feet of the ill individual for more than 10 minutes, then the employee should [self-quarantine](#) at home for 14 days from the date of the contact. Offer telework, if feasible. Check to see if other employees may also have had similar exposure to the ill individual. If so, they should [self-quarantine](#) at home for 14 days, as well.

**When can my employee come back to work if they have been ill or had an exposure?**

Employees who have been ill with symptoms of an upper respiratory illness [new onset of fever (subjective or temperature of  $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  or  $37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) OR symptoms of possible COVID-19 (cough OR shortness of breath OR sore throat)] can return to work 7 days after symptoms started and 72 hours after fevers have resolved without the use of fever reducing medications and symptoms improved, whichever is longer.

Employees who have been close contacts to a suspect or known case of COVID-19 should [self-quarantine](#) at home for 14 days. If they develop symptoms while in quarantine, they should follow the return-to-work guidelines noted above (7 days after symptoms started and 3 days after fevers have resolved and symptoms improved, whichever is longer).

**For the most up-to-date guidance for COVID-19, including [detailed instructions on self-isolation and self-quarantine](#), visit the following sources of official information:**

- Washtenaw County: [washtenaw.org/COVID19](https://washtenaw.org/COVID19)
- Michigan: [michigan.gov/coronavirus](https://michigan.gov/coronavirus)
- National: [cdc.gov/COVID19](https://cdc.gov/COVID19)

**For additional questions, contact the Washtenaw County Health Department at 734-544-6700.**