

Isolation and Self-monitoring Guidance for Healthcare Workers and First Responders

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is currently reporting sustained widespread community transmission of COVID-19 in multiple areas of the State. This interim guidance should be considered alongside applicable state and federal regulations and provided to all healthcare workers as appropriate.

This guidance is applicable to the following groups: hospitals, healthcare facilities, EMS, other organizations that employ healthcare workers in the inpatient or outpatient setting, other first responders, all providers and support staff involved in patient care, and public health staffing actively involved in the COVID-19 response (local or state).

You must stay home if:

- You have a new onset of fever (subjective or temperature of $\geq 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}^*$ or 37.8°C) **OR** symptoms of possible COVID-19 syndrome (cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, congestion, headache, muscle aches, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of taste or smell)
- Healthcare workers should isolate at home until:
 - At least **10 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared **AND**
 - At least **24 hours** have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **AND** improvement in other symptoms
- For HCP with [severe to critical illness](#) or who are severely immunocompromised¹, the recommended duration for work exclusion is **20 days** after symptom onset or positive test
- If you need medical care:
 - Call before seeking care and alert them of your symptoms and possible exposure
 - Take a private vehicle and wear a mask
 - If it is an emergency, call 911

After returning to work, you should:

- Wear a facemask at all times while in the healthcare facility or field until all symptoms are completely resolved or until 14 days after illness onset, whichever is longer.
- Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after illness onset.
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette in [CDC's interim infection control guidance](#) (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles).
- Self-monitor for symptoms and seek re-evaluation from occupational health if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen.

ALL healthcare workers and first responders should:

- **Self-monitor for illness consistent with COVID-19**
 - Take temperature and evaluate yourself for the following symptoms twice daily (8 hours apart with one check immediately before each healthcare shift):
 - Measured temperature >100.0 °F* (37.8 °C) or subjective fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat, runny nose or congestion
 - GI symptoms including abdominal discomfort, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
 - Headaches
 - Muscle aches, fatigue or weakness
 - Loss of the sense of taste or smell

*Fever cutoffs are different in guidance for healthcare workers. This is done to recognize illness early.

- **If any of these signs/symptoms develop, then do NOT go to work.** If symptoms develop at work, you should immediately leave the patient care area, self-isolate, and notify your supervisor.

Healthcare workers and first responders with HIGH-RISK exposure to a confirmed or probable COVID-19 patient should:

- Take extra care to self-monitor your health
 - In addition to self-monitoring at least twice daily for symptoms listed above (subjective fever or measured temp >100.0 °F, cough, shortness of breath or sore throat), also monitor for additional new onset lower acuity symptoms that may be associated with early signs of infection with COVID-19 including muscle aches, malaise (feeling tired or run down), runny nose, congestion, nausea, increased bowel irritability, or loss or change in taste or smell.
- You can keep working if you are able to be closely monitored by your facility's occupational health program and adhere to all requirements for self-monitoring.
- If any symptoms develop, do NOT go to work. If symptoms develop at work, you should immediately leave the patient care area, self-isolate, and notify your supervisor.
- Given the limited availability of personal protective equipment, use of surgical masks by asymptomatic exposed providers at work should be limited to those who have had known high-risk exposures or are involved in care of vulnerable patients.
 - Vulnerable patients include:
 - People aged 65 and older.
 - Individuals who may be immune compromised because of disease or medications.
 - Those with underlying health conditions such as chronic lung disease, severe obesity, diabetes, asthma, heart disease, impaired liver, or kidney function.
 - People who are pregnant.

Asymptomatic health care workers and first responders should NOT be tested:

- In keeping with CDC guidance, MDHHS advises against testing of any asymptomatic individuals with or without an exposure to COVID-19, including healthcare workers.
- Healthcare workers and first responders should not be tested as a precondition of returning to work. A negative test result does NOT provide assurance that healthcare workers will not go on to develop symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of a high-risk exposure.

Support for healthcare workers experiencing anxiety:

- If you feel overwhelmed and need support to cope with the situation, contact the SAMHSA Disaster Distress Hotline at 800-985-5990 or the Washtenaw County Community Mental Health CARES team at 734-544-3050.

Additional resources:

- [Interim U.S. Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure in a Healthcare Setting to Patients with Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) from CDC](#)
- [Guidance for Healthcare Worker Self-Monitoring and Work Restriction from MDHHS](#)