COVID-19
Frequently Asked Questions for Workplaces

Washtenaw County
Health Department

This document was updated April 5, 2021. Please visit our website for the most current guidance.
==Important Update: The quarantine period for close contacts has returned to 14 days – it is no longer 10 days.==

Positive employees

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

1. **Instruct the positive employee to stay home and isolate.**
   These individuals need to isolate at home for at least 10 days after their symptoms began (or 10 days after being tested if no symptoms). The Health Department from the county in which this person lives may contact them to provide information about isolation and to conduct contact tracing. However, due to high numbers of cases, the Health Department may not be able to contact them.

   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 parties the name or other personal or health information of the employee who tested positive for COVID-19. This information can be shared with the Health Department, however.

2. **Determine when the person was at the facility while they were contagious.**
   If the person has symptoms, the contagious period starts 2 days before symptoms started. If the person does not have symptoms, the contagious period starts 2 days before the COVID-19 test was conducted. Determine the potential dates that others were at risk of exposure.

3. **Determine who was a "close contact" of the positive person while they were contagious.**
   A "close contact" is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, either with or without wearing a mask. The contagious period starts 2 days before symptoms begin (or 2 days before the infected person was tested if they don't have symptoms) until the time the infected person is isolated. The 15 minutes does not have to be all at one time. Individual exposures over a 24-hour period should be added up to determine exposure time (i.e. three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes).

   Review schedules to see who was at the facility on the dates of potential exposure. Talk to staff and watch surveillance video, if available, to determine who met the close contact criteria. The individuals identified as close contacts need to quarantine for 14 days after the last date of contact with the positive individual.

   Notify these close contacts directly that they need to quarantine due to an exposure (while protecting the privacy of the positive person, not naming them). Send them home if they are currently at work. Collect names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and county of residence of these close contacts to provide to the Health Department.

4. **Notify the Washtenaw County Health Department of the positive individual.**
   Enter the information about the positive case and any close contacts identified in our secure online portal: www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5698438/Business-COVID-Report

5. **Thoroughly clean and disinfect the facility.**
   Focus on equipment and other elements of the work environment of the employee, along with frequently touched surfaces and objects such as doorknobs/push bars, elevator buttons, restroom doors, etc. Use EPA-approved disinfectants and use according to label instructions. The facility may need to consider closing to accomplish this task.

6. **Notify all other potentially impacted people.**
   Inform other employees and those who may have had casual contact with the positive individual that there was a positive case associated with your facility (while protecting the privacy of the positive person, and not naming them), and indicating that any close contacts who were at higher risk of exposure have been identified and notified directly. Any other individuals at the facility are considered lower risk – similar to any time you leave the house and go out in public. These lower risk individuals should self-monitor for symptoms and seek medical care and testing if they develop symptoms.

Returning to work

If someone tests positive, when can they go back to work?

Isolation is used to keep someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who is sick with symptoms of COVID-19 away from others to prevent the spread of disease. People in isolation must stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their local health department.

Workers who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 can return to work under the following conditions:

- At least 10 days* have passed since symptoms started, **and**
- At least 24 hours fever-free without the use of fever reducing medications, **and**
- Other symptoms have improved.

If the employee did **not** have any symptoms, they can return to work 10 days after the date they were tested for COVID-19.

*Some people with severe illness may continue to be infectious beyond 10 days. The isolation timeframe may be extended for hospitalized, severely ill, or severely immunocompromised cases. The positive employee must follow the guidance provided by the local health department.

If someone is a close contact and in quarantine, when can they go back to work?

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others to prevent the spread of disease. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their local health department.

Workers who have had close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual can return to work under the following conditions:

- At least 14 days have passed since the last date of exposure to the COVID-19 positive person, **and**
- The individual with close contact has not developed any symptoms, **and**
- The individual with close contact does not have any pending COVID-19 test results.

Even if the close contact tests negative for COVID-19, they must complete the full quarantine period.

Ending quarantine at 7 days with negative COVID-19 test results is NOT an option.

[Certain workers who are exposed to COVID-19 may be allowed to continue to work if they remain asymptomatic and wear a mask at all times. See this guidance document for the full list of workers.]

How do I count the 10 days of isolation or 14 days of quarantine?

For **isolation (sick or COVID-19 positive individual)**, the day the individual first showed symptoms of illness is "Day 0." Count 10 days past that date for the return-to-work date. The employee can return to work the next day (Day 11). Be sure that the employee is fever-free for 24 hours and has a vast improvement in symptoms before returning. If the person did not have symptoms, the date the positive test was taken is "Day 0." Count 10 days past that date for the isolation time frame. The employee can return to work the next day (Day 11).

- **Example 1:** Employee developed fever 11/14/20 (Day 0). Fever went away on its own 11/16/20. Employee has no other symptoms. Employee can return to work 11/25/20 (which is 10 full days after illness began and at least 24 hours fever-free).
- **Example 2:** Employee decided to get tested even though they did not have symptoms. Tested 11/20/20. Results came back positive 11/24/20. Date of test on 11/20/20 is "Day 0." Employee never developed symptoms. Employee could return to work 12/1/20 (which is 10 full days after date positive test was taken).

For **quarantine (exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual),** the last day the person was exposed to the COVID-19 positive individual is "Day 0." Count 14 days past that date for the quarantine time frame. The employee can return to work the next day (Day 15). Not that if the employee develops symptoms while in quarantine, they must then revert to the 10 days past symptom onset and 24 hours fever-free, and improvement in other symptoms before returning to work.

It is important to note that the quarantine time period does not begin until after the **last** date of close contact with the positive individual. For this reason, it is critical for positive individuals to isolate from other household members. If they do not properly isolate, the close contact would be out of work during the 10 days of the positive household member's isolation time period, **PLUS** an additional 14 days of quarantine.

- **Example 1:** Employee had close contact with a friend on 11/14/20 (Day 0). The friend developed a cough the next day and then tested positive. Employee can return to work 11/25/29 (which is 14 full days after exposure).
- **Example 2:** Employee's spouse develops symptoms 12/1 and tests positive 12/3. Employee does not isolate from spouse at home. Employee must stay home during the spouse's isolation period through 12/11, **AND THEN** employee begins their 14-day quarantine period. This employee would not be able to return to work until 12/26!

If someone had close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual, can they get a test and go back to work instead of being in quarantine for the full 14 days?

No. COVID-19 can take up to 2 weeks to develop after someone is exposed. The individual must finish the full 14 days of quarantine, regardless of test results, since COVID-19 could still develop.

If an employee has symptoms but does not get tested, when can they go back to work?

We encourage anyone with symptoms to be tested. Employees who have been ill with COVID-19 symptoms but who are not tested can return to work if they meet ALL of the following criteria:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started, **and**
- At least 24 hours fever-free without the use of fever reducing medications, **and**
- Other symptoms have improved.

If an employee has symptoms but tests negative, when can they go back to work?

Employees who have been ill with COVID-19 symptoms and who are tested can return to work if they meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Mild symptoms improve in a short period of time, **and**
- The person tests negative for COVID-19, **and**
- The person is not a close contact of a positive individual.

They do not need to continue to stay at home for the 10 full days after symptoms begin. However, it is a good policy for anyone to be fever-free without the use of medications for 24 hours before returning to work. Also, vomiting or diarrhea should be gone for 24 hours before returning to work.

If symptoms continue after a negative test, they should see their health care provider to rule out any other possible illnesses.

An employee is in quarantine and has developed symptoms and/or tested positive. When can they go back to work?

If an employee develops symptoms while in quarantine, they now need to follow the return-to-work guidelines for a positive person (10 days after symptoms started, at least 24 hours fever-free, and other symptoms improved). They should seek COVID-19 testing.

An employee who did not have any symptoms tested positive for Covid-19. Then they developed symptoms a couple days later. When can they go back to work?

They need to be in isolation for 10 days after their symptoms started. They can return to work 10 days after symptoms started, with at least 24 hours fever-free and symptoms improved.

An employee already tested positive for COVID-19 and was just exposed again. Do they need to quarantine?

Maybe. An individual does not have to quarantine after close contact with someone with COVID-19 if they meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Tested positive for COVID-19 illness *within the last 3 months*, <u>and</u>
- Has recovered, <u>and</u>
- Remains without COVID-19 symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, fever).

An employee was already a close contact and was under quarantine and was just exposed again by someone else. Do they need to quarantine again?

Yes. If an employee who completed quarantine is exposed to the virus again and is considered a close contact, they need to quarantine for 10 days AGAIN. If they get sick or have symptoms while in quarantine, they would then follow the return to work guidelines for a positive person (14 days after symptoms started, 24 hours fever-free and other symptoms improved) and they should get tested.

An employee has been vaccinated for COVID-19 and was just exposed. Do they need to quarantine?

Maybe. Vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet ALL of the following criteria:

- The individual is fully vaccinated, meaning it has been at least 14 days since receiving the final dose in the vaccine series (2 doses of Moderna; 2 doses of Pfizer; or 1 dose of Janssen/Johnson & Johnson), <u>and</u>
- The individual has not developed ANY symptoms since their exposure.

One of our employees has symptoms or is "suspected" of having COVID-19. What should I do?

Instruct the employee to stay home. Encourage the employee to be tested for COVID-19. Until results are available, the individual must isolate at home. If the employee chooses not to be tested, they must stay home for 10 days past the onset of their symptoms.

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/push bars, elevator buttons, restroom doors, etc. Use [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) and use according to label instructions.

Begin identifying co-workers and individuals with whom the employee may have had close contact, in the event the individual tests positive. Close contact means someone was closer than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes from an individual who is positive for COVID-19. It does not matter if the individuals were wearing face coverings. If the sick person ends up testing positive, the exposed individuals identified as close contacts must quarantine at home for 14 days following the last date of close contact.

An employee's family member has been diagnosed with COVID-19. What should I do?

If the employee has a household member or close contact who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee must quarantine at home for 14 days after the last date of close contact with the positive individual. The employee may be contacted by the Health Department for contact tracing. The individual must follow the guidance provided, which will likely be to quarantine for at least 14 days.

If the employee develops symptoms, they should seek testing and follow the return-to-work guidelines for a positive person (10 days after symptoms started and 24 hours fever-free and other symptoms improved).

An employee has reported that they came into contact with someone rumored to be positive for COVID-19. What should I do?

There is an ongoing risk of exposure to COVID-19 everywhere we go. Try to find out more information about the potential exposure, including if the employee had close contact with the individual, being closer than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes.

If it sounds as though close contact occurred, the employee should quarantine at home for 14 days.

If it does not sound like close contact occurred, the employee should self-monitor for symptoms. However, if the employee is contacted by the Health Department and is told they are a close contact and they need to quarantine, they must follow that guidance.

If the employee develops symptoms, they must follow the return-to-work guidelines for a positive person (10 days after symptoms started and 24 hours fever-free and other symptoms improved).

An employee showed up to work ill or became ill at work. What should I do?

If an employee comes to work ill or becomes ill while at work, direct them 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. Encourage the employee to be tested for COVID-19. Until results are available, the individual must isolate at home. Follow the return-to-work guidelines for a positive person (10 days after symptoms started and 24 hours fever-free and other symptoms improved).

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/push bars, elevator buttons, restroom doors, etc. Use [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) and use according to label instructions.

Social distancing

How do I determine a good social distance from another person?

Social distancing means keeping at least 6 feet apart from another person.

What does 6 feet look like?

Six feet is equivalent to two Golden Retrievers standing nose to tail, the average width of a sedan, the length of a sofa or mattress, or two arm lengths extended.

Screening

What screening questions should I ask my employees?

Before starting work in person each day/shift, employees must be asked about [symptoms](#) of fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Any symptom unusual for the person is reason for concern. You can use our [screening form](#) or develop your own.

Employees must be asked if they have tested positive for COVID-19 or if they have been in contact with anyone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

Consider asking about travel. However, this is not required.

Do I have to take the temperature of all my employees?

In most industries, taking temperatures is encouraged but not required. Check current orders for guidance. If available, you can use a touchless thermometer to screen for fever, which is 100.4⁰F or above. The person taking the temperature must wear a mask. Disinfect the thermometer appropriately. Employees can also take their temperature at home or can report if they feel feverish. Not everyone who is infected with COVID-19 develops a fever, so be sure to ask employees symptom-related questions even if you take temperatures.

Traveling

What are the requirements for workers who have traveled?

Domestic travelers are recommended to get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 10 days after travel.

All air passengers coming to the United States, including U.S. citizens, are [required](#) to have a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before they board a flight to the United States. In addition, international travelers are recommended to get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel AND are recommended to stay home and self-quarantine for a full 10 days after travel.

Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. Follow safer practices while traveling, including wearing a mask, maintaining social distance, and cleaning your hands often. Be aware that going to a large social gathering like a wedding, funeral, or party; attending a mass gathering like a sporting event, concert, or parade; or being in crowds can put you at greater risk.

Note that schools have different guidelines, and workplaces may set their own policies about travel.

See [CDC recommendations for travel](#).

Close contact

What does "close contact" mean?

A "close contact" is someone who:

- Was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (either with or without wearing masks.)
- Provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- Had direct physical contact with an infected person (hugged or kissed them).
- Shared eating or drinking utensils with an infected person.

The contagious period starts 2 days before symptoms begin (or 2 days before the infected person was tested if they don't have symptoms) until the time the infected person is isolated. The 15 minutes does not have to be all at one time. Individual exposures over a 24-hour period should be added up to determine exposure time (i.e. three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes).

Close contacts should be sent home from work immediately and must quarantine after contact with a positive individual for 14 days.

If someone is identified as a close contact, they may be contacted by the Health Department, and they must follow the guidance provided.

What if someone had contact with a close contact?

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

COVID-19 testing

Where can I get tested?

In Washtenaw County, most testing sites are using diagnostic tests and a small number are offer antibody testing. Check with your health care provider or see www.washtenaw.org/COVID19test for testing locations.

What types of tests are available for COVID-19?

A viral test looks for **current** infection. These are usually nasal swabs or saliva tests. A PCR test is the most accurate test and is most often recommended. PCR test results can take a couple days. A rapid antigen test is less accurate than a PCR test, especially if people do not have symptoms, but results are available in minutes.

An antibody test or serology (blood) test looks for **past** infection. There are currently many unknowns about COVID-19 antibody testing. It is not clear how accurate these tests are, or if they tell us anything about future immunity to COVID-19.

Should I get a COVID-19 test?

If you have any symptoms, get a **viral** test to check for current infection.

If you are working in person, consider getting a **viral** test to check for current infection.

If you have been exposed to someone infected with COVID-19, consider getting a **viral** test, but wait at least 5 days after the exposure.

Washtenaw County Health Department **does not currently recommend antibody testing**. If you do get an antibody test, we strongly recommend getting both an antibody test and a viral test.

When should I test after a possible exposure?

Testing right after exposure is not recommended, as the virus can take several days to build up enough in the body to develop symptoms or show positive on a test. Individuals should wait a minimum of 5 days after exposure before being tested, with the best window being 7-10 days after exposure. Testing too soon will most likely result in a false negative test - and a false sense of security. In addition, a PCR test is preferred over a rapid antigen test for people who do not have symptoms.

What should I do while waiting for viral COVID-19 test results?

If you have any symptoms or were exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19:

- Stay at home except to get medical care.
- Stay away from other people in your home.
    - Use a separate room and bathroom if possible.
    - Wear a mask if you go into shared spaces.
    - Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.
    - Contact the Health Department if you cannot safely quarantine, as temporary housing may be available (734-544-6700).
- Call ahead before visiting a doctor. See www.washtenaw.org/COVID19 and click the "What to do if you're sick" button for information on managing your symptoms and when to get medical care.
- Make a list of anyone you had contact with 2 days before your symptoms started or since you were exposed.

If you have no symptoms and no known contact with someone who tested positive:

- Still try to stay away from others as much as possible.
- Keep track of anyone you come in close contact with after your test, as well as 2 days before your test.

What do the different COVID-19 test results mean?

Positive viral (PCR/antigen) test: The individual is considered to have an active COVID-19 infection. This person must isolate for 10 days from the start of any symptoms (or 10 days since the date the test was conducted if no symptoms). Health Department staff may be in touch with the individual to conduct contact tracing and to connect the individual with needed resources during isolation.

Negative viral (PCR/antigen) test: No action needed. Just remember this is a point in time for the test. The individual could have been recently exposed and tested negative or could be exposed after testing.

Positive antibody (blood/serology) test: The individual likely had a past infection. The individual can continue to work with a positive antibody test. People can be infected with COVID-19 multiple times, so do not assume a positive antibody test means a person won't get infected or sick in the future. Each case of infection is different, and a person could be asymptomatic one time and severely ill the second time infected. It is important to continue to use protective measures like social distancing, face coverings, and handwashing.

Negative antibody (blood/serology) test: No action needed.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

What type of PPE should people wear?

Healthcare workers should wear N95 masks (also known as respirators) if available. For appropriate use, N95 masks must be fit tested annually to ensure protection. Surgical masks can be worn by those not in direct care of a patient or providing treatment that cause aerosolization. Healthcare workers may also need to wear gloves, surgical masks along with a face shield, gowns, and goggles.

Cloth face coverings can be worn by employees, volunteers, and the public. This means a tightly woven cloth or other multi-layer absorbent material that closely covers an individual's mouth and nose.

In most cases gloves are not necessary. Using your ungloved hands and washing them often is the best method for the typical tasks of everyday life. Wearing gloves might also create a false sense of security, lead to less attention to hand washing, or contribute to cross-contamination when removing or reusing gloves.

Do customers need to wear masks?

Everyone who can medically tolerate a face covering must wear one when in an indoor public space, and when outdoors if 6 feet social distance cannot be maintained. There are limited exemptions to this requirement.

Masks must be worn correctly in order to be effective. Masks should cover nose and mouth, fit snugly against the sides of face and under chin. Masks with valves or vents are not recommended. Don't put the mask

around your neck, chin, or up on your forehead. Don't touch the mask, and if you do, wash or sanitize hands to disinfect. Handle masks only by ear loops or ties.

Based on available research, face shields alone are not considered effective face coverings.

Businesses that are open to the public must refuse entry and service to individuals who fail to comply and must post signs at all entrances instructing customers of their legal obligation to wear a face covering while inside. The state's website has [posters and more information](#) about face coverings.

Do my employees have to wear masks at work?

We strongly recommend that **all** employees wear face masks at work. Medical or surgical grade masks are included within this definition. Employers must supply face coverings to all employees. Based on [current health orders](#), these situations require face coverings:

- Any individual (employees, visitors, and customers) able to medically tolerate a face covering **must** wear a covering over his or her nose and mouth when in any enclosed public space; when outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a distance of 6 feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household; and when waiting for or riding on public transportation, while in a taxi or ridesharing vehicle, or when using a private car service as a means of hired transportation.
- Employees who are not able to consistently maintain six feet of separation from other individuals **must** wear a face covering. Employees who are not able to consistently maintain 3 feet of separation from other individuals in the workplace **should consider** wearing face shields in addition to a mask.
- Employees **must** wear face coverings in shared spaces, including during in-person meetings and in restrooms and hallways.
- Employees working in a food establishment **must** wear a face covering.

Employers can also establish guidelines that require their employees to wear masks at all times.

How often should I change my surgical or N95 masks?

Surgical masks should be thrown away after each shift. They are single-use items and considered contaminated after use. N95 masks should be used according to the facility's policy and manufacturer's instructions. If at any time your mask becomes soiled or crushed, it should be removed, discarded, and a new mask used. Hand hygiene must be followed when putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) a mask.

[How should I wear](#) and care for a cloth face covering?

A cloth face covering is a tightly woven cloth or other multi-layer absorbent material that covers both the mouth and nose and allows for breathing without restriction. Masks should be secured with ties or ear loops. Hand hygiene must be followed when putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) a mask. Cloth face coverings should be washed after each use. Be careful when drying the fabric in case it shrinks.

Hand hygiene & respiratory etiquette

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

Customers are required to wear a face covering, such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana, or handkerchief, when in any enclosed public space, if they can medically tolerate one.

Employees should follow strict 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 15 minutes, if possible. Be sure to provide the public with tissues and trash receptacles. Have a no-touch hand sanitizer dispenser near customer entrances.

Is hand sanitizer equal to washing your hands?

Washing hands with warm running water and soap is preferred whenever available. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers don't kill ALL types of germs, such as norovirus, some parasites, hepatitis A, and Clostridium difficile. Hand sanitizers also may not remove harmful chemicals such as pesticides and heavy metals like lead. Handwashing reduces the amounts of all types of germs, pesticides, and metals on hands.

Fortunately, alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can kill the virus that causes COVID-19. Hand sanitizer should be used when running water hand washing is not available or practical. For example, hand sanitizer could be used after checking out at a grocery store cash register or moving between workstations in a factory.

What's the correct way to wash your hands?

When washing your hands, wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Scrub all surfaces of your hands, including the palms, backs, fingers, between your fingers, and under your nails. Keep scrubbing for 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song twice. Rinse your hands under clean, running water. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them. Handwashing materials and posters are [available online](#).

What's the correct way to use hand sanitizer?

Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing alcohol, especially in schools and childcare facilities. Apply enough product on hands to cover all surfaces. Rub hands together, until hands feel dry. This should take around 20 seconds. Do not rinse or wipe off the hand sanitizer before it's dry.

Cleaning & disinfection

What should I use to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces?

Wear reusable or disposable gloves for routine cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces like tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc. Clean surfaces using soap and water or a cleaning agent, then use disinfectant. Cleaning with soap and water or a cleaning agent reduces number of germs, dirt, and impurities on the surface. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces. Be sure to wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after removing gloves.

For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are specifically [EPA-approved](#) for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (concentration, application method, contact time, etc.).

Consider using wipeable covers for electronics. If manufacturer guidance is not available, consider using alcohol-based wipes or spray containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Spray a cloth or paper towel and wipe the electronic device rather than spraying anything directly on electronics. Dry these surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

Any product to be used for cleaning or disinfecting should have [Safety Data Sheets](#) (formerly known as Material Safety Data Sheets or MSDS) provided with the product, or available online. The information must be shared with employees. Appropriate training must be given to employees on safe handling and use of the product, potential health effects of product use, and personal protective equipment required.

If I can't locate specific EPA-approved cleaners or wipes, etc., what can I use to clean surfaces?

A simple diluted bleach water solution is effective against the COVID-19 virus. Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. **Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleaner.** To make a bleach solution, mix 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water. Wipe the solution on the surface to be disinfected. Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute. Bleach solutions should be made fresh every 24 hours.

How should I clean and disinfect after someone with COVID-19 has been in my facility?

We don't know how long the air inside a room could be infectious after someone with COVID-19 was there. If someone was actively ill at your facility, close off areas visited by the person who was sick. We recommend waiting 24 hours before you clean and disinfect these areas. This reduces the chance for other employees to be exposed to respiratory droplets.

You can shorten the time it takes respiratory droplets to be out of the air if you increase the ventilation in the area or room. Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.

Clean visibly dirty and high-touch surfaces. Disinfect them after you clean. Clean and disinfect all areas, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment (like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines) used by the person who is sick, focusing on frequently touched surfaces.

Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms.

Do not have people who are sick or who need to be in quarantine perform the cleaning. These individuals should be at home.

Policies

What else can I do to help keep staff and customers safe?

Space is safe! Ensure that employees and customers limit close contact (stay 6 feet apart). Create a physical barrier between customers and staff that ensures 6 feet of distance at routine points of contact (e.g. purchase point). Placing tape on the floor to keep people adequately spaced or by place arrows in the aisle to direct the flow of movement in one direction. Limit the number of people in the establishment at one time. Provide services by appointment. Provide online order, electronic payment, and curbside pickup or delivery options. Deliver services remotely (e.g. phone, video, or web). Reconfigure retail space to enable people to be located at least 6 feet apart (reduce the amount of inventory on the floor, use smaller displays, strategically place inventory, etc.). See best practices for various industries provided by state of Michigan.

Provide soap and water for hand washing. Place hand sanitizers at the entrance to encourage hand hygiene among customers entering the establishment. Require staff and customers to wear a non-medical covering over their face and mouth. Display signage that encourages face coverings, hand hygiene, and social distancing.

Conduct daily screenings for symptoms of illness and ensure employees stay home when they are sick. Discourage workers from sharing phones, desks, keyboards, cash registers, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect equipment before and after use. Establish staggered lunch and break times for staff.

Resources

View Washtenaw County Health Department COVID-19 information.

View Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Epidemic Orders.

View Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) Emergency Orders.

View State of Michigan laws pertaining to COVID-19: PA 236 of 2020, PA 237 of 2020, PA 238 of 2020 & PA 339 of 2020

COVID-19 guidance and requirements are being continually developed. For local information, contact the Washtenaw County Health Department at L-wchdcontact@washtenaw.org or 734-544-6700.

- See the Michigan COVID-19 Business Response Center for industry-specific plans and guidance.
- For the most up-to-date guidance on COVID-19, visit the following sources of official information:
    - Washtenaw County: washtenaw.org/COVID19
    - Michigan: michigan.gov/coronavirus
    - National: cdc.gov/COVID19