COVID-19
Frequently Asked Questions for Workplaces

This document was updated August 9, 2021. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date guidance.

For questions, contact the Washtenaw County Health Department at health@washtenaw.org or 734-544-6700.

<mark>Important Updates:</mark>

The CDC recommends that everyone (including fully vaccinated individuals) wear a mask in public indoor settings to help prevent spread of COVID-19, especially the Delta variant, and to protect others.

The CDC recommends fully vaccinated people who are exposed to get tested 3-5 days after their exposure (PCR test recommended). They should also wear a mask in indoor public settings for at least 10 days after their exposure, or until they receive a negative test result.

See face mask recommendations from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

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.** The positive individual needs to isolate at home for at least 10 days after symptoms began (or 10 days after being tested if no symptoms). The Health Department may contact them to provide information and to conduct contact tracing. You must protect the confidentiality of your employee. Legally, you cannot tell other staff or third parties the name or health information of the employee. However, this information should be shared with the Health Department.

2. **Determine when the person was at the facility while contagious.** If the person has symptoms, the contagious period starts 2 days before symptoms began and goes until the person begins isolating. If the person does not have symptoms, the contagious period starts 2 days before the COVID-19 test was taken and goes until the person begins isolating. Determine the 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 a contagious person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, either with or without wearing a mask. Individual exposures over a 24-hour period should be added up to determine exposure time (i.e. three 5-minute exposures would total of 15 minutes). Review schedules to see who was at the facility on the dates of potential exposure. Talk to the positive employee and watch surveillance video, if available, to determine who met the close contact criteria.

4. **Notify close contacts that they need to quarantine.** Notify these close contacts directly that they need to quarantine due to an exposure (while protecting the privacy of the positive person). 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. The individuals identified as close contacts need to quarantine for 10 days after the last date of contact with the positive individual – unless they are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days. Fully vaccinated people who are exposed should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure (PCR test recommended). They should also wear a mask in indoor public settings for at least 10 days after their exposure, or until they receive a negative test result.

5. **Notify the Washtenaw County Health Department of the positive individual.** Enter the information about the positive case and any close contacts in our secure online portal: http://bit.ly/covid19atwork

6. **Notify 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). Let them know 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 a person goes out in public. These lower risk individuals should self-monitor for symptoms and seek medical care and testing if they develop symptoms.

7. **Thoroughly clean and disinfect the facility.** If less than 24 hours have passed since the sick/diagnosed person has been in the space, clean and disinfect. If more than 24 hours have passed, cleaning is enough. If more than 3 days have passed, no additional cleaning is needed, aside from regular cleaning. When cleaning and disinfecting, focus on frequently touched surfaces in offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment (tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, etc.). Open outside doors and windows and use fans to increase air circulation in the area.

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. (Note that loss of taste and smell may continue for weeks or months after recovery, which does not delay the ability to return to work.)

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

*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 or hospital.

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. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. 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 10 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.

<u>Quarantine exemptions:</u>

- Close contacts who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days do not need to quarantine as long as they do not have ANY symptoms since their exposure.
- Close contacts who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 (it has been more than 14 days since their 2nd dose of Pfizer/Moderna, or more than 14 days since their only dose of Janssen/Johnson & Johnson) do not need to quarantine as long as they do not have ANY symptoms since their exposure. Fully vaccinated people who are exposed should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure (PCR test recommended). They should also wear a mask in indoor public settings for at least 10 days after their exposure, or until their test result is negative.
- Certain workers who are exposed to COVID-19 may be allowed to continue to work as long as they do not have ANY symptoms since their exposure. See this guidance document for the full list of workers.

How do I count the 10 days of isolation or 10 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 4/14/21 (Day 0). Fever went away on its own 4/16/21. Employee has no other symptoms. Employee can return to work 4/25/21 (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 4/20/21. Results came back positive 4/22/21. Date of test on 4/20/21 is "Day 0." Employee never developed symptoms. Employee could return to work 5/1/21 (which is 10 full days after test 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 10 days past that date for the quarantine time frame. The employee can return to work the next day (Day 11). Note 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 10 days of quarantine.

- **Example 1:** Employee had close contact with a friend on 4/4/21 (Day 0). The friend developed a cough the next day and then tested positive. Employee can return to work 4/15/21 (which is 10 full days after exposure).
- **Example 2:** Employee's spouse develops symptoms 4/4/21 and tests positive 4/5/21. Employee does not isolate from spouse at home. Employee must stay home during the spouse's isolation period through 4/14, **AND THEN** employee begins their 10-day quarantine period. This employee would not be able to return to work until 4/25/21.

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 or Pfizer; or 1 dose of Janssen/Johnson & Johnson), **and**
- The individual has not developed ANY symptoms since their exposure.

Fully vaccinated people who are exposed should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure (PCR test recommended). They should also wear a mask in indoor public settings for at least 10 days after their exposure, or until their test result is negative.

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 10 days?

No. If someone if exposed to COVID-19, it can take up to 2 weeks to develop illness. The individual must finish the full 10 days of quarantine, regardless of test results.

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 began. 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 a health care provider to rule out other 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. If they did not have symptoms and tested positive, they can return to work 10 days after the test was taken.

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 was already positive for COVID-19 and was just exposed. 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 **within the last 3 months**, **and**
- Has recovered, **and**
- The individual has not developed ANY symptoms since their exposure.

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 (10 days after symptoms started, 24 hours fever-free and other symptoms improved), and they should get tested.

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 10 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 or family member who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee must quarantine at home for 10 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 10 days.

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 employee would be out of work during the 10 days of the positive household member's isolation time period, **PLUS** an additional 10 days of quarantine.

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?

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 10 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, 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.

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 10 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.

Screening

What screening questions should I ask my employees?

Daily health screenings are no longer required for non-healthcare settings, but businesses can continue to screen employees if they so choose. Before starting work each day/shift, consider asking employees about exposure to anyone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, and about any new or unusual symptoms such as 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. As an alternative, employees could be encouraged to monitor their symptoms at home and report if they feel sick. You can use our screening form or develop your own. Another option is to use the MI Symptoms app, a free online tool from the State of Michigan, available at https://misymptomapp.state.mi.us.

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

Taking employee temperatures is not required for non-healthcare settings. Employees can be encouraged to monitor their temperature at home or report if they feel feverish. Any temperature 100.4°F or above is considered a fever. Not everyone who is infected with COVID-19 develops a fever.

Traveling

What is the guidance for workers who have traveled?

Vaccinated domestic travelers are recommended to get tested if they develop symptoms. Unvaccinated domestic travelers are recommended to get tested with a viral test 1-3 days before a trip, and 3-5 days after travel, AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 10 days after travel.

Unvaccinated individuals are not recommended to travel internationally. Vaccinated international travelers are recommended to get tested with a viral test 1-3 days before a trip, and 3-5 days after travel. Unvaccinated international travelers who MUST travel are recommended to get tested with a viral test 1-3 days before a trip, 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 and fully vaccinated people, are required to have a negative COVID-19 test result no more than 3 days before travel or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 in the past 3 months before they board a flight to the United States.

Workplaces and schools may set their own travel policies.

See CDC recommendations for travel.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

What type of PPE should employees 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.

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 and taking off a mask.

Cloth face coverings can be worn by non-healthcare 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 employees or customers need to wear masks?

Masks are not currently required indoors or outdoors in most settings. However, the CDC recommends that everyone (including fully vaccinated individuals) wear a mask in public indoor settings to help prevent spread of COVID-19, especially the Delta variant, and to protect others. Note that healthcare settings may have additional or different requirements. See the MDHHS recommendations for face masks.

How should I wear and care for a cloth face covering?

A cloth face covering should be tightly woven cloth or other multi-layer absorbent material. Cloth face coverings should be washed after each use. Be careful when drying the fabric in case it shrinks.

Masks must be worn correctly to be effective. Masks should cover nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of face and under chin. Masks should be secured with ties or ear loops. Handle masks only by ear loops or ties. 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. Masks with valves or vents are not recommended. Based on available research, face shields alone are not considered effective face coverings.

Hand hygiene & respiratory etiquette

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

Employees should maintain at least a 6-foot distance from anyone, especially those with symptoms. If your employee must be closer to the customer, advise them to minimize time to less than 15 minutes, if possible. Have a no-touch hand sanitizer dispenser near customer entrances, as well as tissues and trash receptacles.

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, including norovirus, some parasites, hepatitis A, and Clostridium difficile. Hand sanitizers also may not remove harmful chemicals like pesticides and heavy metals like lead. Handwashing reduces the amounts of all types of germs, pesticides, and metals on hands.

Fortunately, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can kill the virus that causes COVID-19. Hand sanitizer should be used when running water 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 use hand sanitizer?

Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer. 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.

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.

Cleaning & disinfection

How often do we need to clean and disinfect surfaces?

In most situations, the risk of infection from touching a surface is low. The most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

When no individuals with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 are known to have been in a space, cleaning once a day is usually enough to maintain a healthy facility. More frequent cleaning might be needed when the space is occupied by young children or others who may not consistently wear masks, wash hands, or cover coughs and sneezes. If the space is a high traffic area, you may choose to clean more frequently.

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

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

If disinfection is necessary, use a product that is specifically EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19. 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, one option is to use alcohol-based wipes or spray containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect devices. Spray a cloth or paper towel and wipe the device rather than spraying anything directly on electronics. Dry surfaces thoroughly.

Any product to be used for cleaning or disinfecting should have Safety Data Sheets (formerly called 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 disinfect 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, like 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 bleach with ammonia or any other cleaner.** To make a bleach solution, mix 1/3 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?

Follow this CDC guidance if someone who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the facility:

- If less than 24 hours have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, clean and disinfect the space.
- If more than 24 hours have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, cleaning is enough. You may choose to also disinfect depending on certain conditions or everyday practices required by your facility.
- If more than 3 days have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, no additional cleaning beyond regular cleaning practices is needed.

When cleaning and disinfecting, focus on frequently touched surfaces in offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment used by the person who is sick (tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines). Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. 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 people should be at home.

COVID-19 testing

Where can I get tested?

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 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.
    - o Use a separate bedroom and bathroom if possible.
    - o Wear a mask if you go into shared spaces.
    - o Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.
    - o Contact the Health Department if you cannot safely quarantine, as temporary housing may be available (734-544-6700).
- Call ahead before visiting a doctor. Review [what to do if you're sick](#) for more 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 of the test 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.

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

Policies

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

Encourage COVID-19 vaccination for employees. Find a vaccine here: www.washtenaw.org/covid19vaccine

Although previous COVID-19 prevention strategies are no longer required for most settings, the Washtenaw County Health Department strongly encourages each workplace to evaluate their operations, and to follow CDC and OSHA recommendations to prevent disease spread and protect worker health and safety.

Businesses can continue to require masks for customers and employees and implement other protective measures. In addition, under state law, sick or exposed employees cannot come to work, and employers cannot discipline employees who are sick or in quarantine.

- Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration: MIOSHA Emergency Rules & Summary of OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare Rules
- State of Michigan laws requiring sick or exposed employees to stay home, and prohibiting employers from disciplining these employees: PA 238 of 2020 & PA 339 of 2020
- Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA): Recommendations for non-healthcare workplaces

For questions, contact the Washtenaw County Health Department at health@washtenaw.org or 734-544-6700.