**GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS**

*(All information provided in this guidance sheet is for employees who are not healthcare workers)*

**My employees tested positive with COVID-19. Now What?**

The employee should isolate until 5 days have passed, if the person is asymptomatic, or if symptoms are improving and the individual has been fever-free without medication for 24 hours at day 5. This isolation period should be followed by 5 days of wearing a well-fitting mask around others.

If an employee states they are not feeling well on day 5, continue to allow the employee to isolate through day 10. If symptoms persist, have the employee follow up with their medical provider.

- Employers should work with the case quickly to determine [Workplace Close Contacts](#) and inform their coworkers of their possible exposure to COVID-19 but maintain confidentiality. *The NDDoH no longer notifies employers of cases within the workplace or provides release of isolation letters to employees when isolation is over.*

**My employee is a close contact. Now what?**

A close contact is anyone who was within 6 feet of an infectious person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. The infectious period begins 2 DAYS BEFORE illness onset (or, for asymptomatic cases, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) and continues until the case is released from isolation. Close contacts should quarantine for 5 days after their date of last exposure to a case followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days.

- If the close contact has received their booster shot, has had a prior infection in the last 90 days, are within 6 months of their primary mRNA series or two months of J & J does, or if both the infected person and the close contact were consistently and correctly wearing appropriate masks at all times, then they do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day five after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

- If the close contact has not been vaccinated or is more than 6 months out from their second mRNA dose, or more than 2 months after the J & J dose, and not yet boosted, the CDC recommends quarantine for five days followed by strict mask use for an additional five days. If a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is
imperative than an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure.

My employee is a household contact. Now what?

A household close contact is defined as all individuals who live with a person who is positive for COVID-19.

Household contacts are recommended to quarantine during the household member’s isolation period (which is at least 5 days from symptom onset or positive test date for asymptomatic) plus the 5-day quarantine period, followed by 5 days of wearing a well-fitted mask.

Best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 5 days after their last exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

Exemptions:
- Vaccinated Household Close Contacts who are up to date on all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including booster dose(s) when eligible.
- Household Close Contacts who have a history of positive COVID-19 infection in the last 90 days.

My employees were both wearing masks during exposure. Now what?

If an employee was exposed to a case during the case’s infectious period and both the case and the close contact were both wearing properly fitted masks for the entirety of the exposure, the close contact will not need to quarantine, but the case will need to follow isolation guidelines.

My employee called to state that they took an at-home or OTC COVID-19 test and it was positive, can the state verify the test?

The state is not able to verify or validate home tests. At-home or over the counter tests are an important tool in early identification and isolation of positive cases.
- As the state shifts toward an endemic response, businesses are encouraged to accept results of at-home or OTC tests.
- Employees can use the covid calculator on the department’s website to create a document that would outline the period of isolation as determined by the date of testing or the date of symptom onset provided by the employee.
COVID-19 CALCULATOR

The NDDoH provides a covid isolation calculator for our employers/employees to use to assist in calculating the dates of return for your employee who is a case, close contact or household contact. Use our Covid Calculator to assist with dates to return to work and to also print out paperwork if needed for their employment records. Link is provided below.

COVID-19 QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION CALCULATOR

NDDoH Fact Sheets and Vaccination Information

Workplace Assessment for COVID-19: Best practices for preventing and responding to COVID-19 in the business setting
Pre-Screen: Screening sheet for non-healthcare employees
Wear a Mask: Proper information on wearing a mask
United States Department of Homeland Security: Guidance for people who are essential workers
Environmental Cleaning: Information on cleaning the workplace
Workplace Close Contacts: Information sheet to assist in identifying workplace contacts
COVID-19 Vaccine Information | Department of Health (nd.gov): ND DoH Vaccination