INTRODUCTION
The following guide is intended for employers and employees who work in non-healthcare settings. These guidelines are directly from the CDC, and are simply condensed here for ease of use. The CDC continues to update their guidelines on a regular basis. For the most up-to-date information, please visit the Guidance for Businesses and Employers page on the CDC website. The first section identifies steps businesses will need to take if an employee tests positive for COVID-19. The second section outlines guidelines businesses should follow on an ongoing basis to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in their workplace. The last section outlines some frequently asked questions.

SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19 IN THE WORKPLACE
If an employee tests positive, or is symptomatic and presumed to be positive, businesses should take the following actions:

1. Employees who test positive for COVID-19 should be excluded from work and remain in home isolation.*

2. Determine which employees may have been exposed to the virus
   o If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform other employees of their possible exposure, while maintaining confidentiality of the infected employee.
   o The health department will be reaching out to employers to determine which employees may have had close contact with the infected employee. Employers can help identify contacts by creating a list of employees who had close contact with the infected employee ahead of time. Generally, any employee who was within 6 feet of the infected employee for at least 15 minutes over a 24 hour period while the COVID-19 positive employee was infectious**, is considered a close contact, and should take additional precautions, including exclusion from work and remaining at home. See the attached flow chart for more information.
   o Instruct employees who were close contacts of the infected employee to stay home for 14 days, telework if possible, and self-monitor for symptoms. The health department will be following up with those individuals as well.
   o Other employees who are not considered close contacts can continue reporting to work, but should self-monitor for symptoms. If they develop symptoms, they should stay home, and notify their supervisor.

3. Close off any areas used by the sick employee for prolonged periods of time
   o Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting the area to minimize potential for other employees being exposed to respiratory droplets. If waiting 24 hours is not possible, wait as long as possible.

4. Clean and disinfect the area.
   o Clean any dirty surfaces with soap and water first
   o Disinfect the surfaces using products that meet criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2
   o Follow the instructions on the product labels to ensure safe and effective use
   o Wear additional personal protective equipment depending on the setting and disinfectant product being used
If storing the cloth face covering while at work, employees should place the used cloth face covering into a container.

If an employee tests positive, or is symptomatic and presumed to be positive, businesses should take the following actions:

1. Implement flexible meeting and travel options (such as postponing non-essential meetings or events)
2. Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol throughout the workplace for employees and customers.
3. Close off any areas used by the sick employee for prolonged periods of time through, erecting partitions, and marking floors to guide spacing at least 6 feet apart.
4. Before and after work breaks
5. Before and after the work shift
6. At least once a day, clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched by multiple people. This includes high-touch surfaces, and not sharing personal items.
7. Follow the instructions on the product labels to ensure safe and effective use
8. Clean any dirty surfaces with soap and water first
9. Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting the area to minimize potential for other employees being exposed
10. Use no more than the amount recommended on the label
11. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleaner.
12. Always wear gloves appropriate for the chemicals being used when you are cleaning and disinfecting.
13. Never combine unproven home remedies with standard disinfectants.
14. Instruct employees who were close contacts of the infected employee to stay home for 14 days, telework or work from home if possible, and wash hands frequently.
15. Instruct employees who had close contact with the infected employee ahead of time.
16. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform other employees of their possible exposure, while maintaining confidentiality of the infected employee.
17. Use no more than the amount recommended on the label
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21. Instruct employees who were close contacts of the infected employee to stay home for 14 days, telework or work from home if possible, and wash hands frequently.
22. Instruct employees who had close contact with the infected employee ahead of time.
23. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform other employees of their possible exposure, while maintaining confidentiality of the infected employee.
24. Testing Considerations

Testing in the workplace could be arranged through a company's occupational health provider or in consultation with the local or state health department, and may only be available depending on testing capacity in your area. In most cases, the health department will reach out to employers for assistance in identifying close contacts of the worker. The health department will then help to coordinate testing for those employees on an individual basis.

There may be a delay between the time a person is exposed to the virus and the time that virus can be detected by testing, therefore immediate testing after exposure at a single time point may miss many infections. Viral testing only indicates if an individual is currently infected. It could take as many as 14 days for the virus to become detectable, so anyone exposed to someone with COVID-19 must self-quarantine in their home for 14 days after exposure, regardless of whether they get tested.

In some settings, broader testing (i.e., testing beyond individually identified close contacts to those who are possible close contacts), such as targeting workers who worked in the same area and during the same shift, may be considered as part of a strategy to control the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in the workplace. The rationale is that identification of contacts may be imprecise. High-risk settings that have demonstrated potential for rapid and widespread dissemination of SARS-CoV-2 include:

- High-density critical infrastructure workplaces
- Workplaces where employees live in congregate settings (e.g., fishing vessels, offshore oil platforms, farmworker housing or wildland firefighter camps)
- Workplaces with populations at risk for severe illness if they are infected, such as nursing homes

*If your business and/or employees meet the criteria for [critical infrastructure employees](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-infrastructure-workers.html), please see those guidelines here.*

**Employers may not be able to determine this time period until the Health Department contacts them. The Health Department will work with employers throughout this process. However, in the event that an infected employee notifies their supervisor of their positive COVID-19 test result, employers should begin this process to the extent that is possible with the information they have. This will help to quickly stop the spread of COVID-19 before it spreads to other employees.**

**Guidance for Employees who have been Exposed to a COVID-19 Case**

Whether the employee was exposed at work, or in the community (i.e. through a family member or friend with COVID-19), employees will need to stay home for 14 days after exposure.

Employees may have been exposed if they are a “close contact” of someone who is infected. A “close contact” is defined as being within about 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24 hour period of time.

Potentially exposed employees should not report to work, and should stay home for 14 days, whether or not they have symptoms.

- Potentially exposed employees **who have** symptoms should self-quarantine and follow [CDC guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/worksafe/employees.html).
- Potentially exposed employees **who do not** have symptoms should remain at home and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days.

**Testing Considerations**

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- Workplaces with populations at risk for severe illness if they are infected, such as nursing homes
Strategies businesses could use include:

- Social Distancing
- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration suggests that an employee wear a face shield if a cloth face cover is not feasible.

Cloth face coverings should not be shared with others unless they are washed and dried first.

If storing the cloth face covering while at work, employees should place the used cloth face covering into a container labeled with the employee's name.

Employees may have been exposed if they are a “close contact” of someone who is infected. A “close contact” is defined as:

- An individual who was within 6 feet of the infected employee for at least 15 minutes over a 24 hour period while the infected person had symptoms of COVID-19.

Employees who did not have symptoms, but tested positive for COVID-19, may return to work under the following conditions:

- At least 10 days have passed since their first positive test.
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved.

Employees who were exposed to someone with known COVID-19 infection, whether at work or in the community, may return to work under the following conditions:

- 14 days have passed since their exposure to the person with confirmed COVID-19.
- If an employee has been exposed to another person in their household, and they are unable to isolate from the infected household member, the employee should stay home until 14 days after the infected household member is symptom free.

Employers should not require a doctor’s note or a negative test result in order for an employee to return to work. Employers should not require a positive test result or doctor’s note from an employee to validate their illness or qualify for sick leave. Additionally, employers should not require a doctor’s note or letter verifying an employee has been exposed and needs to self-quarantine. Doctors’ offices and health departments are at full capacity, and are not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner.

Employers are encouraged to implement flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices as part of a comprehensive approach to prevent and reduce transmission among employees. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Employers with fewer than 500 employees are eligible for 100% tax credits for Families First Coronavirus Response Act COVID-19 paid leave provided through December 31, 2020, up to certain limits.
REDUCING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN WORKPLACES

**Actively encourage all employees to go home or stay home if they feel sick.** Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible, and that employees are aware of and understand these policies.

**Screening**

Employers may consider conducting daily in-person or virtual health checks to identify employees with signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 before they enter a facility. If implementing in-person health checks, conduct them safely and respectfully. The screener should be protected by a barrier or personal protective equipment, if they are not maintaining a distance of six feet from the arriving employees. Provide multiple screening points to avoid bottlenecks and crowding at entry points. Alternatively, employers can request employees self-screen at home before reporting to work, and declare themselves symptom free upon arrival.

If employers decide to actively screen employees (or ask employees to self-screen at home), consider focusing questions on the following symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish (chills, sweating)
- New cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell

Workers with COVID-19 symptoms should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors, and sent home or to a healthcare facility. Workers with symptoms should be referred to a healthcare provider for evaluation and potential testing. Waiting for test results prior to returning to work is essential to keep potentially infected workers out of the workplace.

Screening employees is an optional strategy that employers may use. Performing screening or health checks will not be completely effective because asymptomatic individuals or individuals with mild non-specific symptoms may not realize they are infected and may pass through screening. *Screening and health checks are not a replacement for other protective measures such as social distancing.*

To prevent stigma, keep employee health screenings as private as possible.

**Mask Wearing**

Jackson County currently requires a face covering or mask when in public. This includes all offices and businesses. See our guidance for businesses during the mask order [here](#). When wearing a cloth face covering or mask, it should fit over the nose and mouth, fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, and be secured with ties or ear loops. The cloth face covering should allow the wearer to breathe without restriction.

Employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth as well as the inside or outside of the face covering while putting on, wearing, and removing it. When putting on and removing it, they should only touch the ties or ear loops.
If storing the cloth face covering while at work, employees should place the used cloth face covering into a container or paper bag labeled with the employee's name.

Cloth face coverings should not be shared with others unless they are washed and dried first.

If the cloth face covering becomes wet, visibly soiled, or contaminated at work, it should be removed and stored to be laundered later. The employee should put on a clean cloth face covering or disposable face mask. If cloth face coverings are provided by the employer, a clean face covering should be issued to replace the soiled one.

Employees should wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings. If soap and water are not available, they should use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Laundry instructions depend on the cloth used to make the face covering. In general, cloth face coverings should be washed regularly (e.g., daily after each shift) using water and a mild detergent and dried completely in a hot dryer. If a washing machine and dryer are not available, an alternative is to soak the cloth face covering in a diluted bleach (0.1%) solution, rinse, and air dry completely. Hands should be washed before laundering the cloth face coverings.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration suggests that an employee wear a face shield if a cloth face covering is recommended but the employee cannot tolerate wearing a cloth face covering. If used, a face shield should cover the entire front and sides of the face and extend below the chin.

**Social Distancing**

Social distancing means avoiding large gatherings and maintaining distance (at least 6 feet) from others.

**Strategies businesses could use include:**

- Allowing flexible worksites (such as telework)
- Allowing flexible work hours (such as staggered shifts)
- Increasing physical space between employees at the worksite
- Increasing physical space between employees and customers (such as a drive-through and partitions)
- Implementing flexible meeting and travel options (such as postponing non-essential meetings or events)
- Delivering services remotely (e.g., phone, video, or web)
- Delivering products through curbside pick-up or delivery

Additionally:

- Consider options to increase physical space between employees and customers such as opening a drive-through, erecting partitions, and marking floors to guide spacing at least 6 feet apart.
- Change the alignment of workstations where feasible. For example, redesign workstations so employees are not facing each other.
- Consider making foot traffic one-way in narrow or confined areas, such as aisles and stairwells, to encourage single-file movement at a 6-foot distance.
- Set up, where possible, physical barriers between employees, and between employees and customers.
- Use strip curtains, plastic barriers, or similar materials to create impermeable dividers or partitions.
- Move electronic payment terminals/credit card readers farther away from the cashier to increase the
distance between the customer and the cashier.

- Use visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, and signs to remind employees to maintain distance of 6 feet from others, including at their workstation and in break areas.
  - Consider these cues for customers as well, such as at the entrance or checkout line.

**Hygiene**

All employees should have a basic understanding of COVID-19, [how the disease spreads](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/index.html), [symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html), and basic hygienic precautions, including covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands frequently, disinfecting high-touch surfaces, and not sharing personal items.

Hand washing:

Employees should wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available, especially during key times when persons are likely to be infected by or spread germs:

- After blowing one’s nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- After using the toilet
- After touching garbage
- Before and after the work shift
- Before and after work breaks
- After touching objects that have been handled by customers or other employees

Additionally:

- At least once a day, clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched by multiple people. This includes door handles, desks, phones, light switches, and faucets.
- Consider assigning a person to rotate throughout the workplace to clean and disinfect surfaces.
- Consider scheduling handwashing breaks so employees can wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Consider scheduling a relief person to give cashiers and service desk employees an opportunity to wash their hands.
- Make sure restrooms are well-stocked with soap and paper towels.
- Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol throughout the workplace for employees and customers.

**Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure.

Disinfection using [EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID-19](https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/disinfectants) can also help reduce the risk. Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important.
When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants can be used (for example, 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions). Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together. This can cause fumes that may be very dangerous to breathe in. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours. Keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children. Read EPA’s infographic on how to use these disinfectant products safely and effectively.

General guidelines for the use of disinfectants:

- **Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use.**
- Always wear gloves appropriate for the chemicals being used when you are cleaning and disinfecting. Additional personal protective equipment (PPE), such as eye protection, may be needed based on the setting and product you are using.
- Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleaner.
- Make sure that employees know which cleaning chemicals must be diluted and how to correctly dilute the cleaners they are using.
- Employers must ensure employees are trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals used in the workplace in accordance with OSHA’s Hazard Communication standard.
- Ensure adequate ventilation
- Use no more than the amount recommended on the label
- Use water at room temperature for dilution (unless stated otherwise on the label)
- Avoid mixing chemical products
- Label diluted cleaning solutions
- Store and use chemicals out of the reach of children and pets
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I get my staff tested right away and they all come back negative, then can they return to work?

No. Because there may be a delay between the time a person is exposed to the virus and the time that virus can be detected by testing, early testing after exposure at a single time point may miss many infections. Viral testing only indicates if an individual is currently infected. It could take as many as 14 days for the virus to become detectable, so anyone exposed to someone with COVID-19 must self-quarantine in their home for 14 days after exposure.

One of my employees was exposed to a confirmed case outside of the office. What do I need to do?

The employee who has been exposed needs to stay home for 14 days. At this point, other employees do not need to quarantine (unless they also have exposure outside of the office), but they should be alert for signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If the employee who was exposed subsequently tests positive, any employees who had close contact with the COVID-19 positive employee will need to self-quarantine for 14 days.

One of my employees tested positive for COVID-19, do I need to close my business?

Usually, a complete shutdown of a business can be avoided. The health department will work with employers to determine which employees were exposed to infected employee. Only those employees will need to stay home. Employers will also want to close off any area used by the infected employee for 24 hours, and then clean and disinfect the area before using it again. If a substantial number of employees were exposed to the infected employee, and business operations cannot continue while they are quarantined, yes, your business will need to temporarily close for the 14 day quarantine period.

Should I cancel meetings and conferences?

Carefully consider whether travel is necessary and use videoconferencing or teleconferencing when possible for work-related meetings and gatherings. Employers should consider canceling, adjusting, or postponing large work-related meetings or gatherings that can only occur in-person. Follow CDC guidance for events and mass gatherings and consider resuming non-essential travel in accordance with state and local regulations and guidance.

When videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces, and space chairs at least 6 feet apart. Encourage staff and attendees to stay home if sick.

Should I adjust my ventilation system?

The risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 through ventilation systems has not been studied but is likely low. Routine HVAC maintenance is recommended. Although it is never the first line of prevention, consider general ventilation adjustments in your workplace, such as increasing ventilation and increasing the amount of outdoor air used by the system. Maintain the indoor air temperature and humidity at comfortable levels for building occupants.

An employee was exposed to a COVID positive person and they have continuous exposure (i.e. a household member), how long do they need to be excluded from work?

If an employee has been exposed to another person in their household, and they are unable to isolate from the infected household member, the employee should stay home until 14 days after the infected household member is symptom free and it's been at least 10 days since the infected household member's symptoms started or 10 days after testing for asymptomatic individuals.

For additional FAQs, see the CDC's FAQ page for businesses.
### Identifying Contacts - Steps for Employers

**1. Determine the time period** when the employee with COVID-19 was infectious and at work: 2 days before symptom onset, or if asymptomatic, 2 days before the test was performed, until their last day at work.

**2. Determine which employees had close contact** with the COVID-19 positive employee during that time: any individual who was within 6 feet of the infected individual for 15 minutes or longer over a 24 hour period.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPOSED EMPLOYEES</th>
<th>ALL OTHER EMPLOYEES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Stay home until 14 days after last exposure and maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) from others at all times</td>
<td>• Practice social distancing and other personal prevention strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self-monitor for symptoms</td>
<td>• Be alert for symptoms</td>
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<tr>
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**For the purpose of this guidance, fever is defined as subjective fever (feeling feverish) or a measured temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.