

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Employee Illness Response

This document is intended to provide general guidance for company leaders in the event that an employee has tested positive or been around someone who has tested positive to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The employee should be directed to follow CDC and/or OSHA recommendations on contacting medical assistance (hyperlinks below).

- [CDC Recommendations](#)
- [OSHA Medical Information Resource](#)
- [OSHA Controls & Prevention](#)

Most people who acquire COVID-19 show mild symptoms and are able to recover at home. All affected/potentially affected people should monitor their symptoms. If emergency warning signs occur, get medical attention immediately.

Emergency Warning Signs:

- Trouble breathing
- Pain or pressure in the chest
- Fever
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

(This is not an all-inclusive list. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.)

MOST PEOPLE WHO ACQUIRE COVID-19 SHOW MILD SYMPTOMS AND ARE ABLE TO RECOVER AT HOME. ALL AFFECTED/POTENTIALLY AFFECTED PEOPLE SHOULD MONITOR THEIR SYMPTOMS. IF EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS OCCUR, GET MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY .

“If an employee has a confirmed COVID-19 case, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality.”

STEPS TO HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

- Follow CDC spacing recommendations, social distancing and home isolation from other family members. (Federal recommendation is 6’ apart and fewer than 10 in a group, as of March 18, 2020.)
- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.
- Establish personal hygiene practices – [CDC How to Protect Yourself & Others](#)
- Avoid sharing tools, equipment and office supplies.
- Clean all high-touch surfaces multiple times a day. – Follow [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#).
- Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, visitors and sent home. [CDC What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
- If an employee has a confirmed COVID-19 case, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality.
- The employer should instruct fellow employees about how to proceed based on the [CDC Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#).
- If you have any questions, contact your local public health department for details.

WHEN AN EMPLOYEE IS OR IS SUSPECTED OF BEING INFECTED WITH COVID-19

The potential scenarios outlined below are not intended to address all unique situations, but rather guide decision-making and help ensure consistency in approach where possible.

Employee Considerations:

- Contact their manager and Human Resources (subject to local privacy laws and local guidance from health authorities).
- Should not return to work until they receive medical clearance from their healthcare provider.

Management Considerations:

- Consider creating a timeline of the employee’s schedule for the past 7-14 days.
- Assess whether to issue a communication to at-risk employees or impacted clients.
- Assess whether to implement any necessary business resiliency strategies in the event the office becomes unavailable or employees otherwise do not come into work.
- Employees who have been in close contact with a person who is suspected of having COVID-19 are to be instructed to work from home for the recommended quarantine period, currently 14 days, or as directed by local health authorities.
- During the quarantine period, the employee can work remotely, if able, and remain in contact with employees and clients via online media, telephone and email. If there are issues which prevent effective remote working, the employee should discuss options with their manager.
- Where there is a need to notify employees or clients, care should be given to protect the identity of the infected individual, unless it is impossible to do so under the circumstances. Always make sure you are following regulatory guidance on this subject.
- Facility management should notify the building management and organize any necessary cleaning of the office.

Additional Considerations for Employers:

- Employers should work with their local and state health departments to ensure appropriate local protocols and guidelines, such as updated/additional guidance for cleaning and disinfection, including identification of new potential cases of COVID-19.
- Employers should educate staff and workers performing cleaning, laundry and trash pick-up activities to recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 and provide instructions on what to do if they develop symptoms within 14 days after their last possible exposure to the virus. At a minimum, any staff should immediately notify their supervisor and the local health department if they develop symptoms of COVID-19. The health department will provide guidance on what actions need to be taken. When working with your local health department, check their available hours.
- Employers should develop policies for worker protection and provide training to all cleaning staff on-site prior to providing cleaning tasks. Training should include when to use PPE, what PPE is necessary, how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE, and how to properly dispose of PPE.
- Employers must ensure workers are trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals used in the workplace in accordance with OSHA's Hazard Communication standard ([29 CFR 1910.1200](#)).
- Employers must comply with OSHA's standards on Bloodborne Pathogens ([29 CFR 1910.1030](#)), including proper disposal of regulated waste, and PPE ([29 CFR 1910.132](#)).

At times like this, our experience and expertise can make a crucial difference.

As always, please feel free to reach out to your service representative if you have questions. Marsh & McLennan Agency is Ready to Assist You.

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