

COVID-19 Preparedness & Response
Frequently Asked Questions for NCHC Employees
Updated May 7, 2020

Return to Work

Q: If I have been told to stay home due to any symptoms of illness, when can I return to work?

A: The answer depends on your unique condition and when your symptoms improve, and is guided by these 2 strategies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
<https://bit.ly/CovidReturntoWorkCDC>

Test-Based Strategy:

Resolution of fever without use of fever-reducing medications

AND

Improvement in respiratory symptoms

AND

Two consecutive negative COVID-19 PCR tests collected ≥24 hours apart.

Symptom-Based Strategy:

At least 72 hours have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications

AND

Improvement in respiratory symptoms,

AND

At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

(Note this is a change from the previous 7 days recommended by the CDC)

Q: Who do I contact if I am experiencing any signs of illness?

A: Contact your manager and NCHC Employee Health at 715.848.4396 to discuss any new onset symptom(s) of illness consistent with COVID-19 to determine if further action is needed. Do not come into work if you are experiencing symptoms at home. If you develop symptoms while at work, immediately stop any patient care. Keep your mask on at all times. Contact your manager/supervisor immediately and contact Employee Health.

The CDC reports that people with Covid-19 have a wide range of symptoms from mild to severe, or none at all. The following symptoms are common with Covid-19:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

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Q: I tested positive for Covid-19, are there return to work practices or restrictions for me?

A: Yes. Employee Health will provide you and your manager with the date you can return to work.

Your return will be based on the Test-Based Strategy or the Symptom-Based Strategy above.

You must follow the following guidelines when you return to work:

- Wear a facemask at all times while in the facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or at baseline.
- Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients until 14 days after illness onset.
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette.
- Self-monitor for symptoms, and see re-evaluation from Employee Health if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen.

Q: I tested negative for Covid-19 but I am displaying symptoms, are there return to work practices or restrictions for me?

A: Yes. Employee Health will provide you and your manager with the date you can return to work.

Your return will be based on the Test-Based Strategy or the Symptom-Based Strategy above.

You must follow the following guidelines when you return to work:

- Wear a facemask at all times while in the facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or at baseline.
- Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients until 14 days after illness onset.
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette.
- Self-monitor for symptoms, and see re-evaluation from Employee Health if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen.

Q: I had contact with someone who is positive for Covid-19 and I have no symptoms, what should I do?

A: Notify your Manager and Employee Health. After discussing with Manager and Employee Health you may be asked to:

- Quarantine OR wear a facemask at all times while working, for 14 days after exposure.
- Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients, for 14 days after exposure.
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette.
- Self-monitor for symptoms, seek re-evaluation if symptoms appear, and report to Employee Health & Manager.

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