

5 Steps: When Your Employee Tests Positive for COVID-19

Guidance for New Hampshire Businesses Key Steps for Investigating and Reporting COVID-19 Cases and Exposures

NH Department of Health and Human Services encourages use of the [NH Universal Best Practices](#). These are recommendations for all businesses to consider and implement in their daily operations. Nothing in this document or other guidance precludes any business from taking additional precautions for the health and safety of its employees and consumers. “Employer” includes “organizations” and “employee” includes “volunteers” in this document.

Employee health information shared with their employer should be kept private.

1 Identify and Exclude Employees Who Might Have COVID-19

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19 and were at their place of employment during their infectious period (two days prior to symptom onset or test date if asymptomatic) should notify their employer.

Employers should have a designated person to whom employees report when they feel ill or have tested positive for COVID-19.

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay at home and [self-isolate](#). Employees should not return to work or other community settings until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met. In general, individuals may return to work or congregate settings when:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since fever went away without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in other symptoms
- If the individual did NOT have symptoms but has a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, the individual can return to work after 10 days have passed since the date of the positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.

Employees of covered businesses or organizations should be reminded of the provision of the federal [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) that allows for paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for self-quarantining or seeking a medical diagnosis for COVID-19 symptoms.

2

Identify and Notify Workplace Contacts and Recommend Monitoring and Testing

Employers should have a plan in place that includes a protocol for quickly identifying workplace contacts of employees with COVID-19 who worked while infectious. To begin the notification process, speak with the employee diagnosed with COVID-19 and ask about:

- When they worked while infectious
- If they participate in any work-related carpooling
- Who they interacted with during work activities and breaks

Notify any employees who were **within 6 feet for more than ten minutes** from two days before the employee with COVID-19 developed symptoms OR two days before their positive test if the employee with a positive COVID-19 test did not have symptoms.

It is in the best interest of employers that workplace notifications be completed quickly to help prevent spread of the virus in the workplace.

Workplace contacts should self-observe for symptoms for 14 days following their last exposure to the person with COVID-19. If the contact develops symptoms, they should self-isolate and seek testing

3

Seek Guidance and Report Suspected Outbreaks

When you initially learn about a positive employee, please refer to the NH Universal Best Practices. Contact the NH Department of Health and Human Services should you have questions or suspect you might have an outbreak (3 or more cases of COVID-19 potentially associated with the same location). Workplaces may also need to require unvaccinated staff to stay out of work following exposure if the workplace is experiencing an outbreak. Our team will work closely with you to learn more about the situation and to provide guidance on how to control the spread of COVID-19 disease.

4 **Implement Return to Work Policy**

Employees with COVID-19 should not return to work until the criteria to [discontinue home isolation](#) are met, in consultation with healthcare providers.

Employees with COVID-19 can return to work when:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since fever went away without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in other symptoms

If the employee did NOT have symptoms but has a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, they can return to work:

- After 10 days have passed since the date of the positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.

5 **Limit the Spread**

Continue to use the resources available to you to prevent introduction or re-introduction of COVID-19 into your workplace.

[NH Universal Best Practices](#)

[Self-Isolation Guidance](#)

[Self-Quarantine Guidance](#)

[Self-Observation Guide](#)

[COVID-19 Testing Information](#)

COVID-19 [Vaccine information](#)

COVID-19 [Vaccine FAQ](#)

[COVID-19 Employer Travel, Screening and Exclusion Guidance](#)