COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY
All Employees Q&A
Protocols on Returning to Work if Sick
or Exposed to the COVID-19 Virus

Prepared in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services,
Division of Public Health Services

March 26, 2020

The following Q&A provides updated information on questions being asked by employees. It may replace information provided in previous Q&As, so please read the information carefully. Due to the continuously evolving nature of information related to the COVID-19 State of Emergency, the information provided in this guideline is subject to change as circumstances change.

DISCLAIMER: This guidance does not pertain to employees working in 24/7 healthcare facilities.

The following protocols pertain to employees under the following circumstances:

Category 1

Who: Employees who are sick with fever, respiratory illness, or mild flu-like symptoms; or employees who have a Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Test

a. What should I do if I’m sick and when can I return to work?

You should:

- Stay home and limit contact with other people (self-isolate)
- Inform your supervisor by phone
- Call ahead before visiting your healthcare provider if medical evaluation is needed
- Review the following CDC guidance:
  - Caring for yourself at home
  - Preventing the spread of COVID-19 in homes
  - Cleaning and disinfection guidance
- Self-isolate at home (no going out of house or to work) until:
  - At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared,
At least 72 hours (3 days) have passed since recovery – which is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms.

b. **If you work in a healthcare setting and are returning to work after confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection:**

You should:

- Follow CDC’s criteria for return to work for healthcare personnel, which include the above “7/72” criteria PLUS:
  - Wear a facemask at all times while in the healthcare facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or until 14 days after illness onset, whichever is longer.
  - Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after illness onset.
  - Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette in CDC’s interim infection control guidance (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles).
  - Self-monitor for symptoms, and seek re-evaluation from occupational health if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen

**Category 2**

**Who: Asymptomatic individuals (people without symptoms) with direct contact* with a Category 1 person**

- **What should I do, and when can I return to work, if I am:**
  - Sharing a home with or caring for a Category 1 person?
  - In direct contact (within 6 feet) with a Category 1 person, including a co-worker?

You should:

- Stay home (self-quarantine)
- Inform your supervisor by phone
- Work from home if the option is available
- Review the following guidance from NH DHHS
- Monitor for symptoms of fever, respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose), and any flu-like symptoms (e.g., fatigue, chills, muscle aches)
- If you develop any symptoms while on self-quarantine, you must follow the instructions above (Category 1 instructions)
- You may return to work after 14 days from last day of exposure to the individual, if no symptoms have developed

*Direct contact means within six feet*
Category 3
Who: Asymptomatic individuals (people without symptoms) with high risk of exposure from travel

a. What should I do, and when can I return to work, if I have engaged in any out of state travel by plane, train, or bus; am returning from New York City by any means of transportation; or if I have attended any large group/business gatherings in other states?

You should:
- Stay home (self-quarantine)
- Inform your supervisor by phone
- Work from home if the option is available
- Review the following guidance from NH DHHS
- Monitor for symptoms of fever, respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose), and any flu-like symptoms (e.g., fatigue, chills, muscle aches)
- If you develop any symptoms while on self-quarantine, you must follow the instructions above (Category 1 instructions)
- You may return to work after 14 days from last day of exposure, if no symptoms have developed

Category 4
Who: Asymptomatic individuals (people without symptoms) with other low-risk contacts

a. What should I do, and when can I return to work, if I live, work, or closely associate with:
- An asymptomatic individual who has had direct contact with a Category 1 person?
- An asymptomatic individual who has engaged in any out of state travel by plane, train, or bus?

OR

b. What should I do, and when can I return to work, if I have shared a large space with a Category 1 person (e.g. same work building but not same room, same large hall or meeting space), but was not in close direct contact with the person?

You should:
- As long as you do not have symptoms, there are no restrictions on your ability to work
- Review the following NH DHHS guidance:
• Monitor for symptoms of fever, respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose), and any flu-like symptoms (e.g., fatigue, chills, muscle aches)
• If you develop any symptoms, you must follow the instructions above (Category 1 instructions)
• Continue to always perform frequent hand hygiene and social distancing – always maintain at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and other people.