

What To Do If An Employee Has COVID-19

If an employee has tested positive for COVID-19, you must take steps to protect others in the workplace. Promptly separate any sick employees from others and send them home, determine who may have been exposed to the person who tested positive for COVID-19, and educate employees about workplace health and safety guidelines.

Determine which employees have been exposed to the positive COVID-19 employee:



- **Identify close work contacts** of the person who tests positive for COVID-19. This is anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a *cumulative total* of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period regardless of the use of a face covering starting from 2 days before the positive person developed symptoms. You do not need to give these names to local or state public health agencies.



- **Tell exposed employees how to keep from spreading COVID-19** to others, including staying home for 14 days from the last day they were exposed to the person with COVID-19 if they work at non-essential businesses or 10 days from the last day they were exposed to the person with COVID-19 if they work at an essential business.



- **Track the number of days that exposed employees stay home** to make sure they do not come back to work too soon. Employees who are sent home and develop symptoms should stay home until all three of these things are true: they feel better; **and** it has been 10 days since they first felt sick; **and** they have had no fever for the last 24 hours, without using medications that lower fevers. That means they might be out of work for more than 10 days.



- **Screen returning employees** to make sure they do not have symptoms and are OK to come back to work. No medical examination, testing, or official letter is needed to return to work.

Screen employees coming to work:

Do regular health checks of all employees and visitors entering buildings. Take temperatures and ask about symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. If someone exhibits symptoms, send them home immediately.

Educate employees about health and safety guidelines:



- **Practice social distancing.** Stay away from large gatherings and stay at least 6 feet away from others when possible.



- **Wear a facemask** if you need to be around other people and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Wash hands thoroughly.



- **Wash hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.



- **Routinely clean and disinfect** frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs.



- **If employees develop symptoms**, make sure they know to separate themselves from others and follow public health recommendations for staying at home.

AB 685: COVID-19 Notifications to Employees and Public Health Authorities:

The law requires employers or union representatives to notify the local public health agency if there is an “outbreak” at the place of employment. The notification must be provided within 48 hours of learning of the outbreak and must include: the names, number, occupation, and addresses (and NAICS codes) of the worksites of all employees who are “qualified people” (as defined below). Once there is an outbreak, the employer must continue to notify the local health department of subsequent COVID-19 cases in the workplace.

- **“Outbreak”** is currently defined by the State Department of Public Health as “three (3) or more laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 within a two-week period among employees who live in different households.” However, because AB 685’s definition of outbreak is keyed to how the term is used by the State Department of Public Health, any change in the State Department of Public Health’s use of the term will change the application of AB 685.

The law also requires employers to provide written notice to all employees who were on the premises at the same worksite as the qualifying individual within the infectious period of a qualified employee



within one day and their exclusive representative. The law sets forth the subject matter to include in the notice. See Labor Code 6409.6.

Connect with public health

If you need more guidance about conducting business safely, please visit the Ventura County COVID-19 website at www.venturacountyrecovers.org.

**We wish to thank the Minnesota Department of Public Health for the use of this informational flyer.*

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