

## GENERAL GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION

This memo provides agency employees guidance on working in person and awareness of the highly communicable COVID-19 virus. Self-monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 can prevent the spread of COVID-19 by limiting the exposure of others to symptomatic employees. To safeguard the workplace, employees who are assigned to work at the workplace (rather than telework) are expected to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, stay home if sick or experiencing symptoms, and report to their supervisor if they are sick or experiencing symptoms. Employees who are not assigned to, but wish to work at the workplace (rather than telework) are also expected to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and not come to the workplace if they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

Employees should not enter the workplace if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and have not tested or are awaiting a COVID-19 test result. Employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 or are awaiting a COVID-19 test result, should discuss with their supervisor whether their job duties can be performed through telework. Approval for telework is at the discretion of the employee's supervisor/manager.

Supervisors or managers who believe that an employee is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 in the workplace should contact agency Human Resources before asking the employee to leave the workplace. This guidance is subject to change at the discretion of the agency.

### I. Definitions and key terms

*COVID-19 Viral Test:* A diagnostic test for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) that is cleared, approved, or authorized for emergency use by the FDA to detect current infection with COVID-19 (e.g., a viral test).

Viral tests include:

1. Rapid Point-of-Care tests, which are performed or interpreted by someone other than the individual being tested, can be performed in minutes, and can include antigen tests, some NAATs, and other tests authorized or cleared by the FDA.
2. Self-tests, which are rapid tests that can be taken at home.

Laboratory tests, which include RT-PCR and other types of NAATs.

*Workplace:* Any physical location (e.g., fixed, mobile) where State operations occur or where State work is performed. Workplace does not include an employee's residence.

### II. General Standards

#### 1. What symptoms associated with COVID-19 should employees be aware of?

These symptoms are any of the following that can't be explained based on another health or environmental condition:

- Fever of 100.4°F or higher or feeling feverish (such as chills, sweating)
- A new cough
- New shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unusual fatigue
- Muscle or body aches not related to exercise
- New headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- A new sore throat
- New congestion or runny nose
- New nausea/vomiting or diarrhea

This is not an exhaustive list and may change as COVID-19 evolves.

**2. What should employees do when they have been exposed to COVID-19 or have been told by a healthcare provider or public health authority that they were exposed?**

Employees who have been exposed to COVID-19 or have been told by a healthcare provider or public health authority that they were exposed should follow [current CDC guidance for individuals exposed to COVID-19](#). Current CDC guidance can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html>

Because CDC guidance is subject to change, employees are responsible for reviewing and determining the applicable precautions for their individual situation.

**3. What should employees do if they experience symptoms associated with COVID-19 and typically report to a workplace where others are present?**

If any employee experiences symptoms associated with COVID-19 and normally reports to a workplace where others are present, the employee should not report to the workplace. The employee should test for COVID-19 using a COVID-19 viral test.

In addition to testing, treatment, and prescribed treatment for COVID-19 through an individual health care provider or other sites of care, COVID-19 testing and treatment is now available through many local pharmacies and health clinics at Test to Treat sites. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services provides a COVID-19 Test to Treat Locator on its website at:

<https://aspr.hhs.gov/TestToTreat/Pages/default.aspx>

**4. What should an employee do if they receive a positive COVID-19 test result?**

An employee with a confirmed COVID-19 test result should follow [current CDC guidance for isolation](#) and cannot enter the workplace until that period of isolation has ended. Current CDC guidance for individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html>

Because CDC guidance is subject to change, employees are responsible for reviewing and determining the applicable precautions for their individual situation.

**5. What should employees do if they start to experience symptoms associated with COVID-19 while they are in the workplace?**

An employee who experiences the onset of COVID-19 symptoms while in the workplace should immediately notify their supervisor and immediately leave the workplace as safely as possible while avoiding exposing other individuals in the workplace. If the employee cannot safely notify their supervisor without exposing others, they should first leave the workplace and then contact their supervisor. The employee should take a COVID-19 viral test as soon as possible and follow all applicable CDC guidance regarding isolation.

**6. What should an employee do if they receive a positive COVID-19 test result or diagnosis while in the workplace?**

An employee who receives a positive COVID-19 viral test result, or receives a COVID-19 diagnosis from a healthcare provider should immediately notify their supervisor and immediately leave the workplace as safely as possible while avoiding exposing other individuals in the workplace. If the employee cannot safely notify their supervisor without exposing others, they should first leave the workplace and then contact their supervisor.

**7. When can employees return to the workplace after receiving a positive COVID-19 test result?**

Generally, employees who are required to work at the workplace should follow all current [CDC quarantine/isolation guidelines](#) before returning to the workplace. Because CDC guidance is subject to change, employees are responsible for reviewing and determining the applicable precautions for their individual situation.

**8. If an employee takes a COVID-19 viral test and receives a negative result even though they have symptoms, can the employee report to the workplace?**

Employees with a negative COVID-19 test result should follow current [CDC guidance for testing](#). A negative COVID-19 test means the test did not detect the virus, but this **does not rule out that you could have an infection**. If you used an antigen test, you should refer to and follow [FDA instructions on repeat testing](#). If you have symptoms:

- You may have COVID-19, but tested before the virus was detectable, or you may have another illness.
- Take general public health precautions to prevent spreading an illness to others.
- Contact a healthcare provider if you have any questions about your test result or if your symptoms worsen.

**9. What options are available to an employee who works at the workplace and has symptoms of COVID-19 or receives a positive test?**

Employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have received a positive COVID-19 test result and are able to perform work despite their illness should discuss with their supervisor whether their job duties can be performed through telework. Approval for telework is at the discretion of the employee's supervisor/manager. Employees must use accrued sick leave if they are unable to report to work and unable to telework. Employees who do not

have accrued sick leave may request to use accrued vacation or accrued compensatory time or take unpaid time off if they are unable to report to work and unable to telework.

Employees who should quarantine or isolate under the CDC-recommended quarantine/isolation guidelines, cannot telework, and need additional time off after the CDC-recommended quarantine/isolation period should contact the agency FMLA or ADA coordinator.

## REFERENCES

Applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements

Applicable Compensation Plans

[HR/LR Policy #1337 Sick Leave](#)

## CONTACTS

MMB Enterprise Employee Resources