

## INGHAM COUNTY COVID-19 FAQ

### 1. What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

- a) Isolation separates people who are positive with COVID-19, regardless of whether they have symptoms or not, from people who are not known to be COVID-19 positive.
- b) Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to COVID-19 to see if they become infected and/or sick with the virus. These people may have been exposed to a disease and do not know it, or they may have the disease but do not show symptoms

### 2. What should I do if an employee comes to work with symptoms or develops symptoms during the day?

- a) An employee with symptoms should be separated immediately from other staff and sent home to limit exposure.
- b) If employee develops symptoms as home, he/she/they should stay home and you should determine if employee was in the workplace during the contagious period (48 hours prior to symptom onset)
- c) Employees should not be required to get tested. This is a decision between a patient and their medical provider. The employee should consult their provider.
- d) If illness is determined not to be COVID-19 related, they should return to work based on existing sick leave policy, follow your regular sick policy
- e) Employees with COVID-19 symptoms (new or worsening cough, fever, shortness of breath) or positive COVID-19 test should not return to work until criteria for discontinuation of isolation are met i.e. at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have improved. In the case of short duration of symptoms, the employee still must wait until at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. So, isolation lasts until 24 hours after symptom resolution or 10 days, whichever is longer.

### 3. What to do if an employee is COVID-19 positive?

- a) COVID-19 positive employee should stay home or should be sent home immediately, if stable and does not need to be hospitalized. (Always call 911 in the event of an emergency.)
- b) Employee should return to work ONLY after meeting criteria for discontinuation of isolation (see definition above).
- c) Determine close contacts and exclude those close contacts from the workplace for 14 days from last known exposure to a positive case. Close contact is defined as:
  - i. Within six feet of known COVID positive case
  - ii. No mask wearing or poor adherence to mask wearing
  - iii. Exposure for 15 minutes, this can be cumulative (e.g. 5 min + 5 min + 5 min)
  - iv. Note if closer than 6 feet for that duration indicated, individual is a close contact even if masks were worn
- d) If it is determined that the workplace exposure requires notification of all staff, we can provide a template that can be modified for staff notification. This would be necessary ONLY if it is not possible to determine close contacts who can be notified directly rather than via a notification

to all staff. A notification to all staff may be sent for transparency, but should indicate that all close contacts have been notified and if you have not been notified, you are not considered a close contact.

- e) Follow your internal procedures re: workplace incidents if the exposure resulting in a positive case was workplace related.

#### **4. What is considered a COVID-19 exposure?**

- a) Close contact is a COVID-19 exposure.
- b) As noted above, a close contact is being less than 6 feet from a COVID-19 positive individual for 15 minutes or more. This can be cumulative rather than a single exposure.
- c) Exposure includes 48 hours prior to COVID positive individual's onset of symptoms or test collection date if the individual is asymptomatic.

#### **5. What should employees do if they have been exposed in the workplace?**

- a) Workplace exposure may also require enhanced cleaning within the workplace following the exposure.
- b) All exposed employees with exception of healthcare workers and other critical infrastructure workers should be quarantined at home and self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days, per CDC guidelines
- c) Employees should telework if possible.
- d) Critical infrastructure workers and healthcare workers may have exposures due to the nature of their work. At the supervisor's discretion they may continue working on site but the following precautions are required:
  - i. Employers should measure the employee's temperature and assess symptoms each day prior to them starting work. Ideally, temperature checks should happen before the individual enters the facility. A touchless thermometer, or a dedicated thermometer for the employee if not touchless, should be used. Sharing of any thermometer other than a touchless thermometer is strictly prohibited.
  - ii. As long as the employee doesn't have a fever or symptoms, they should self-monitor under the supervision of their employer's occupational health program or other programs in place to protect employee health and safety.
  - iii. If the employee becomes sick during the workday, they should be sent home immediately.
  - iv. The employee should wear a facemask at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure. Employers can issue facemasks or can approve employees' supplied cloth face coverings in the event of shortages.
  - v. The employee should maintain 6 feet and practice social distancing as work duties permit in the workplace.
  - vi. Beyond standard cleaning protocols, clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment routinely known to be impacted by the exposed employee during for 14 days after last exposure

#### **6. What should I do if my staff is positive but asymptomatic? Can he/she/they continue to work?**

- a) No, any employee who is positive for COVID-19 should not be in the workplace, regardless of symptoms.
- b) An asymptomatic positive COVID-19 individual should be sent home until criteria for discontinuation of isolation is completed i.e. 10 days of isolation starting from date diagnostic test was obtained (specimen collection date).
- c) If feasible, an asymptomatic positive worker may work from home.

**7. Do employees need to self- quarantine after travel outside of Michigan?**

- a) Return from travel **outside** of the United States to countries with widespread sustained transmission will require a 14-day quarantine before return to work. Travel health advisories are available at <https://www.cdc.gov>.
- b) Return from travel outside the state of Michigan does not require a 14 day quarantine, however, Ingham County Health Department recommends a 14 day self-quarantine after recent travel to states at risk for active or imminent outbreak as identified by COVID Act Now <https://www.covidactnow.org/?s=712117>

**8. What should I do if my staff reports being in contact with someone who has been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual?**

- a) Continue standard COVID-19 control precautions. No other measures need to be taken.
- b) If the person your staff was in contact with becomes positive, then your staff may need to be quarantined based on known exposure and risk. The Health Department contact tracing will make that determination in consultation with you.

**9. What do I do if my staff cannot wear a face mask for medical reasons?**

- a) There are very few reasons why masks should be exempt. True medical reasons are neurological or behavioral or psychiatric disorder, a facial abnormality or a severe dermatological disorder.
- b) Asthma or COPD **are not** valid reasons to exempt masks. People with breathing disorders are actually a good reason why a mask should be worn as people with these conditions are at higher risk for more severe COVID.
- c) Note that a face shield is not a good alternative as there is no good evidence to show that it is equally effective alternative as a mask.
- d) If an employee states that they cannot wear a mask for medical reasons they should be re-assigned to work that does not require close contact (defined in #4) with other co-workers or clients/customers/the public.

**10. What are the levels of workplace COVID-19 risk assessment?**

- a) Low Exposure Risk: Jobs or work without frequent, close contact with the general public or others. Workers in this group have minimal occupational contact with the public and other co-workers. Examples of such jobs may include remote workers (i.e., working from home), office workers without frequent close contact with others and workers providing teleservices.
- b) Medium Exposure Risk: Jobs or tasks with close, frequent contact with the general public or others. This risk level may apply to workers who have frequent and close contact with the people in high-population-density work environments (e.g. food markets, bus stations, public transport, and other work activities where physical distancing of at least 1 meter may be difficult

to observe), or tasks that require close and frequent contact between co-workers. This may also include frequent contact with people returning from areas with community transmission. Examples of such jobs may include frontline workers in retail, home deliveries, accommodation, construction, police and security, public transport, and water and sanitation.

- c) High Exposure Risk: Jobs or tasks with close contact with people who may be more likely to have COVID-19, as well as contact with objects and surfaces possibly contaminated with the virus. Examples include transporting people known or suspected to have COVID-19 without separation between the driver and the passenger, providing domestic services or home care for people with COVID-19, and having contact with the deceased who were known or suspected of having COVID-19 at the time of their death. Jobs that may fall under this category include domestic workers, social care workers, personal transport and home delivery providers and home repair technicians (plumbers, electricians) who have to provide services in the homes of people with COVID-19.