STAY SAFE MN

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 other employees have been exposed

- **Identify close work contacts** of the person who tests positive for COVID-19. This includes people who have had at least 15 minutes of contact within 6 feet of the person who is positive, beginning two days before the person who tests positive 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 noncritical businesses, or 10 days from the last day they were exposed to the person with COVID-19 if they work at a critical 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 who 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 three days, without using medicine that lowers 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.

Connect with public health

If you need more guidance about conducting business safely, please visit the Minnesota Department of Health website or contact your local health department.

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Minnesota Department of Health | health.mn.gov | 651-201-5000
625 Robert Street North PO Box 64975, St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

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