COVID-19: VCHCA STAFF SCREENING, EXPOSURE, AND RETURN TO WORK GUIDELINES

*In era of COVID-19, exposure may be anywhere (work, community, home). Please remain vigilant, monitor for new symptoms of acute respiratory infection, and follow the guidelines below.*

**SYMPTOMATIC EMPLOYEES**
Staff who develop symptoms of acute respiratory infection (i.e. temperature >100°F, new cough, new SOB, body aches, chills, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste/smell, diarrhea, etc.) should notify their supervisor. Additionally, county employees should call the Employee Hotline at (805) 981-5166, physicians/providers should contact Dr. Kory (via Tiger Text or VCMC page operator), and non-physician employees at affiliated clinics call the Outpatient Infection Prevention Team at (805) 515-6303. Staff member should stay home from work until medically cleared to return. Again, doctors must notify Dr. Kory (call VCMC operator and page or Tiger Text).

Follow-up steps:
- If referred for testing, all county employees should seek testing for COVID-19 at one of the VCHCA Urgent Care drive-through testing sites. Call the Urgent Care to notify that you will be coming. Specimens collected will be labeled “Send to Public Health; PUI Exempt”.
- If staff member does not need hospitalization, they should be sent home and put on home isolation until test results are obtained.
- If patient meets screening criteria for testing and needs hospitalization, the ER should be called at (805) 652-6168 (VCMC) or (805) 933-8663 (SPH) ahead of time so that they can arrange appropriate infection prevention.
- The test result will be communicated to the staff member by Dr. Kory, Employee Health, Outpatient Infection Prevention team and/or by the ordering physician at the Urgent Care.
- If staff tests positive for COVID-19, they are to remain isolated while seeking appropriate medical care and follow ‘Return to Work Guidelines for HCW with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19’ guidance below.
- If staff tests negative for COVID-19 and they are still ill, they should remain at home until they have been afebrile and have improving symptoms for 24 hours. Of note, if the staff member has had a high risk exposure, please follow the steps below in the ‘Exposure to Known Case of COVID-19’ section. When returning to work, providers should wear a facemask at all times while in the healthcare facility as per universal masking policy.

**EXPOSURE TO KNOWN CASE OF COVID-19**
Asymptomatic staff with a high-risk exposure to a confirmed COVID-19+ individual without appropriate PPE (whether at work, home or traveling) should notify their supervisor. Additionally, county employees should immediately call the Employee Hotline at (805) 981-
5166, physicians/providers should contact Dr. Kory (via Tiger Text or VCMC page operator), and non-physician employees at affiliated clinics call the Outpatient Infection Prevention Team at (805) 515-6303 for evaluation and possible testing. Staff members who are instructed to stay home from work should do so until medically cleared to return by either Employee Health, Dr. Kory or the Outpatient Infection Prevention Team.

‘Exposure’ includes having contact with a COVID-19+ family member in the home. Staff member should isolate when possible from the COVID-19+ household contact(s). Of note, if the staff member’s household contact is a COVID-19 suspect, the household contact should be tested at a VCHCA Urgent Care drive-through testing site by PCR test which should be sent to Public Health.


Should staff develop symptoms of acute respiratory infection or temperature > 100.0, body aches, chills, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste/smell, diarrhea, they should immediately isolate and follow guidance in ‘Symptomatic Employees’ section above, and also follow ‘Return to Work Guidelines for HCW with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19’ section below.

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<th>Exposure</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Criteria for Return to Work</th>
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| High Risk    | Staff member was exposed to a confirmed COVID-19+ individual for ≥ 15 minutes and within 6 feet, and, the staff member is not wearing a respirator or facemask, or a staff member is not wearing eye protection if the person with COVID-19 was not wearing a cloth face covering or facemask, or the staff member was not wearing all recommended PPE (i.e. gown, gloves, eye protection, respirator) while performing an aerosol-generating procedure. | • Staff members with a ‘high risk’ exposure will be directed not to work, and present immediately to an Urgent Care testing site to be tested by PCR (specimen sent to Public Health), and isolate at home.  
• If initial PCR test is negative and staff member remains asymptomatic they may return to work (and not work around severely immunocompromised individuals), following all the ‘Conditions of Working’ listed below for the monitoring period.*  
• The staff member will be instructed to be re-tested by PCR at Urgent Care testing site (specimen sent to Public Health) every 3 – 4 days until the monitoring period is over.* |
If PCR test is positive, staff must isolate at home and follow ‘Return to Work’ guidelines below.

| Low Risk                                      | Staff member was exposed to a COVID-19+ individual and was not wearing full PPE, but does not meet criteria for ‘high risk’ exposure. | Staff member does not need to be tested, and may continue to work, but must following all the ‘Conditions of Working’ listed below for the monitoring period.* |

*Monitoring Period: 14 days from the last exposure with the COVID-19+ contact or from the last day in an international region with widespread ongoing transmission; or if in constant contact with a COVID-19+ individual then 14 days from when that COVID-19+ contact is no longer considered infectious (using the CDC symptom based criteria this is 72 hours without a fever or use of antipyretics, improvement of symptoms, and at least 10 days from onset of symptoms [whichever is longer]). If COVID-19+ person never develops symptoms, they are considered infectious for 10 days following their first positive test.

**Conditions of working include:**

- Daily check-in with Dr. Kory for physicians or Manager/Supervisor for other staff regarding absence or development of fever or symptoms at the beginning of each shift.
- Document daily temperature on ‘COVID-19 Post-Exposure Monitoring’ log on the VCMC Medical Staff Website for 14 days from the last exposure with the COVID-19+ contact or from the last day in an international region with widespread ongoing transmission; or if in constant contact with a COVID-19+ individual then 14 days from when that COVID-19+ contact is no longer considered infectious (using the CDC symptom based criteria this is 72 hours without a fever or use of antipyretics, improvement of symptoms, and at least 10 days from onset of symptoms [whichever is longer]). If COVID-19+ person never develops symptoms, they are considered infectious for 10 days following their first positive test.
- Wearing a facemask at all times while in the healthcare facility per universal masking policy. Recommendations on the use of facemasks may change as the pandemic progresses, so check with Manager/Supervisor for most current information (i.e. all workers wear masks for all shifts, etc.)
- Should staff develop symptoms of acute respiratory infection or temperature > 100.0, body aches, chills, sore throat, headache, loss of sense of taste/smell, diarrhea, they should *immediately isolate* and follow guidance in ‘Symptomatic Employees’ section above, and also follow ‘Return to Work Guidelines for HCW with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19’ section below.
RETURNING TO WORK GUIDELINES FOR HCW WITH CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED COVID-19+

If symptomatic with suspected or confirmed COVID-19
Exclude from work until:
- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
  - As an example, if fever resolves on day 2 of symptoms, one would return to work on day 10 from onset of symptoms. If fever resolves on day 9 of symptoms, one would return on day 9 + 3 = day 12 from onset of symptoms.

If asymptomatic with confirmed COVID-19
Exclude from work until:
- 10 days have passed since the date of first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, assuming staff member has not subsequently developed symptoms after his or her positive test. If symptoms develop, then refer to guidance above.

If symptomatic with a negative COVID-19 test
If the staff member had a high risk exposure to a confirmed COVID-19+ individual, and developed symptoms after their initial negative COVID-19 PCR test:
- They should get re-tested for SARS-CoV-2 with the PCR test on the day they develop symptoms at one of our VCHCA Urgent Care drive-through testing sites.
- If the test is negative, they should continue to isolate at home until their symptoms resolve.
- The day the symptoms resolve county employees should call the Employee Hotline at (805) 981-5166, physicians/providers should contact Dr. Kory (via Tiger Text or VCMC page operator), and non-physician employees at affiliated clinics call the Outpatient Infection Prevention Team at (805) 515-6303 to be tested again.
- If that result is negative then they can return to work at that time, and continue with PCR testing every 3 – 4 days until their high risk exposure monitoring period is completed (see ‘Exposure to Known Case of COVID-19’ section for further details).

Staff members without a high risk exposure should remain at home until symptoms have improved, and he or she has been afebrile for 24 hours. When returning to work, staff should wear a facemask at all times.

Determination of clearance to return to work will be made by a combination of Inpatient or Outpatient Infection Control, Dr. Leah Kory and/or Employee Health.
RE-TESTING FOR PREVIOUSLY POSITIVE EMPLOYEES

If the staff member previously tested positive, met criteria to discontinue isolation, and then develops new or worsening symptoms, without an alternative plausible etiology, then would retest by PCR and follow the steps in the section ‘Symptomatic Employees’ above and ‘Returning to Work Guidelines for HCW with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19+’ section based on PCR results.

If the staff member previously tested positive, met criteria to discontinue isolation, and then has a new high risk exposure within 90 days of their initial test, they do not need to be re-tested, but should follow the ‘Conditions of working’ section above, and be restricted from working with immunocompromised patients for 14 days from exposure.