COVID-19 Return to Work Decision Chart For Healthcare Workers

For more information, see the COVID-19 Return to Work Guide for Healthcare Workers.

1. Immunocompromised individuals are legally allowed to follow quarantine rules that are based on immunization status, but they should consult with their health care provider for individualized recommendations.

2. If your potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus occurred while performing your work duties, then you must report this exposure. If you develop symptoms within 14 days of a work-related exposure, then this must also be reported. To report your work-related exposure or subsequent symptoms, contact WHS (1-855-342-8070) if you work for AHS or APL, or contact OHS (1-855-342-8070) if you work for Covenant Health.

3. There is no need to contact WHS prior to returning to work unless instructed to do so by WHS. Return to work decisions should be made in consultation with this guide and discussion with one’s manager or medical staff leader, as appropriate. A negative COVID-19 test result and/or a medical note is not required to return to work.

4. “Close contact” is defined as:
   • Provided direct care for the case (including healthcare workers, family members or other caregivers), or who had other similar close physical contact (e.g. intimate partner, hug, kiss, handshake) without consistent and appropriate use of personal protective equipment; OR
   • Lived with or otherwise had close prolonged contact which may be cumulative, i.e. multiple interactions for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period and within two metres with a case without consistent and appropriate use of personal protective equipment; OR
   • Had direct contact with infectious bodily fluids of a case (e.g. shared cigarettes, glasses/bottles, eating utensils) or was coughed or sneezed on while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.

5. “Infectious period” is defined as:
   • For a COVID-positive case who is symptomatic, 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms until the case’s isolation period if over (which is usually 10 days after symptom onset).
   • For a COVID-positive case who remains asymptomatic, 48 hours prior to their COVID test (swab collection) until 10 days after their COVID test date. Note that if symptoms subsequently develop after the test date, then the infectious period would be until 10 days after symptom onset.

*NOTES:

1. You have been potentially exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
Your **date of last exposure** will depend on any ongoing interaction with the case. The instructions below apply for all COVID-19 cases (variant of concern (VOC) or non-VOC):

1. If you are able to live separately from the positive case during your quarantine (e.g. you were exposed at work to the case and will have no interaction with the case outside of work; or the case is from your household, but either you or the case will be temporarily living at a different location or at an isolation hotel), then your 14-day quarantine starts after your last contact with the case.

2. If the positive case is from your household, and the case is able to completely isolate at home (i.e. separate bedroom and washroom, avoidance of all close contact with other individuals in the home, no shared meals, etc), then your 14-day quarantine starts after your last contact with the case (i.e. the date the case starts isolating).

3. If the positive case is from your household and you will have ongoing close contact with the case in your household, then you must quarantine for the duration of the case’s isolation period (10 days after symptom onset, or 10 days after specimen collection if the case tested positive but never developed symptoms) PLUS an additional 14 days from the date of last exposure. In this situation, your “date of last exposure” is the date when the case’s isolation period ends (and they are no longer considered infectious).

**NOT tested:**
- Continue to monitor for symptoms during your 14-day quarantine period.

**Tested**

**Test is NEGATIVE:**
- Continue to monitor for symptoms during your 14-day quarantine period.

**Test is POSITIVE**:  
- If you remain asymptomatic, then isolate for 10 days after the date that your specimen was collected for COVID-19 testing.
- If you develop symptoms during your isolation period, then you must isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms improve AND you have gone 24 hours without a fever, without taking fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

**During your 14-day quarantine, have you developed any other symptoms (see COVID-19 symptoms) which are new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms?**

- **Yes**
  - Take the online COVID-19 self-assessment for consideration of COVID-19 testing.
  - During your 14-day quarantine, have you developed a fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, or loss of taste or smell that is new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms?
  - **Yes**
    - Continue the 14-day quarantine due to the exposure, or isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms improve AND you have gone 24 hours without a fever, without taking fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.
  - **No**
    - Take the online COVID-19 self-assessment for consideration of COVID-19 testing.
    - **Yes**
      - Have you tested positive for COVID-19 at any time during your 14-day quarantine period?
      - **Yes**
        - Test is POSITIVE*: Return to work at the end of the 14-day quarantine period, or after symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.
      - **No**
        - If you have remained asymptomatic during your entire quarantine period and were either not tested or tested negative for COVID-19, then you can return to work at the end of your 14-day quarantine period.
    - **No**
      - Take the online COVID-19 self-assessment for consideration of COVID-19 testing.

**NOT tested:**
- Continue the 14-day quarantine due to the exposure, or isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms improve AND you have gone 24 hours without a fever, without taking fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

**NOT tested:**
- Continue the 14-day quarantine due to the exposure, or isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms improve AND you have gone 24 hours without a fever, without taking fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

**Test is POSITIVE**:  
- Isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms improve AND you have gone 24 hours without a fever, without taking fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

**Test is NEGATIVE:**
- Return to work at the end of the 14-day quarantine period, or after symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.

**NOTES:**

1. As per Federal Quarantine Act, if you recently returned from international travel and you develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 during your 14-day quarantine, then you must **isolate for 14 days**, starting from the date of your positive test or the date of your symptom onset (if not tested).

2. If you have tested positive **AND** you were at work at any time from 48 hours prior to your symptom onset up to 10 days after symptom onset (or, if you remained asymptomatic, 48 hours prior to your COVID test to 10 days after your COVID test), then please contact **WHS (1-855-450-3619)** if you work for AHS or APL, or contact **OHS (1-855-342-8070)** if you work for Covenant Health.

3. If symptoms such as lingering cough, loss of sense of taste/smell, or fatigue persist beyond 10 days, then you may return to work as long as your symptoms have improved and you feel well enough to return to work.

4. All mention of COVID-19 testing in this algorithm refers to a lab-based, accredited, molecular test to determine if an individual is a confirmed case of COVID-19.

5. The instructions on this page apply to all COVID-19 cases (variant of concern (VOC) or non-VOC).

*NOTES:*
Your date of last exposure will depend on any ongoing interaction with the case. The instructions below apply for all COVID-19 cases (variant of concern (VOC) or non-VOC):

1. If you are able to live separately from the positive case during your quarantine (e.g. you were exposed at work to the case and will have no interaction with the case outside of work; or the case is from your household, but either you or the case will be temporarily living at a different location or at an isolation hotel), then your 10-day quarantine starts after your last contact with the case.
2. If the positive case is from your household, and the case is able to completely isolate at home (i.e. separate bedroom and washroom, avoidance of all close contact with other individuals in the home, no shared meals, etc), then your 10-day quarantine starts after your last contact with the case (i.e. the date the case starts isolating).
3. If the positive case is from your household and you will have ongoing close contact with the case in your household, then you must quarantine for the duration of the case’s isolation period (10 days after symptom onset, or 10 days after specimen collection if the case tested positive but never developed symptoms) PLUS an additional 10 days from the date of last exposure. In this situation, your “date of last exposure” is the date when the case’s isolation period ends (and they are no longer considered infectious).

You must quarantine for 10 days from the date of last exposure (see sidebar)

It you remain asymptomatic during your quarantine, then it is recommended that you undergo testing for COVID-19 on day 7 or later after your exposure.

During your 10-day quarantine, have you developed a fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, or loss of taste or smell that is new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms?

Yes

Take the online COVID-19 self-assessment for consideration of COVID-19 testing.

No

Take the online COVID-19 self-assessment for consideration of COVID-19 testing.

Tested

Test is NEGATIVE prior to day 7:
• If you were tested prior to day 7, then you must resume your quarantine until day 10, or until you test negative on day 7 or later.

Test is NEGATIVE on day 7 or later:
• If you have remained asymptomatic and your test on day 7 or later is negative, then your quarantine ends and you can return to work as soon as you receive your negative test result.

Test is POSITIVE*:
• If you remain asymptomatic, then isolate for 10 days after the date that your specimen was collected for COVID-19 testing.
• If you develop symptoms during your isolation period, then you must isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms have improved* AND you are afebrile for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

Have you tested positive for COVID-19 at any time during your 10-day quarantine period?

Yes

Test is POSITIVE*:
• If you remain asymptomatic during your entire quarantine period, then you can return to work at the end of your 10-day quarantine.

During your 10-day quarantine, have you developed any other symptoms (see COVID-19 symptoms) which are new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms?

Yes

Test is POSITIVE*:
• If you remain asymptomatic, then isolate for 10 days after the date of last exposure AND your symptoms have resolved, then you can return to work when your symptoms resolve.

No

If you have remained asymptomatic during your entire quarantine period, then you can return to work at the end of your 10-day quarantine.

* NOTES:
1. If you are partially immunized, then you should closely monitor for COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days after your potential exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Follow the instructions on page 6 if you develop symptoms after your quarantine ends.
2. If you have tested positive AND you were at work at any time from 48 hours prior to your symptom onset up to 10 days after symptom onset (or, if you remained asymptomatic, from 48 hours prior to your COVID test to 10 days after your COVID test), then please contact WHS (1-855-450-3619) if you work for AHS or APL, or contact OHS (1-855-342-8070) if you work for Covenant Health.
3. If symptoms such as lingering cough, loss of sense of taste/smell, or fatigue persist beyond 10 days, then you may return to work as long as your symptoms have improved and you feel well enough to return to work.
4. All mention of COVID-19 testing in this algorithm refers to a lab-based, accredited, molecular test to determine if an individual is a confirmed case of COVID-19.
5. The instructions on this page apply to all COVID-19 cases (variant of concern (VOC) or non-VOC).
You have close contact (i.e. in your home) with a child AND this child is symptomatic and/or has recently been instructed to stay home due to possible exposure to COVID-19.

Are you experiencing any symptoms that are new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms?

- Yes → Go to page 6
- No

Has the child with whom you are a close contact recently been instructed to stay home due to possible exposure to COVID-19, OR has this child had close contact with a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case during that case’s infectious period?

- Yes
  - You have potentially been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. Return to the algorithm on page 1, starting from the red box, to determine if you must quarantine for 14 days, 10 days, or if no quarantine is required based on immunization status.
  - No
    - You can continue to work with no restrictions.

Has this child with whom you are a close contact recently been instructed to stay home due to possible exposure to COVID-19, OR has this child had close contact with a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case during that case’s infectious period?

- Yes
  - You can continue to work with no restrictions, even if the child is symptomatic.
- No
  - You can continue to work with no restrictions.

Has the child developed a fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, or loss of taste or smell, that is new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from their usual symptoms?

- Yes
  - The child that is a close contact and has any of these symptoms is considered a case of COVID-19 unless they test negative. COVID-19 testing of the child is encouraged and they will be required to isolate.
  - You have potentially been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. Return to the algorithm on page 1, starting from the red box, to determine if you must quarantine for 14 days, 10 days, or if no quarantine is required based on immunization status.
- No
  - You can continue to work with no restrictions.

Has the child developed any other symptoms which are new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from their usual symptoms?

- Yes
  - It is recommended that the online COVID-19 self-assessment be completed for the child, for consideration of COVID-19 testing.
  - You can continue to work with no restrictions:
    - while awaiting the child’s COVID-19 test result, or
    - if the child is not tested for COVID-19.
- No
  - You can continue to work with no restrictions:
    - The child that is a close contact and has any of these symptoms is considered a case of COVID-19 unless they test negative.
    - COVID-19 testing of the child is encouraged and they will be required to isolate.

Return to the top of this algorithm if the situation changes, e.g.:
- The child was a close contact of a case and develops new symptoms, or
- The child tests positive for COVID-19, or
- You become symptomatic.

NOTE: Any household contact of the symptomatic child (who is a close contact) is not required to quarantine if:
- the child tested negative for COVID-19, and
- the household contact has no COVID-19 symptoms.
You are asymptomatic and have recently been tested for COVID-19.

Carefully review the top two grey boxes on page 1 that start with "In the past 14 days, . . . ". Do any of the points in those top two grey boxes apply to you?

Yes → Go to page 1

No

You can continue to work as per usual while awaiting your test result. Follow the actions outlined below once your test result is received.

Test is NEGATIVE:
• Continue to work as per usual.
  Go to page 6 if you develop symptoms after your negative test result.

Test is POSITIVE*:
• Isolate for 10 days after the date that your specimen was collected for COVID-19 testing.
• If you have remained asymptomatic, then you can return to work after your 10 day isolation.
• If you develop symptoms during your isolation period, then you must continue to isolate until 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms have improved* AND you are afebrile for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

* NOTES:
1. If you have tested positive AND you were at work at any time from 48 hours prior to your symptom onset up to 10 days after symptom onset (or, if you remained asymptomatic, from 48 hours prior to your COVID test to 10 days after your COVID test), then please contact WHS (1-855-450-3619) if you work for AHS or APL, or contact OHS (1-855-342-8070) if you work for Covenant Health.
2. If symptoms such as lingering cough, loss of sense of taste/smell, or fatigue persist beyond 10 days, then you may return to work as long as your symptoms have improved and you feel well enough to return to work.
3. All mention of COVID-19 testing in this algorithm refers to a lab-based, accredited, molecular test to determine if an individual is a confirmed case of COVID-19.
4. The instructions on this page apply to all COVID-19 cases (variant of concern (VOC) or non-VOC).
You are experiencing any symptoms that are new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms.

Carefully review the top two grey boxes on page 1 that start with "In the past 14 days, . . . ". Do any of the points in those top two grey boxes apply to you?

Yes → Go to page 1

No

Have you recently been immunized, and you developed any COVID-19 symptoms within 24 hours of receiving the vaccine?

Yes → Stay home and minimize contact with others, even if you think that your symptom(s) are just side effects of the vaccine

No

Do you have a fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose or loss of taste or smell that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms?

Yes → You can return to work unless you have been instructed to quarantine or isolate for other reasons.

No

Have your symptoms resolved within 48 hours (2 days) of onset?

Yes → Take the online COVID-19 self-assessment for consideration of COVID-19 testing.

No

Do you have any other symptoms (see COVID-19 symptoms) which are new, or not related to a pre-existing health condition, or a change from your usual symptoms?

Yes → Take the online COVID-19 self-assessment for consideration of COVID-19 testing.

No

If you do not have any COVID-19 symptoms, then you can continue to work with no restrictions. See page 5 if you are asymptomatic and underwent COVID-19 testing.

Test is POSITIVE*:
- Isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms have improved* AND you are afebrile for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

Test is NEGATIVE:
- Return to work after symptoms resolve.

NOT tested:
- Isolate for 10 days (or 14 days if immunocompromised) after onset of symptoms, or until symptoms have improved* AND you are afebrile for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.

NOT tested:
- Remain off work and limit contact with others until symptoms resolve.

* NOTES:
1. If you have tested positive AND you were at work at any time from 48 hours prior to your symptom onset up to 10 days after symptom onset or, if you remained asymptomatic, from 48 hours prior to your COVID test to 10 days after your COVID test, then please contact WHS (1-855-450-3619) if you work for AHS or APL or contact OHS (1-855-342-8070) if you work for Covenant Health.
2. If symptoms such as lingering cough, loss of sense of taste/smell, or fatigue persist beyond 10 days, then you may return to work as long as your symptoms have improved and you feel well enough to return to work.
3. All mention of COVID-19 testing in this algorithm refers to a lab-based, accredited, molecular test to determine if an individual is a confirmed case of COVID-19.
4. The instructions on this page apply to all COVID-19 cases (variant of concern (VOC) or non-VOC).