



**Department of Human Resources**  
***Procedures for Responding to Exposure to  
and Positive Cases of COVID-19***  
***Version 1.1 September 26, 2022***

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COVID-19 remains a serious health risk and Milwaukee County remains committed to practices to reduce its impact on our employees, those we serve, and our community. This procedure of the Human Resources Department outlines the steps that employees, managers, and visitors to our facilities should take whenever individuals:

- Contract cases of COVID-19, or
- Experience symptoms of COVID-19, or
- Have been exposed to COVID-19.

Version 1.1 of this Human Resource procedure includes these sections:

1. [Definitions](#)
2. What to do when an employee, contractor, or recent visitor has a [Confirmed Case of COVID-19](#).
3. What to do when an employee reports to work with [Symptoms of COVID-19](#), develops Symptoms while at work, or calls in sick with Symptoms, or when a contractor or visitor to a County location exhibits Symptoms.
4. What to do when an employee has [Exposure](#) to a person with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19.
5. Isolation and Quarantine [Guidance](#).

If you have questions about this, or any other procedures or policies, please email: [COVID-19@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:COVID-19@milwaukeecountywi.gov).

## **I. Definitions**

**A. Close Contact:** A person with Close Contact is someone who:

- i. Was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before infected person's illness onset (or, for an asymptomatic infected person, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the infected person is isolated. This is the definition **regardless of whether face masks or personal protective equipment (PPE) were worn by any or all individuals**, and/or
- ii. Provided care at home to an infected person; and/or
- iii. Had direct physical contact with an infected person (touched, hugged, or kissed them); and/or
- iv. Shared eating or drinking utensils with an infected person; and/or
- v. Got respiratory droplets (for example, was sneezed or coughed on) on them from an infected person.

**B. Confirmed Case of COVID-19:** A case of COVID-19 that has been confirmed through a positive test for COVID-19.

- C. Exposure to COVID-19 (Exposure):** Any form of Close Contact (see A. above) with an individual who has a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 during the last 14 days.
- D. Fully Vaccinated:**
- i. An individual has received two vaccinations in a two-dose vaccine series or one vaccination in a single-dose vaccine, AND
  - ii. Two weeks or more have passed since the individual received the final dose.
- E. Up-to-date Vaccinations**
- i. Up to date refers to an individual who has received two vaccinations in a two-dose vaccine series or one vaccination in a single dose vaccine, AND
  - ii. Has received one booster shot vaccine
- F. High-Risk Facility:** A congregate living facility operated by Milwaukee County, including the House of Correction; the jail within the Criminal Justice Facility operated by the Milwaukee County Sheriff; and, within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Children, Youth, and Family Services (CYFS) Detention Center and Behavioral Health Services (BHS) clinical settings.
- G. Isolation:** [Isolation](#) keeps **someone who is infected** with the virus away from others, even in their home.
- H. KN-95 Mask.** For this order, N-95 and KN-94 masks are equivalent to KN-95 and may be used interchangeably. These are also referred to as “high quality” masks. If these masks are not available, multiple-ply disposable masks, sometimes referred to as “surgical,” masks, may be substituted until a KN-95 or its equivalent can be obtained.
- I. Not Up to Date with Vaccinations:** Individuals who:
- i. Have not received the second shot of a two-dose vaccine despite being eligible for a second shot (more than 3 weeks since initial Pfizer vaccination or since the initial Moderna vaccination) OR
  - ii. Have not received a booster shot despite being eligible for a booster (more than two months since single dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccination or at least five months since second dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccination)
- J. Person in Our Care or Custody:** Anyone who is legally under the care of Milwaukee County, including those in detention, in jail, or in a medical care facility, and for whom Milwaukee County has a custodial responsibility.
- K. Persons Recovered from COVID-19 in the Past 30 Days:** An individual who received a positive test within the past 30 Days where the date of the test is Day 0, who has completed the required Isolation period, and who no longer has Symptoms.
- L. Quarantine:** [Quarantine](#) keeps **someone who has been exposed** to the virus away from others.
- M. Side Effects from COVID-19 Vaccine (Side Effects).** A set of reactions that are commonly experienced following a vaccination dose. In the 72 hours following a COVID-19 vaccine dose, including booster dose, individuals may experience fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and body aches, and soreness at the injection site.
- N. Symptomatic Individual:** Any person in a County facility who has Symptoms Compatible with COVID-19. This could include employees, contractors, visitors, or people in the County’s Care or Custody.
- O. Symptoms Compatible with COVID-19 (Symptoms):** Symptoms may appear from 2 to 14 days following exposure. Also see the [CDC self-check tool](#) for identifying COVID-19 symptoms. The following symptoms may be symptoms of COVID-19 if

they are new for an individual or are not commonly experienced. Note that **in the 72 hours following a dose of COVID-19 vaccine**, common side effects of the vaccines may mimic some COVID-19 Symptoms but should be treated as Side Effects, not Symptoms, as indicated below.

<b>COVID-19 Symptom or Vaccine Side Effect?</b>	<b>Outside Vaccination Window</b>	<b>Within 72 hours of receiving vaccination</b>
Feverish or temperature of 100.4 <sup>0</sup> F (38 <sup>0</sup> C) or higher	COVID-19 Symptom	Side Effect: normal response to vaccine – <b>BUT</b> need to stay home until 24 hours after fever ends (without use of fever-reducing drugs)
Chills	COVID-19 Symptom	Side Effect: normal response to vaccine – Go to work, if able
Headache that is new or different for you	COVID-19 Symptom	Side Effect: normal response to vaccine – Go to work, if able
Unexpected fatigue	COVID-19 Symptom	Side Effect: normal response to vaccine – Go to work, if able.
Unexpected muscle or body aches	COVID-19 Symptom	Side Effect: normal response to vaccine – Go to work, if able
Soreness at site of injection	(not applicable)	Side Effect: normal response to vaccine – Go to work, if able
Diarrhea	COVID-19 Symptom	COVID-19 Symptom; follow procedures in Section III
Nausea or vomiting	COVID-19 Symptom	COVID-19 Symptom; follow procedures in Section III
New shortness of breath or difficulty breathing	COVID-19 Symptom	COVID-19 Symptom; follow procedures in Section III
New congestion or runny nose	COVID-19 Symptom	COVID-19 Symptom; follow procedures in Section III
New loss of taste or smell	COVID-19 Symptom	COVID-19 Symptom; follow procedures in Section III
New sore throat	COVID-19 Symptom	COVID-19 Symptom; follow procedures in Section III
New cough	COVID-19 Symptom	COVID-19 Symptom; follow procedures in Section III

- P. Test for COVID-19:** Two tests are commonly used to diagnose COVID-19: PCR (polymerase chain reaction) tests and rapid (or antigen) tests. Both are used to determine if the virus that causes COVID-19 is currently present in an individual.
- i. PCR tests, which are analyzed in laboratories and usually take from one to three days for results, are highly accurate and considered the “gold standard” test.
  - ii. Rapid tests may be analyzed outside labs and may yield results as soon as a few minutes after testing. Rapid tests are most accurate in identifying positive cases of COVID-19 when symptoms are present; negative rapid test results may be less conclusive. For more information, visit the [CDC website](#).
  - iii. Note that antibody tests are blood tests that determine if an individual has had a past infection of COVID-19 but are not used to diagnose current infections.
- Q. Unvaccinated:** Individuals who have not received any dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

## **II. What to do when an employee, contractor, or recent visitor has a Confirmed Case of COVID-19**

This section provides guidance to employees who have a Confirmed Case of COVID-19. It also provides guidance to supervisors of these individuals as well as to managers of facilities where a recent contractor or visitor has a Confirmed Case of COVID-19. In no instance is this guidance meant to replace or override the advice of a medical professional.

**NOTE:** An individual's vaccination status does not affect the required responses if the individual contracts a Confirmed Case of COVID-19. The variable that affects these requirements are whether the individual develops Symptoms.

### **A. For Employees with Confirmed Case of COVID-19**

- i. If an employee has a Confirmed Case of COVID-19, they should notify their supervisor immediately and identify areas of the County facility(s) where they spent 15 minutes or more over the last 24 hours.
- ii. The employee should provide to their supervisor confirmation of their positive test result or confirmation from medical personnel of the Confirmed Case of COVID-19 as soon as it can be reasonably obtained.
- iii. Medical advice to the employee should come from a medical doctor or public health authority.
- iv. The employee should follow the [guidance on isolation](#) from the CDC as well as Section VI (Isolation and Quarantine Guidance).
- v. If telework is possible, isolating employee may telework. If telework is not an option, employee may use Sick Time or other paid time off (PTO).

### **B. Department Leader or Supervisor Immediate Actions**

- If a department leader or supervisor is notified that an employee, contractor, or recent visitor to the facility has a Confirmed Case of COVID-19, then, as possible, the leader or supervisor should immediately evacuate and section off areas that the individual with the Confirmed Case of COVID-19 has occupied for 15 minutes or more over the past 24 hours (for example, the individual's office, shared work areas, kitchen area). Where possible, the areas should remain sectioned off for 24 hours before cleaning or disinfecting.
- The department leader or supervisor should ensure that areas occupied by the individual with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more in the last 24 hours are cleaned or disinfected in accordance with [CDC standards](#). This may be accomplished by contacting the department's facilities management team via a service request or by arranging directly for cleaning or disinfecting.
  - a) In the case of a facilities service request, the requestor should provide the following information (as known and available):
    - This is a COVID-19 Confirmed Case alert, with request for disinfectant cleaning.
    - The point of contact within the department.

- The location of the potentially infected areas (for example, Courthouse, Suite ###).
  - The time that the person with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 was last in the space.
  - Whether or not the potentially infected areas have been sectioned off.
- b) For departments without direct access to a facilities management team, the department should follow closely the [CDC guidance](#) for cleaning or disinfecting facilities, including:
- Opening outside doors and windows, if possible, to increase air circulation in these areas.
  - Wait as long as is practical, or at least several hours, since last occupancy by the person with COVID-19 before cleaning or disinfecting sectioned off areas.
  - Cleaning or disinfecting all areas used by the person with COVID-19, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
  - Vacuuming should not be done in the first 24 hours. Afterwards, when needed, vacuuming should be done when the area is unoccupied and using a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter vacuum (if available) and with any fans or ventilation systems turned off (if possible).
- c) Once any space occupied by the individual with COVID-19 has been appropriately cleaned or disinfected, it may be reopened for use.
- Supervisors should, as possible, identify employees, contractors, and Persons in Care or Custody who had Exposure to the individual with the Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in the 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms through the time of the positive test or medical confirmation.
  - If the individual with the Confirmed Case of COVID-19 is asymptomatic, identify people who had Exposure to the individual in the 48 hours prior to the time the test specimen was collected.
    - a) All employees with Exposure should follow the procedures in Section IV.
    - b) Persons in the Care or Custody with Exposure should be Quarantined for 14 days or should follow public health guidelines for their facility type.
  - Note that the press should never be contacted about individuals who have a Confirmed Case of COVID-19, which would violate confidentiality and County policy. Departments should refer any press inquiries to the County Executive's Office.

**C. Return to Work Procedure for Employees with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19**

- i. Unless otherwise directed by their health care provider, employees with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 should follow these guidelines and procedures for returning to work:
- a) **Employees with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 who developed Symptoms** and were directed to isolate themselves at home may return under the following conditions:
- i. Stayed home for at least 5 days and isolated from others in their home. One is likely most infectious during these first 5 days
  - ii. End isolation after day 5 if you are fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication, and
  - iii. Symptoms are improving.

- iv. Wear a high-quality mask through Day 10. If you have two sequential negative antigen tests 48 hours apart, you may remove your mask sooner than Day 10.
- b) **Employees with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 who never developed Symptoms**
- i. If experiencing no symptoms including no fever, may return to work on day 6 but must wear KN-95 mask or mask required by department for days 6 through 10 and follow the County’s mask order thereafter
  - ii. A rapid (or antigen) test for COVID-19 is strongly recommended but not required
  - iii. Note that a negative test for COVID-19 is not required to return to work after 10 days of isolation.
  - iv. Individuals with Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 must provide evidence of positive test results or other documentation from a doctor or medical professional confirming the case of COVID-19 prior to returning to work.

### **III. What to do when an employee calls in sick with Symptoms, reports to work with Symptoms, or develops Symptoms while at work, or when a contractor or visitor to a County location exhibits Symptoms while at a County location**

Public health officers are confident that the number of people with COVID-19 is higher than the number of known positive cases. While symptoms compatible with COVID-19 are an imperfect proxy for someone being infected, Symptoms can be used to inform preventative measures to contain the spread of the virus. The guidelines below are consistent with recommendations from local public health officers to help contain spread in Milwaukee County.

**Note:** Individuals may experience common Side Effects within 72 hours of receiving a dose of COVID-19 vaccine, and these Side Effects are NOT Symptoms of COVID-19. See the definition of Symptoms in Section I.D for a list of common side effects of COVID-19 vaccinations and for instructions on responding to Side Effects.

Departments with Persons in Care of Custody should follow CDC and state guidance for responding to Symptomatic Individuals in the County’s care.

#### **A. Employees, Contractors, or Visitors with Symptoms**

If employees experience any Symptoms, they should stay at home or, if at work, return home following the immediate directions below. Any Symptomatic contractors or visitors should also return home immediately, following this guidance.

- i. **Immediate Directions to Symptomatic Individuals, including Symptomatic contractors or visitors, in the Workplace**
  - a. The Symptomatic Individual should always stay 6 feet away from other people.
  - b. The Symptomatic Individual should wear a well fitted, high quality mask over their nose and mouth to help prevent the spread of germs.
  - c. The Symptomatic Individual should avoid touching equipment and furniture, as much as possible, and should not move around the workspace.
  - d. The Symptomatic Individual should be sent home as soon as possible.

- e. The Symptomatic Individual should continue to wear a mask and practice physical distancing until they reach their residence or Isolation area. Modes of transportation for the Symptomatic Individual to get to their residence are prioritized below, starting with the top recommendation:
  - Personal transportation.
  - A ride with a member of their household.
  - A ride with a family member or friend.
- f. Once outside the workplace the Symptomatic Individual should go to their residence and Isolate.
- ii. **Directions to Symptomatic Employees Once Isolating**
  - a. Symptomatic Individuals should notify their supervisor immediately if the Symptoms emerged outside the workplace.
  - b. Symptomatic Individuals should report to a supervisor any area of the County facility(s) where they spent 15 minutes or more over the past 24 hours.
  - c. **Symptomatic Individuals who do not telework full time must be tested for COVID-19 immediately.**
    - 1. **Employee should have a PCR test for COVID-19 as soon as possible and no later than one (1) business day from the onset of Symptoms.**
    - 2. Employee should Isolate while test results are pending (see Section VI).
    - 3. Supervisors may ask for confirmation that the employee has scheduled or registered for testing to ensure the employee completes the testing in a timely manner.
    - 4. Employee should provide their test results to their supervisor and their HR Business Partner as soon as results are available. If employee tests positive, follow procedures in Section II. If negative, follow return to work procedures in this section (see Section III.C).
    - 5. If possible, employee should telework until they are cleared to return to work (see Section III.C). If telework is not an option, employees may use sick time or other paid time off.
  - d. **Symptomatic individuals who telework full time are encouraged, but not required, to get tested.**
  - e. Employees who are symptomatic and seeking testing are encouraged to document people they have been in Close Contact with in the 48 hours prior to the start of their Symptoms to inform contact tracing efforts should they test positive.
  - f. Employees who have Symptoms AND who have had Exposure to someone with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 should follow procedures in Section IV. and immediately seek out testing.

**B. Department Leaders or Supervisors Immediate Actions**

When a supervisor is notified of a Symptomatic Individual in the workplace, the supervisor should immediately confirm that this individual has Symptoms Compatible with COVID-19. **Supervisors have the right to ask employees, contractors, or members of the public about how they are feeling as it relates to COVID-19 Symptoms. They should wear a mask and maintain 6 feet of distance when asking questions.**

Once a supervisor has confirmed that the Symptoms are Compatible with COVID-19, the department leader or supervisor should take the following immediate actions:

- Evacuate and section off areas that the Symptomatic Individual has occupied for 15 minutes or more over the past 24 hours (for example, the individual’s office, shared work areas, kitchen area). Where possible, the areas should remain sectioned off for 24 hours since last contact with the Symptomatic Individual before cleaning or disinfecting.
- Ensure that areas occupied by the Symptomatic Individual for 15 minutes or more in the last 24 hours are cleaned or disinfected in accordance with [CDC standards](#). This may be accomplished by contacting the department’s facilities management team via a service request for disinfection and/or cleaning.
  - a. In the case of a facilities service request, the requestor should provide the following information (as known and available):
    - This is a COVID-19 Symptomatic Individual alert, with request for cleaning or disinfecting.
    - The point of contact within the department.
    - The location of the potentially infected areas (for example, Courthouse, Suite ###).
    - The time that the Symptomatic Individual was last in the space.
    - Whether or not the potentially infected areas have been sectioned off.
  - b. For departments without direct access to a facilities management team, the department should follow closely the [CDC guidance](#) for cleaning or disinfecting facilities, including:
    - Opening outside doors and windows, if possible, to increase air circulation in these areas.
    - Waiting 24 hours, or as long as is practical, since last occupancy by Symptomatic Individual before cleaning or disinfecting sectioned off areas.
    - Cleaning or disinfecting all areas used by the Symptomatic Individual, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
    - Vacuuming should not be done in the first 24 hours. Afterwards when needed, vacuuming should be done when the area is unoccupied and using a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter vacuum (if available) and with any fans or ventilation systems turned off (if possible).
  - c. Once any space occupied by the Symptomatic Individual has been appropriately cleaned or disinfected, it may be reopened for use.
- Local health departments **do not** need to be notified of a Symptomatic Individual.

**C. Return to Work Procedure for Employees with Symptoms of COVID-19 Only (no Exposure)**

Keep in mind that within 72 hours of receiving a COVID-19 vaccination, individuals may experience Side Effects that mimic Symptoms of COVID-19. See Section I.O to distinguish between Symptoms and Side Effects. This section addresses return to work following Symptoms of COVID-19. Please note that the logic in the County’s [Health Screening Questionnaire](#) distinguishes between vaccine Side Effects and COVID-19 Symptoms to support the correct interpretation of return-to-work policy.



- i. **Symptomatic Individuals who do not telework full time:** Before a Symptomatic employee may return to in-person work, the following must be true:
  - a. If symptom free isolate for 5 days and wear a high-quality mask through day 10
  - b. If symptomatic, you may end isolation after day 5 if fever free for 24 hours. Continue to wear high quality mask through day 10.
  - c. If you still have symptoms through day 5 continue to isolate until fever free for 24 hours and symptoms are improving, or through day 10.
- ii. **Full-time telework employees:** Symptomatic employees should either telework or if unable to work use sick time, or other paid time off per department policies.

#### **IV. What to do when an Employee has Exposure to a Person with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19**

It is an employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor immediately if they have had Exposure to someone with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19, including a member of their household with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19.

This section includes **procedures for**

- Employees exposed to COVID-19
- Department Leaders or Supervisors Actions

##### **B. Procedure for Employees with Exposure Only (no Symptoms)**

- i. Exposure guidelines are the same for employees who are vaccinated or unvaccinated. Employees **DO NOT** need to Quarantine and may return to work immediately so long as they:
  - a. Wear a mask as soon as you learn you were exposed – Day 0 is the day of your last exposure to someone with COVID-19 and Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure
  - b. Continue to take precautions
  - c. Day 6 – get tested
    - i. **If test results are positive**, they should follow the procedures outlined in Section II of this order, or
    - ii. **If test results are negative**, continue to take precautions and wear a high-quality mask through Day 10

##### **C. Department Leaders or Supervisors Immediate Actions**

When a supervisor is notified that an employee has had Exposure to a person with a Confirmed Case of COVID-19, or that a household member of an employer has COVID-19, no specific actions are required of the supervisor beyond requiring the Exposed employee(s) to adhere to the exposure guidelines (no Symptoms) or Isolate (with Symptoms).

- Local health departments **do not** need to be notified that the employee has had Exposure to COVID-19.
- Unless the employee develops Symptoms or has a Confirmed Case of COVID-19, the supervisor does not need to request special cleaning or notify other employees.

## V. Additional Isolation and Quarantine Guidance

These guidelines are meant to augment instructions provided by the CDC for [isolation](#) and for [quarantine](#).

- A. **Isolation:** Keeps **someone who is sick or is infected** with the virus away from others, even in their home. When you isolate, you should:
- i. Stay home! This means do not go to school, work, public areas, or attend large gatherings, such as parties, weddings, meetings, and sporting events. If you need medical care, call a health care provider.
  - ii. Call ahead before going to a doctor's office.
  - iii. Monitor your symptoms. If you have an [emergency warning sign](#) such as trouble breathing, seek emergency medical care immediately.
  - iv. Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible.
  - v. Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
  - vi. Avoid contact with other members of the household and pets.
  - vii. Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, or utensils.
  - viii. Wear a face mask.
- B. **Quarantine:** Keeps **someone who might have been exposed** to the virus away from others. When you quarantine, you should:
- i. Stay home! This means do not go to school, work, public areas, or attend any gatherings, such as parties, weddings, meetings, and sporting events. If you need medical care, call a health care provider and use telemedicine when possible.
  - ii. Call ahead before going to a doctor's office or any other health care setting.
  - iii. Watch for fever (100.4°F degrees or higher), cough, shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19. If you experience symptoms, you should isolate from others.
  - iv. Stay away from others, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19.
  - v. Minimize contact with others in the same household including not sharing bathrooms, kitchens, or other common areas whenever possible.