

*Note: This document replaces and supersedes the document COVID-19 Response Guidance for Schools, Version 7.0, dated April 3 2023. As of Version 8.0, there are separate guidance documents for Students vs. Employees.*

**Updates as of January 9, 2024:** [California Department of Public Health COVID-19 Isolation Guidance](#) moved away from five days of isolation and instead focus on clinical symptoms to determine when to end isolation.

## Section A: Recommendations for people who test positive for COVID-19

- Stay home if the person has [COVID-19 symptoms](#)**, until they have not had a fever for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication AND other COVID-19 symptoms are mild and improving.
  - If the person does not have symptoms, they should follow the recommendations below to reduce exposure to others.
- [Mask](#)** (unless unable to mask due to age, medical, cognitive, sensory, or behavioral conditions) when the person who tests positive is around other people indoors for the 10 days\* after they become sick or test positive (if no symptoms). They may remove their mask sooner than 10 days if they have two sequential negative tests at least one day apart. Day 0 is symptom onset date or positive test date.
- Avoid contact with people at [higher-risk for severe COVID-19 for 10 days\\*](#)**. Higher-risk individuals include pregnant people, the elderly, those who live in congregate care facilities, those who have immunocompromising conditions, and that put them at higher risk for serious illness.
- [Seek Treatment](#)**. If the person has symptoms, particularly if they are at [higher risk for severe COVID-19](#), speak with a healthcare provider as soon as they test positive. They may be eligible for [antiviral medicines](#) or other treatments for COVID-19. COVID-19 antiviral medicines work best if taken as soon as possible, and within 5-7 days from when symptoms start.
  - Call 1-833-422-4255 if unable to contact a healthcare provider, or use the [treatment options](#) to find one.
  - Call Humboldt County Covid Line at 707-449-4913 with any questions related to new recommendations or to discuss testing and treatment guidance**

\*The potential infectious period is 2 days before the date symptoms began or the positive test date (if no symptoms) through Day 10. (Day 0 is the symptom onset date or positive test date).

"Infectious period" for the purpose of cases for isolation and exclusion, per [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations](#) is now defined as:

- For [COVID-19 cases](#) with symptoms, it is a minimum of 24 hours from the day of symptom onset:
  - COVID-19 cases may return to work if 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND
  - Their symptoms are mild and improving.
- For COVID-19 cases with no symptoms, there is no infectious period for the purpose of isolation or exclusion. If symptoms develop, the criteria above will apply.

## Section B: Recommendation for close contacts of cases

- If the close contact has [new COVID-19 symptoms](#), they should [test](#) and mask right away.
- If the close contact does not have symptoms, and is at [higher risk](#) of severe COVID-19 infection and would benefit from treatment, they should test within 5 days.

- **If the close contact does not have symptoms** and has contact with people who are at higher risk for severe infection, they should mask indoors when around such people for 10 days. Consider testing within 5 days after the last exposure date (Day 0) and before contact with higher-risk people. For further details, see [CDPH COVID-19 testing guidance](#).

**Any person who tests positive should isolate at home and follow the guidelines of Section A above.**

**Changes to testing recommendations** per Cal/OSHA [Update: COVID-19 Prevention-Non-Emergency Regulation: What Employers Need to Know](#)

- CDPH no longer recommends testing for all close contacts and instead recommends testing only for:
  - All people with new COVID-19 symptoms.
  - Close contacts who are at higher risk of severe disease or who have contact with people who are at higher risk of severe disease.
- Employers must continue to make COVID-19 testing available at no cost and during paid time to all employees with a close contact, except for asymptomatic employees who recently recovered from COVID-19.
- In workplace outbreaks or major outbreaks, the COVID-19 Prevention regulations still require testing of all close contacts in outbreaks, and everyone in the exposed group in major outbreaks. Employees who refuse to test and have symptoms must be excluded for at least 24 hours from symptom onset, and can return to work only when they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptoms are mild and improving, as with other illness prevention/mitigation.

**Requirements in the COVID-19 Prevention regulations that remain the same per Cal/OSHA:**

- Employers must address COVID-19 as a workplace hazard under the requirements found in section [3203 \(Injury and Illness Prevention Program, IIPP\)](#), and include their COVID-19 procedures to prevent this health hazard in their written IIPP or in a separate document.

**Note:** Employees still have the right to wear face coverings at work and to request and receive respirators from the employer when working indoors and during outbreaks.

- Cal/OSHA requires employers to keep and maintain records of COVID-19 cases in the workplace and report serious illnesses and outbreaks to Cal/OSHA and the local public health department.
- Employers must report information about employee deaths, serious injuries, and serious occupational illnesses to Cal/OSHA, consistent with existing regulations.
- Employers must notify all employees, independent contractors, and employers with an employee who had close contact with a COVID-19 case.
- Employers must exclude COVID-19 cases during the infectious period from the workplace.
- Employers must review CDPH and Cal/OSHA guidance regarding ventilation, including CDPH and Cal/OSHA Interim Guidance for Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments. Employers must also develop, implement, and maintain effective methods to prevent COVID-19 transmission by improving ventilation.

**Resources:**

- **CDPH:** [Guidance for K-12 Schools and Child Care Settings to Mitigate the Spread of Communicable Disease, 2023 -2024 School Year](#)
- **Cal/OSHA:** <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Non-Emergency-regs-summary.pdf>