Checklist for Businesses with Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Summary of March 9, 2021 changes

- New information added for vaccinated individuals.

Summary of March 1, 2021 changes

- Updated language for mask and face covering fit and material in alignment with CDC recommendations.
- Added quarantine recommendations for fully vaccinated individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Updated information on COVID-19 hotline hours and days of operations.

Employer reporting requirements

The Governor's "Roadmap to Recovery" Proclamation requires an employer to notify their local health jurisdiction within 24 hours if they suspect COVID-19 is spreading in a workplace, or if they know of 2 or more employees with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in a 14-day period.

Employer responsibilities

All businesses are obligated to keep a safe and healthy facility in accordance with state and federal safety and health rules. They must comply with specific COVID-19 worksite safety practices outlined in the "Roadmap to Recovery" Proclamation and Healthy Washington Roadmap to Recovery Plan. Business should also be in compliance with the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces and the Washington State Department of Health Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations. The Department of Labor & Industries Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) recently issued Emergency rule (CR-103E) that requires employers to comply with all of the Governor's emergency proclamations for operation. The Governor's website has a COVID-19 Safety Template.

Workers should be screened before entry and spaced at work. An employer must provide employees (at no cost to them) cloth facial coverings, unless greater protection is required.

A cloth face covering is anything the completely covers your mouth and nose, and fits securely on the sides of your face and under your chin. It should be made of two or more layers of tightly woven fabric with ties or straps that go around your head or behind your ears. A face shield with a drape can be used by people with developmental, behavioral, or medical conditions that prevent them from wearing a cloth face covering. Face shields may also be used

by children in childcare, day camp, and K-12 settings. In the workplace, masks or respirators may be required as they are more protective than cloth face coverings.

Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends strategies to improve mask fitting to more effectively slow the spread of COVID-19. These strategies include wearing a cloth mask over a medical procedure mask, knotting the ear loops of a medical procedure mask, using a mask fitter, or using a nylon covering over a mask. In addition, DOH does not recommend the use of masks with exhalation valves or vents, or single layer bandanas and gaiters. (Respirators with exhalation valves are okay when used in accordance with guidance published by DOH and L&I.) It is important to wear a mask in all public settings combined with continued implementation of effective public health measures such as vaccination, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and isolation and quarantine.

Employers are encouraged to identify a central point of contact (POC) who will receive information about all suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases and follow up as needed. The POC will liaise with Public Health and serve as a point of contact for employees to report all suspected and confirmed cases and ensure centralized tracking. All employees should know who the POC is and how to contact them.

If a suspected or confirmed case COVID-19 worked while contagious

☐ **Immediately send home employees who test positive and/or employees with symptoms of COVID-19 who were close contacts of the positive employees.**

    a.   Strongly encourage symptomatic employees to get tested. Free or low-cost testing is available at several locations, regardless of immigration status.
    b.   Employees should be tested 48 hours or later from last exposure.
    c.   If more than two employees test positive in a 14 days period, notify your local health department within 24 hours.
    d.   Provide sick leave and benefit information to support isolation.
    e.   Provide contact information of business COVID POC
    f.   Let employee know that contact tracers may contact them and what to expect.

☐ **Be familiar with return to work conditions.** Employees who test positive for COVID-19 cannot return to work until after an isolation period:

    a.   At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started and
    b.   At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
    c.   Other symptoms have improved.

☐ **Clean and disinfect the facility.** Usually the facility does not need to be shut down. If it has been less than 7 days since the sick employee was in the facility, close off any areas or shared equipment used for long periods of time by the sick person: wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting, or if not feasible wait as long as possible. During this period, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in these areas.

☐ **Identify workers or clients who might have been exposed at work.** A close contact is any person who was within 6 feet of a contagious COVID-19 case for at least 15 minutes. A person is contagious 2 days before their illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before positive test was collected) until the time they are isolated. Review logs, databases, and video footage, and interview employee to identify contacts.

a. Inform exposed employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

b. Most workplaces should follow the [Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#) and instruct employees with close contact to stay home for 14 days quarantine, telework if possible, and self-monitor for symptoms.

c. [Essential workplaces](#) should follow the guidance on [Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers](#). Employers in critical infrastructure must manage return to work for potentially exposed workers in ways that best protect the health of those workers, their co-workers, and the general public. Consult with your local health department.

d. Be aware that a negative test does not rule out COVID-19 and that the full quarantine must be completed. This is because it can take up to 14 days for infection to start.

e. Current quarantine recommendations are to stay in quarantine for 14 days after your last contact. **This is the safest option**. Monitor your symptoms during this time, and if you have any [COVID-19 symptoms](#) during the 14 days, get tested. Certain high-risk settings or groups **should** use the 14-day quarantine option:

   - People who have recently been in [countries where the new variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, 501Y.V, has been identified](#).
   - People who work or stay in an acute or long-term healthcare setting.
   - People who work or stay in a correctional facility.
   - People who work or stay in a shelter or transitional housing.
   - People who live in communal housing such as dormitories, fraternities or sororities.
   - People who work in crowded work situations where physical distancing is impossible due to the nature of the work such as in a warehouse or factory.
   - People who work on fishing or seafood processing vessels.

   If this is not possible, stay in quarantine for 10 days after your last contact, without additional testing. If you have any COVID-19 symptoms during the 10 days, stay in quarantine the full 14 days and get tested. **Keep watching for symptoms until day 14.**

   Under special circumstances it may be possible to end quarantine after 7 full days beginning after your last contact *if* you have been without symptoms *and* after receiving a negative result from a test (get tested no sooner than 48 hours before ending quarantine). This will depend on availability of testing resources. **Keep watching for symptoms until day 14.**

   Consult with your local health jurisdiction to determine the best option for your individual circumstances.

If somebody does not have a doctor or health care provider: many locations have free or low-cost testing, regardless of immigration status. See the Department of Health's Testing FAQ or call the WA State COVID-19 Information Hotline.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently announced new guidance that fully vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with COVID-19 are **not** required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are fully vaccinated (see When You've Been Fully Vaccinated section below for more information.)
- Have not had symptoms since current COVID-19 exposure.

Fully vaccinated persons should still watch for symptoms for 14 days after their exposure. They should also continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, and keep their social circles small.

An exception to the guidance is that vaccinated inpatients and residents in healthcare settings should continue to quarantine following an exposure to someone with COVID-19.

Persons who do not meet both criteria should continue to follow current quarantine guidance after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

☐ **Communicate to larger affected workforce** as appropriate. Be transparent about confirmed cases and close contacts while protecting employee confidentiality. Explain steps being taken to reduce transmission and reinforce any particular actions or changes that employees should take to stay safe. Provide information about how to contact the COVID-19 POC for any questions or concerns.

☐ **Pre-screen all workers for symptoms prior to each shift.** Consider a single point of entry to more easily complete worker screening but ensure social distancing if employees must wait to be screened.

☐ **Maintain a list of confirmed and any suspected cases among employees and customers, and a list of all exposed people.** Be prepared to share this list with Public Health. A template is available here.

What's the difference between isolation and quarantine?

- **Isolation** is what you do if you have COVID-19 symptoms, are awaiting test results, or have tested positive. Isolation means you stay home and away from others (including household members) for the recommended period of time to avoid spreading illness.

- **Quarantine** is what you do if you have been exposed to COVID-19. Quarantine means you stay home and away from others for the recommended period of time in case you are infected and are contagious. Quarantine becomes isolation if you later test positive for COVID-19 or develop symptoms.

When You've Been Fully Vaccinated

People are considered fully vaccinated:
- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

Note: if it has been less than 2 weeks since your shot, or if you still need to get your second dose, you are NOT fully protected. Keep taking all prevention steps until you are fully vaccinated.

Regardless of your vaccination status, you should still take steps to protect yourself and others while in public settings. This includes wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces. In addition, you should still avoid medium or large-sized gatherings and continue to watch for symptoms of COVID-19, especially if you've been around someone who is sick.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

More COVID-19 Information and Resources

Stay up-to-date on the current COVID-19 situation in Washington, Governor Inslee's proclamations, symptoms, how it spreads, and how and when people should get tested. See our Frequently Asked Question for more information.

COVID-19 is not connected to race, ethnicity or nationality. Stigma will not help to fight the illness. Share accurate information with others and avoid rumors and misinformation.

Have more questions? Call our COVID-19 Information hotline: **1-800-525-0127**

Monday – 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Tuesday – Sunday and observed state holidays, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. For interpretative services, **press #** when they answer and **say your language**. For questions about your own health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, please contact a health care provider.

General Resources

- WA State Department of Health 2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19)
- WA State Coronavirus Response (COVID-19)
- Find Your Local Health Department or District
- CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Stigma Reduction Resources

Additional Resources

- COVID-19 Frequently asked questions (DOH)
- Get the Facts About Coronavirus (CDC)
- Emergency (CR-103E) - COVID-19 Prohibited Business Activities and Conditions for Operations (Washington State Department of Labor & Industries)

- [Testing location by health Jurisdictions](#) (DOH)
- [When you can be around others](#) (CDC)
- [Cleaning and disinfecting](#) (CDC)
- [Public health guidance for community-related exposures](#) (CDC)
- [Information for essential businesses](#)

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.