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# Managing Covid-19 and Maintaining Safe and Healthy Worksites

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**1/9/2024 Revision Update: Multiple Updates from the California Department of Public Health and Cal/OSHA**

- COVID-19 testing after a close contact exposure is not routine for all but recommended only for those at higher risk of severe disease or who have contact with those at higher risk of severe disease.

- COVID-19 infectious period (when a person can spread their COVID-19 infection) is still 48 hours before the onset of symptoms until symptom improvement.

- Isolation for COVID-19 infection changed from a time-based isolation requirement (minimum of 5 days) to a symptom-based requirement. Isolate for a minimum of 24 hours from the day of symptom onset. COVID cases may return to work if 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the use of fever reducing medication, AND their symptoms are mild and improving.

- For COVID-19 cases with no symptoms, there is no infectious period for isolation purposes and no isolation required. They do count toward COVID case totals for outbreak and tracking purposes.

## Overview

Though the public health emergency is over, COVID-19 is still present in our communities and is tracked by COVID presence in wastewater and hospitalization data. DHR policies will continue to evolve in keeping with the understanding, science, and prevalence of COVID-19. Policies will focus on steps to support and maintain healthy and safe work environments.

The City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) continues to follow guidance put out by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) which is informed by the evolving science of COVID-19. Cal/OSHA determines state-wide work rules and is adopting the CDPH updated isolation and quarantine guidance.

All City departments must adopt and follow the requirements in the policy as outlined below, including contractors and volunteers.

## Masking Requirements in the Workplace:

Pursuant to S.F. Health Officer Order No. 2023-01, in healthcare facilities, such as acute care hospitals, clinical environments, and jails, the masking requirements remain in place when there is shared airspace with patients, residents, and/or people who are incarcerated*.*

Staff may remove their masks only if other staff but no patients, residents, or people who are incarcerated are present (e.g., break rooms, conference rooms). Within a setting where masking is not required, employees may choose to continue to wear a face mask. Departments must provide face masks if requested.

Masking is required for 10 days indoors and outdoors (when closer than six feet to others) after a close contact exposure, or after a COVID-19 infection.

Masking is required in the setting of a workplace outbreak (3 or more cases within a 7-day period), until the area is no longer in outbreak status. Employees may request provision of an N95 mask in the setting of an outbreak.

**Close Contact Exposure to COVID -19**

Recognizing that COVID-19 spreads by aerosol, even employees not working in close proximity to a COVID-19 positive individual can be considered exposed. Close Contact is defined as sharing the same indoor airspace with a COVID-19 positive individual for greater than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period, while the person is in their infectious period (up to 24 hours prior to development of symptoms).

In the rare setting of very larger indoor airspace (greater than 400,000 cubic feet per floor): a close contact means being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period while the person is in their infectious period. This close contact definition in the very large indoor space is similar to the definition used prior to the Cal/OSHA updates in July 2022.

All employees who have had a close contact to a person testing positive for COVID-19 will adhere to the following steps:

- Continue to come to work; no need to quarantine unless they have symptoms.
- They **must** wear a mask for 10 days following the COVID-19 exposure.
- They **must** continue to monitor for the development of any COVID-19 symptoms,
- Testing after a close contact is recommended only for those who develop symptoms or those who are at higher risk for severe disease or who have contact with people who are at higher risk of severe disease.

**Testing in the Setting of an Outbreak**

If there is a workplace outbreak, defined as 3 or more cases in a 7-day period, (or a major outbreak defined as 20 or more cases in a 30-day period) **testing is required**: on days 3 through 5 after the outbreak starts and then weekly until the setting is out of outbreak status. For tallying purposes, asymptomatic COVID-19 cases who are allowed to continue work, do count towards the case totals measured in defining an outbreak, and with tracking for resolution of the outbreak.

If it is a major outbreak, testing is required on days 3 through 5 after the major outbreak starts and then twice weekly until there are fewer than three COVID-19 cases detected in the exposed group for a 14-day period, at which time testing reverts to weekly until the outbreak is resolved.

Outbreaks are considered resolved when there are one or fewer cases in a 14-day period. If an employee is unable to test or chooses not to test, the employee must leave the worksite after five days for the remainder of the outbreak. Where the employee is not compliant with required surveillance testing, disciplinary action should be considered. Telecommuting should be offered if feasible.

| | Well Fitting Face Mask | COVID Testing (ideally Rapid Antigen test) |
|---|---|---|
| **Close contact** | Required 10 days | Recommended only for those at risk for severe disease |
| **Close Contact in Outbreak** | Required >14 days | Required once on days 3-5, then weekly |
| **Close Contact in Major Outbreak** | Required >14 days | Required once on days 3-5, then twice weekly |
| **COVID infection in <30 days in Outbreak** | Required >14 days | No testing, unless symptoms |

Employees are included in the outbreak when they have been present on site during the COVID-positive individual's infectious period (i.e., 1 day prior to development of symptoms). For an asymptomatic person, there is no infectious period before the date of their test result), or anytime during outbreak status.

**COVID-19 Symptom Screening:**

Health screening remains an important tool in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Departments must require employees to be free of new or otherwise unexplained COVID-19 symptoms before reporting to the workplace each day. While the City no longer requires employees to submit answers to the symptom questionnaire, City employees are required to assess their health on a daily basis. Employees who report to work in person must be free of symptoms of COVID-19 infection that are either new or not explained by another non-COVID-19 reason (including fever at or above 100.4 degrees F, chills, sweats, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, persistent sneezing or runny nose, difficulty breathing, fatigue, body aches, headache, loss of smell or taste, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea). Employees who feel ill should not report to on-site work and stay in contact with their supervisor.

**After Positive COVID-19 Test:**

Isolation and quarantine requirements are based on the severity of COVID-19 symptoms. Those with symptomatic COVID-19 infection should isolate a minimum of 24 hours from the date of onset of symptoms. Those with fever should isolate until 24 hours have passed without fever and without taking fever reducing medications. Return to work is based on fever resolution and improvement of mild symptoms. For COVID-19 cases with no symptoms there is no infectious period for the purposes of isolation and asymptomatic individuals may return to work without isolation. The masking requirement of 10 days is unchanged for all COVID-19 cases whether symptomatic or asymptomatic.

Testing to exit isolation sooner than 10 days is still required for health care personnel or Emergency Medical Services personnel. Employees in health care and Emergency Medical Services must have a negative rapid antigen test run on or after day 5.

Employees may remove their mask sooner than day 10 with two sequential negative tests done at least one day apart.

Confirmed cases with serious symptoms or those with high risk of serious disease should contact their health care provider early for available treatments.

Employees infected with COVID-19 within the previous 30 days do not need to be tested (even in an outbreak setting) unless symptoms develop, at which time rapid antigen testing is the preferred test.

Employee COVID-19 test results must be uploaded by the employee in the self-service portal in People & Pay as soon as possible and before they return to the workplace. For employees without regular access to a computer or internet service, departments may assist the employee with uploading test results.

| Condition | Symptoms | Isolation or Quarantine | Test to End work restrictions | Mask** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| COVID Positive* | None | None | Not Required* | 10 days |
| | Mild and resolving, no fever | Minimum of 24 hours from day of symptom onset | Not Required* | 10 days |
| | Fever | Leave isolation 24 hours after resolution of fever without taking fever reducing medication | Not Required* | 10 days |
| | Serious Symptoms***, seek care | | Not Required | 10 days |
| Close Contact | No symptoms | None | Recommend test Day 3-5 after exposure for those at risk of severe disease | 10 days |
| | If symptoms develop, follow rules for Covid-like symptoms | Isolation until fever resolves and symptoms improving | Test at symptom onset, if negative and still symptoms repeat test in 1-2 days | 10 days |
| COVID like symptoms | Isolate and test, continue to isolate if symptoms persist, even if test is negative | Isolation until fever resolves and symptoms improving | Test at symptom onset, if negative and still symptoms repeat test in 1-2 days | 10 days |

\* Healthcare personnel and Emergency Medical Services personnel are required to document a negative test done on or after day 5 to exit quarantine sooner than day 10.

\*\* Two sequential negative rapid tests can be done at least one day apart and uploaded to People & Pay to unmask earlier than day 10.

\*\*\* Employees with serious or persistent symptoms should seek clinical attention.

**General Prevention**

Practicing regular hand hygiene, including regular cleaning of your workspace continues to be recommended.
The practice of physical social distancing is encouraged where possible.

**Tracking of COVID-19**

Departments must continue to track COVID-19's prevalence amongst their staff. Management of exposure and workplace contact tracing is detailed in the documents below.

**Reporting of Outbreaks**

A COVID-19 outbreak is defined as more than 3 cases in a given work area over a 7-day period. A major outbreak is 20 or more cases over a 30-day period. Outbreaks must be reported to DHR to fiona.wilson@sfgov.org. Detailed management of outbreaks is contained in the policy referenced below. Reporting requirements remain in place until policy is further updated.

**Prevention of Severe COVID-19 infection**

The CCSF requirement of COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of employment was rescinded August 23, 2023. The vaccine requirement still stands for some employee sectors guided by state and local health orders. Though not required, employees are highly encouraged to stay up to date with vaccination and seek the most recent COVID-19 vaccine when one is available.

**Resources:**

DHR: Management of COVID-19 Workplace Investigations and Staff Notifications
https://sfdhr.org/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19/Management-COVID-19-Workplace-Investigations-and-Staff-Notifications.pdf

DHR: Managing Outbreaks/Multiple Infections of COVID-19
https://sfdhr.org/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19/COVID-19-Managing-Outbreaks-Multiple-Infections.pdf

DHR Link and Instructions for Uploading to People & Pay
https://sfdhr.org/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19/Self-Reporting-Test-Results-PeoplePay.pdf