



**Requirements for Employees Returning to Work Sites after not Passing Health Screening,
COVID-19 Illness, or Exposure
Updated: 1/7/2022**

January 7, 2022 Revision Note: *This revision reflects the recent updates issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as adopted by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) on 1/6/2022 and the San Francisco Department of Public Health Revised Isolation and Quarantine Directives issued on 12/30/2021. The timeline for isolation and quarantine has been shortened to five days for some employees as described below. Employees who are recently vaccinated and not boosted do not need to quarantine, may continue working and test on day 3-5 after a close contact.*

This policy is based on the California Department of Public Health and San Francisco Department of Public Health guidance for determining when it is safe for an employee to re-enter their worksite after a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection or close contact with a person with a known COVID-19 infection. Certain departments may apply more stringent (i.e., more health protective) criteria to employees based on the nature of their work. Departmental personnel officers may check the employee's vaccination reporting record in People & Pay when considering whether to follow the guidance for vaccinated and non-vaccinated employees.

COVID-19 and the evolving variants continue to have impacts on communities and workplaces. Workplace behaviors that are known to reduce the spread of COVID-19 remain in place. Employees must continue to follow existing workplace requirements for face covering, performing daily health screening, and maintaining distancing as able.

A "close contact" COVID exposure is defined as:

- spending more than 15 minutes total over 24 hours within six feet of someone with confirmed COVID-19 regardless of whether either party wore a face covering

A close contact does not include employees who are required to work with individuals who may have COVID-19 where they are wearing the appropriate PPE during the encounter.

COVID Positive Illness and Symptoms

The table below shows the shortened isolation changes that reflect updated science showing that infection occurs early in the course of an illness, generally 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after.

The following table covers most employees. Health care personnel have more health protective requirements and must follow the department-specific procedures. Employees working in High-Risk Settings including but not limited to homeless shelters, jails, skilled nursing facilities, residential care facilities, which house vulnerable populations, must continue to follow more extended quarantines as defined by state regulation.

Employees must continue to follow existing workplace requirements for face covering, performing daily health screening, and maintaining distancing as able.

COVID Positive Illness and Symptoms Quick Reference Guide	
COVID-19 Positive Test, and No or Minimal Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home and isolate for 5 days Return to work on Day 6 if you have a negative test (antigen or “rapid test” preferred), no or minimal symptoms, and you do not have a fever over 100.4 degrees Wear a well-fitted mask around others, indoors and outdoors, for a total of 10 days Medical justification is required for absences longer than 5 days
COVID-19 Positive test and Symptoms Persist at day 5 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home and isolate until you have a negative test (antigen or “rapid test” preferred), or you have isolated for 10 days, no symptoms or if your symptoms are minimal and resolving, and you do not have a fever over 100.4 degrees If fever continues after 10 days, continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving and fever has been gone for 24 hours Medical justification is required for absences longer than 5 days
COVID-19 Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home Test immediately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If positive, follow RTW for positive test If negative, return when symptoms improve Medical justification is required for absences longer than 5 days

COVID-19 “Close Contact” Exposure

The requirements for quarantine after a close contact exposure differ based on a person’s vaccination status, including boosters. The requirements are summarized below:

Close Contact Exposure Quick Reference Guide	
Vaccination Status	RTW Instructions
Recent vaccination and/or Booster: Fully Vaccinated with 2-dose vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) within the last 6 months Fully Vaccinated with 1-dose vaccine (J & J) within the last 2 months Fully Vaccinated with Booster (all vaccines)	No quarantine , continue to work. Test recommended on Day 5 from date of exposure. Wear a mask around others, indoors and outdoors, until day 10. Watch for symptoms, follow instructions above if symptoms occur.
Distant or no vaccination and no Booster: Fully Vaccinated with 2-dose vaccine more than 6 months ago, no booster Fully Vaccinated with J & J more than 2 months ago, no booster	No quarantine , test required between days 3-5 from date of exposure. Wear a well fitted mask around others, indoors and outdoors, until day 10. Watch for symptoms, follow instructions above if symptoms occur.
Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated	Quarantine , test at day 5 from date of exposure, return to work if negative. Watch for symptoms, follow instructions above if symptoms occur.

Unvaccinated Employees: Employees who have obtained an exemption from the City must continue to follow all workplace COVID-19 prevention requirements. If they test positive for COVID-19, they must isolate as described above. After a close contact, they must quarantine as described above.

COVID-19 testing: PCR is considered the gold standard test for initial diagnosis of COVID-19. It is performed by the City through CityTestSF and healthcare systems. It is required in the setting of a potential workplace exposure or workers' compensation case. Home based and rapid tests are available and are useful in determining the likelihood of COVID-19 where an employee has symptoms, a concerning close contact, or to return to work after isolation or quarantine. With the prior approval of DHR, departments may require on-site testing prior to employees returning to work after an employee has reported COVID-19 symptoms or a positive diagnosis. Interested departments may send requests for approval to Peggy Sugarman, PhD or Fiona Wilson, MD.

Returning to Work Processes

This guidance applies to all employees (subject to the more stringent guidance for health care employees) regardless of whether they are exposed to or have contracted COVID-19 at work or outside of work. Consistent with Civil Services Rules, employees must provide a doctor's note if they are off work for more than 5 days. If an employee is unable to provide a doctor's note, the Human Resource professional should work with their departmental physician or the Department of Human Resources' physician, Dr. Fiona Wilson, to provide clearance to return to work.

Employees must respond honestly to the return-to-work questions and directives, and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Upon returning to work, employees must follow all workplace safety requirements, including conducting a daily screening for symptoms, wearing a well-fitted mask, and maintaining safe physical distance.

Departmental Personnel Officers who have questions about an employee's individual circumstance or ability to return to work should reach out to Dr. Wilson.

Additional Resources

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>

California Department of Public Health Directive posted 12/30/2021:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Guidance-on-Isolation-and-Quarantine-for-COVID-19-Contact-Tracing.aspx>

SFDPH 12/30/2021 Health Officer Directives on Isolation:

<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/Directive-2020-03-Isolation.pdf>

SFDPH 12/30/2021 Health Officer Directive on Quarantine:

<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/Directive-2020-02-Quarantine.pdf>

SFDPH guidance on rapid testing: <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/ig/athomecovidtest.pdf>

SFDPH information on eligibility for boosters: www.sfcddp.org/boosters

SFDPH Screening Guidance link: <https://sfdhr.org/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19/Health-Screening-for-Employees.pdf>