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| SEAL_v2008-07_web%20large | **Commonwealth of Massachusetts** |
| ***Executive Office of Health and Human Services*** |
| **Department of Youth Services** |
| **Criteria for Discontinuation of Home Isolation (Staying at Home) and Return to Work for Employees in DYS Residential Programs** |

This guidance is based on EOHHS Guidance for Residential and Congregate Care Programs, CDC criteria for return to work for personnel with SARS-CoV-2 infection and MDPH Guidance for Testing of Persons with Suspect COVID-19.

**Definitions:**

**Mild Illness**: Individuals who have any of the various signs and symptoms of COVID 19 (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, malaise, headache, muscle pain) without shortness of breath, dyspnea, or abnormal chest imaging.

**Moderate Illness**: Individuals who have evidence of lower respiratory disease by clinical assessment or imaging and a saturation of oxygen (SpO2) ≥94% on room air at sea level.

**Severe Illness**: Individuals who have respiratory frequency >30 breaths per minute, SpO2 <94% on room air at sea level (or, for patients with chronic hypoxemia, a decrease from baseline of >3%), ratio of arterial partial pressure of oxygen to fraction of inspired oxygen (PaO2/FiO2) <300 mmHg, or lung infiltrates >50%.

**Critical Illness**: Individuals who have respiratory failure, septic shock, and/or multiple organ dysfunction.

**Employee is identified as a close contact of COVID-19 – When to End Home Isolation**

If a staff member is identified by **their local board of health** as a close contact of a COVID-19 case (either within the facility or in the community) **and have no symptoms** (such as fever, shortness of breath, dry cough) at the time of notification by the local board of health, the staff member is to self-quarantine at home for 14 days and can return to work if symptom free.

All individuals in Massachusetts identified as a close contact should be tested with a diagnostic test. A Local Board of Health, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Community Tracing Collaborative, or a healthcare provider are all empowered to recommend testing of a close contact. Close contact is defined as:

a) Being less than 6 feet from a confirmed or clinically diagnosed COVID-19 case for at least 10-15 minutes, while the case was symptomatic or within the 48 hours before symptom onset. Close contact can occur anywhere. Examples include caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a confirmed or clinically diagnosed COVID-19 case.

**OR**

b) Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a confirmed or clinically diagnosed COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment or PPE (e.g., gown, gloves, facemask, eye protection).

Recommended timing of testing for close contacts:

• Close contacts with any symptom associated with COVID-19 should be tested promptly. Testing should occur at any time during the contact’s 14-day quarantine period, even if the person previously had a negative test result within that same period.

• Close contacts without symptoms should be tested as soon as possible after they are notified of their exposure to COVID-19. The contact is required to quarantine for the full 14 days, even following a negative test result.

If an employee is identified by **their local board of health** as a close contact of a COVID-19 case (either within the facility or in the community), the employee should be tested with a diagnostic test (a molecular diagnostic test to detect the presence of the virus by PCR or other nucleic acid amplification methodology is preferred). The employees should quarantine at home while awaiting test results.

If the test is negative and the employee is without symptoms:

* Essential employees are allowed to return work, wear PPE, practice social distancing and self-monitor for symptoms.
* Non- essential employees are required to quarantine for the full 14 days, even following a negative test result.

If experiencing symptoms (such as fever, shortness of breath, dry cough) the staff member is to refer to the guidelines below for **Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19.**

**Employees with suspected (symptoms of respiratory infection such as cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fever and did not get tested) or confirmed case of COVID-19 – Return to Work Criteria**

**COVID-19 POSITIVE RESULT WITH SYMPTOMS**

Employees with [mild to moderate illness](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fhcp-return-work.html#definition) who are not severely immunocompromised may discontinue home isolation and return to work under the following conditions:

* At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and**
* At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
* Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

Employees with [severe to critical illness](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fhcp-return-work.html#severe-illness) or who are severely immunocompromisedmay discontinue home isolation and return to work under the following conditions:

* + At least 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
  + At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
  + Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

**COVID-19 POSITIVE RESULT NO SYMPTOMS**

Employees who have a laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms may discontinue home isolation and return to work under the following conditions:

10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming the employee has not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.

Employees who are **severely immunocompromised**but who were **asymptomatic** throughout their infection may return to work when at least 20 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.

However, if the employee develops symptoms, then the *COVID-19 Positive Results with Symptoms* guideline should be used.  *Note*, because symptoms cannot be used to gauge where the individual is in the course of their illness, it is possible that the duration of viral shedding could be longer or shorter than 10 days after their first positive test.

**Previously Positive Individual Cleared from Isolation**

Individuals previously diagnosed with COVID-19 infection confirmed by molecular diagnostic testing may continue to have PCR detection of viral RNA for several weeks. This does not correlate with the presence or transmissibility of live virus and those who have been cleared from isolation by either the symptom-based or test-based strategy, are not recommended for re-testing within 90 days of their original positive test. These individuals are also not subject to quarantine during this period.

Until further data are available, individuals who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19, are more than 6 weeks past their release from isolation, and who develop clinically compatible symptoms, should be retested. If viral RNA is detected by PCR testing, the patient should be isolated and considered to be re-infected. Additionally, individuals who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 and are more than 90 days from their initial positive test who are identified as a close contact of a confirmed case, are subject to quarantine.

**COVID-19 NEGATIVE RESULT WITH SYMPTOMS**

Employees who have a laboratory-negative result, and HAVE symptoms, may discontinue home isolation and return to work under the following conditions:

* They have contacted their Healthcare Provider for evaluation;
* At least 24 hours have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
* At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

If employee had COVID-19 ruled out by the healthcare provider and have an alternate diagnosis (e.g., tested positive for influenza), criteria for return to work should be based on that diagnosis as determined by their healthcare provider.

**After returning to work, the employee must:**

* Wear a facemask at all times while in the facility.
* Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised youth (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after illness onset.
* Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles)
* Self-monitor for symptoms and seek re-evaluation from their healthcare provider if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen.