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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** |

**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)

1. If no symptom (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.
2. If experiencing 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 refer to the CDC Guidance: What To Do If You Are Sick and follow the guidelines below for **Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 (**based on EOHHS Guidance for Residential and Congregate Care Programs and CDC criteria for return to work for personnel with suspected or confirmed COVID-19).

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

**COVID-19 POSITIVE RESULT WITH SYMPTOMS**

Employees who have a laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19, and HAVE or HAD symptoms, may discontinue home isolation and return to work under the following conditions:

* Symptom-based strategy. Employee can return to work after these three things have happened:
	+ - They have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)
		AND
		- Respiratory symptoms have improved (for example, when their cough or shortness of breath have improved)
		AND
		- at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared
* Test-based strategy. Employee can return to work after these three things have happened:
	+ - They no longer have a fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)
		AND
		- Respiratory symptoms have improved (for example, when their cough or shortness of breath have improved)
		AND
		- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected at least 24 hours or more apart (total of two negative specimens). *Note*: There have been reports of prolonged detection of RNA without direct correlation to viral culture.

**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:

* *Time-based strategy.* Employee can return to work if:

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.

However, if the employee develops symptoms, then the *symptom-based* or *test-based strategy* 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.

* *Test-based strategy*. Employee can return to work if:

Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected at least 24 hours or more apart (total of two negative specimens).

*Note*, because of the absence of symptoms, it is not possible to gauge where the individual is in the course of their illness.  There have been reports of prolonged detection of RNA without direct correlation to viral culture.

*Note* that detecting viral RNA via PCR does not necessarily mean that infectious virus is present.

**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 3 days (72 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.