

What actions should a non-healthcare employer take to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 if an employee is diagnosed?

Identification and notification

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, employers should immediately work with the employee to identify and notify those who may have been exposed to the virus based on close prolonged contact with the diagnosed individual, while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Isolation precautions

Employers should advise employees on proper isolation precautions, which may differ based on exposure status and symptoms.

- If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee should immediately enter home isolation and remain under home isolation precautions for 7 days or until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.
- If another employee has had close contact with the sick employee and has common symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, cough, or shortness of breath, that employee should begin home isolation immediately, and should remain under home isolation precautions for 7 days or until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.
- If an employee has had close contact with the sick employee with COVID-19 but does not have symptoms, that employee should begin home self-quarantine immediately, and remain under home quarantine for 14 days following last contact with the ill person. That employee should also monitor their health for fever, cough, or shortness of breath for 14 days following last contact with the ill person.
- If an employee is sick with fever or respiratory symptoms but has had no known exposures to someone with COVID-19, that employee should stay home and away from others until 72 hours after the fever is gone and symptoms get better. They should talk with their doctor about whether testing is needed based on their symptoms. Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- If an employee is at work when they learn they have been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, that employee should also return home immediately and begin home isolation.

Information

Direct all employees to [Department of Health's patient materials](#) for additional information for those who have [confirmed or suspected COVID-19](#) or who [may have been exposed](#).

Paid leave

Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.

Cleaning

Perform routine environmental cleaning, including routinely cleaning all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace and providing disposable wipes for employees to use.

Guidance

Employers should not require a healthcare provider's note (or a note from Public Health – Seattle & King County) for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare providers may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.

Employers should not report employees who have COVID-19 to Public Health – Seattle & King County. Reporting happens through the employee directly to their healthcare provider or the employee to Public Health.

Employers should not share private health information.