Positive Cases in the Workplace: How employers can help limit the spread of COVID

Employers can prepare and respond to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 by taking the following actions:

1. Refer to the link below for guidance from the California Department of Public Health

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Workplace-Outbreak-Employer-Guidance.aspx#

2. Determine cleaning or disinfection that may be needed. Refer to the link below for guidance to help you determine appropriate actions:


3. Determine which employees may have been exposed to the virus and meet “close contact” criteria.

□ Review CDC definition of a “close contact” or “6-15-48”
  o Persons who are within 6 feet of an infected person, for at least 15 minutes, starting from 48 hours before and 10 days after symptoms of the illness
  o For persons who test positive, but have no symptoms, this period is 2 days prior to testing date plus 10 days. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/contact-tracing.html#:~:text=For%20COVID%2D19%2C,the%20patient%20is%20isolated.
□ Workers who were wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) during their interaction with a positive case may not be considered contacts. Guidance can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html

4. Create a list of all employees that have positive tests or are close contacts

  o List name, date of birth, phone number, dates that the employee worked with the positive staff, dates of symptoms, county of residence, shift hours, and job assignment.
  o The list identifies employees who should quarantine for 14 days and will assist the Public Health Department in a contact investigation.

5. Inform the health department by phone if there are 3 or more positive cases or employees with symptoms in your workplace: (805)681-5280. Assure that positive employees isolate at home and do not report to work. Information sheets found here provide more information in English and Spanish.
6. **Inform employees of their possible exposure** to COVID-19 in the workplace

- Employers must maintain confidentiality of employees with suspected or confirm COVID-19 infection when communication with other employees as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Follow the Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure** and instruct the potentially exposed close contacts to:

- Stay home for 14 days after their last contact with the COVID-positive employee.
- Maintain at least 6-foot distance from others in the home, telework if possible, and self-monitor for symptoms. Additional information can be found here: https://publichealthsbc.org/
- If symptomatic close contacts should be tested for COVID-19 when possible, but will still need to quarantine for 14 days even if the test is negative.
- Contacts who develop symptoms should promptly notify their medical provider. They should be evaluated for infection and for the need for medical care.
  - Provide employees with information about what to expect after they are sent home (e.g., instructions about testing, sick leave rights under federal, state, and local laws and company policies, return-to-work requirements, etc.).

7. **If you are a critical infrastructure industry and have a workforce shortage consult with the Public Health Department.**

- The health department may consider allowing an employee in a critical infrastructure industry who had close contact to a confirmed case to continue to work if the essential operations of the workplace would be compromised by quarantine of the employee and no alternate staff can perform the same role.
- **Critical infrastructure** workplaces should consult with the health department before allowing close contacts to continue work activities, and follow the guidance on Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19.
- Employers in critical infrastructure have an obligation to manage potentially exposed workers’ return to work in ways that best protect the health of those workers, their co-workers, and the general public.