

COVID-19 Testing for Employers and Employees

At this time, Jefferson County, Wisconsin, and the rest of the nation face a shortage of test kits and testing supplies. Though the shortage exists, **we continue to strongly encourage those with symptoms and those who have had close contact with sick individuals to get tested** (see the health department website for more information on where to get tested and upcoming community testing dates).

However, JCHD is asking employers **NOT to require a test in order for employees to return to work**. People with COVID-19 may have positive test results for weeks after they recover without being contagious. Requiring a negative test places an unnecessary burden on the employee and may prevent you from providing services due to extended employee absences. If an employee has tested positive, we ask that they complete their 10 days of self-isolation. If an employee has had close contact with an individual who is sick, they should self-quarantine for 14 days. Essential employees may be subject to different guidelines – please ensure that if you are an essential employee who must continue working while considered actively infected, that you maintain strict physical distancing, hand washing and face covering measures.

Employees with a positive test may return to work using the following criteria:

- ✓ They have been fever-free for 24 hours
- ✓ It has been at least 10 days since their symptom onset
- ✓ Their respiratory symptoms are improving
- If the person never developed any symptoms, they may return 10 days after they were tested

Employees that are asymptomatic (no symptoms) but had a positive test or diagnosis for COVID-19 should:

- Self-isolate and monitor their health for 10 days.
- If they have no symptoms, they may return to work after 10 days from testing
- If they develop symptoms during the 10 days, they should extend isolation precautions for at least 10 days from the date of symptom onset and must meet the following criteria before returning to work:
 - ✓ They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications).
 - ✓ Their other symptoms have improved.
 - ✓ It has been at least 10 days since their symptom onset.

Employees that have been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person may return to work using the following criteria:

- Self-quarantined for 14 days from last contact with a sick person and have had no symptoms
- If develop symptoms during self-isolation period, employees must stay home and avoid others until:
 - ✓ They have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications).
 - ✓ Their symptoms improve.
 - ✓ It has been 10 days since their first symptoms.

How Can I Protect My Business and Employees?

- Implement physical distancing practices.
- Promote hand washing.
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies for work spaces.
- Make sure workers stay home when they are sick.

Employees do not need a clearance letter before returning to work. JCHD works with people who have a positive test or close contact to determine when they can return to work based on the criteria above and provides documentation of test result and completed isolation or quarantine measures in the form of a letter, if requested by the employee.

Jefferson County Health Department

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