



6 Steps for Employers with a COVID-19 Positive Case

COVID-19 Case & Contact Follow-up

This document is to assist an employer with the proper steps should you have a positive case of COVID-19 in the workplace.

This document was drafted by the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Taskforce in collaboration with The Eau Claire City/County Health Department & research through various HR Management firms in the Chippewa Valley.

- 1) If an employee or someone in their immediate household has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, the employee should not report to work OR be sent home to work remote, if able.**
 - If not able to work remote, the employee may be placed on medical/personal leave for isolation (if test positive) or a 14-day, 10-day or 7-day quarantine period (if someone in their household tests positive) as recommended by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (see Step 6 for more information on quarantine periods). Not all employees will be able to select shorter quarantine periods, based on their job activities. More information as well as a [decision guide](https://bit.ly/CovidContact) on quarantine options is here: <https://bit.ly/CovidContact>

- 2) When the Health Department is notified that someone has tested positive, that person may be interviewed (depending on Department capacity and risk level of individual) about who they may have had recent close contact with.**
 - “Close contact” definition: within 6 ft for a total of 15 min or longer; provided care at home to someone sick with COVID-19; had direct physical contact; shared eating or drinking utensils; or



were sneezed/coughed on or in contact with respiratory droplets from someone sick with COVID-19.

- Considerations may include physical distance, length of contact, if either person was wearing a face covering, and the type of face covering or mask they were wearing.
- When the Health Department has capacity, they notify and follow up with all contacts. Under an extreme case surge, people who are positive with COVID-19 are asked to follow up with all of their close contacts themselves.

3) The person who tested positive is also interviewed about their job and where they work.

- The Health Department then can work with the employee's workplace to answer questions, give guidance on cleaning/disinfection, and determine the potential risk for coworkers/clients.
- The Health Department can also offer guidance to the workplace management or Human Resources Department about what kind of information can be shared with co-workers and help to develop that communication. *(NOTE: If the place of employment is in a different county than the individual lives, the Health Department will notify and work with the Health Department in that county to conduct the workplace follow-up as needed.)*

4) Employees who are diagnosed with COVID-19, or who have members in their household diagnosed with the virus, may be eligible for emergency paid sick leave under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), or other state or national state leave laws.

- Because of the demands being placed on the medical community, **employers are encouraged to be accommodating when asking for medical certification (letters of proof of test, quarantine, etc.) to not place further burden on the healthcare or public health response.**



5) **The Health Department works to ensure that the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is isolated for the appropriate length of time and that people who are considered close contacts (definition above) are quarantined as needed.**

- “Isolation” means that the person who is positive for COVID-19 must stay at home.
- In general, people who test positive for COVID-19 are placed on isolation for a minimum of 10 days from when symptoms began, and they must be also fever free for 24 hours and have improvement in symptoms.

6. **The Health Department encourages people who are considered close contacts to quarantine for the full 14 days from the latest point of contact, which is the maximum length of time it takes for symptoms to appear after someone has been exposed to the virus.**

- “Quarantine” means that the close contact of a positive case must stay home unless they are a specific type of employee*. Close contacts should review instructions about quarantine requirements on the Health Department’s website (covid19eauclaire.org).
- If a close contact develops symptoms of COVID-19, they can get tested at sites throughout the community. Testing information is available at covid19eauclaire.org.
- **Effective December 7th, 2020, Wisconsin DHS is providing a 10-day and 7-day quarantine as acceptable alternatives for close contacts.**
 - **10-day option:** Quarantine can end after day 10 without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring, AND individual can wear a mask and keep 6ft from others for the full 14 days.

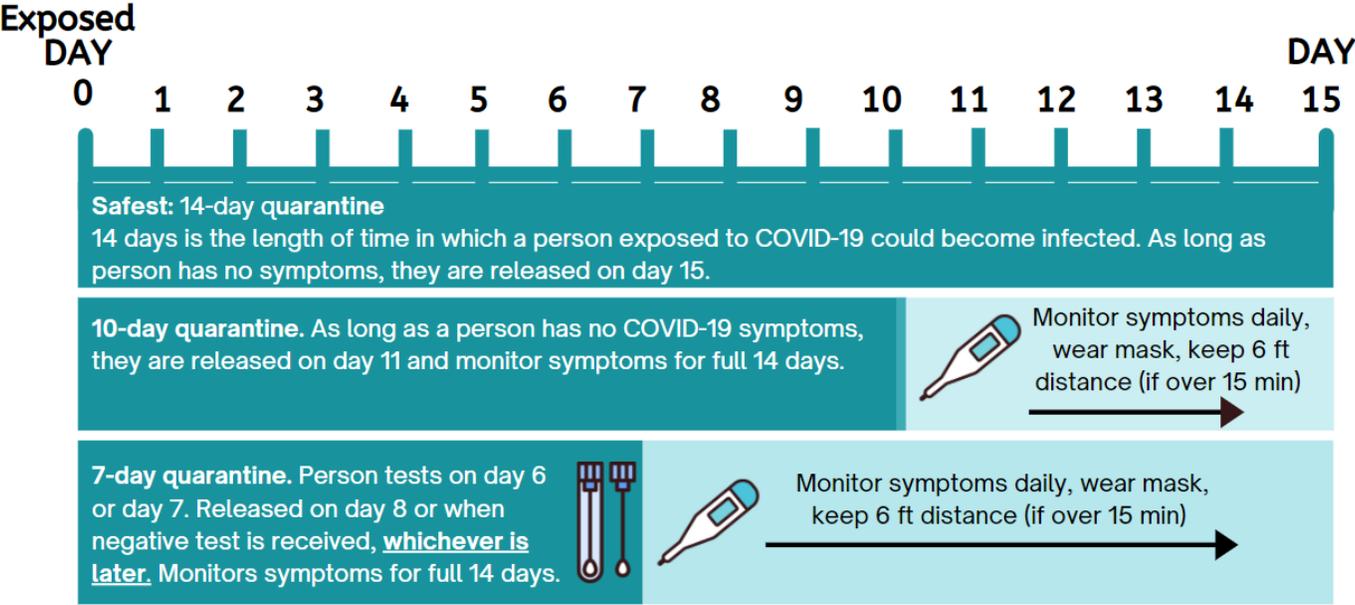


- **7-day option:** Quarantine can after day 7 with a negative test result (PCR test preferred) and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring, AND individual can wear a mask and keep 6ft from others for the full 14 days. Quarantine may not end until test results are received.
- For higher-risk settings such as long-term care facilities, shelters, and jails, please contact the Eau Claire City-County Health Department to determine the best quarantine option. **A shortened quarantine is not appropriate for people who cannot guarantee symptom monitoring or maintain physical distance for the full 14 days.**



Possible quarantine lengths for people exposed to COVID-19 (Close Contacts)

Effective Monday, December 7th, 2020



When communicating with “close contact” employees and business contacts, be mindful of privacy and confidentiality laws. Employers should not communicate the employees’ name. Instead, employers should generally share that an employee they have come in contact with recently has tested positive, or a member of their household has tested positive, for COVID-19. Any employees who came in “close contact” with the employee should be sent home to quarantine, with ability to work remote, if appropriate, to reduce risk of spreading the virus.*

NOTE: “Contacts of contacts” or those that have been in close proximity to someone who is a contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-quarantine or be placed on any restrictions.



*Wisconsin Department of Health Services issued [revised guidance](#) on November 30, 2020 regarding return to work for health care personnel who have been exposed to the coronavirus before completing a 14-day quarantine. This exemption may apply in limited circumstances only.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all community members should be self-monitoring for symptoms and get tested if they have symptoms. Testing options are available here: covid19eauclaire.org

Additional Questions?

Contact the Eau Claire City-County Health Department at ehealth@co.eau-claire.wi.us or via phone (715) 831-7425. More information is available here: covid19eauclaire.org

Contact Tracing & Public Notification

- When someone tests positive for COVID-19, they are interviewed as to who they have recently been in contact with (as Health Department capacity allows). If the person has been in close contact with other people (generally defined as closer than 6 ft for a total of 15 min or more), those close contacts are then notified that they have potentially been exposed.
- IF the individual who tested positive was in close contact with people who cannot be identified or contacted, then a public notification is potentially made to alert people that there was the risk for an exposure. This is currently done via a Health Department news alert and social media posts with specific information about the data and time of the potential exposure and about the need for anyone



with symptoms to get tested. The Health Department does contact the establishment in advance of this public notification.

Sample / Free Downloadable Resources

- [SHRM – Society for Human Resources Management Business Resource Page](#)
- [Potential Work Exposure to COVID-19 Sample Letter](#) – MRA
Assists employers with communicating to employees about a potential work COVID-19 exposure
- [Authorization to Disclose COVID-19 Diagnosis Form](#) – Fisher Phillips
- [Worker Safety & Support](#) – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Eau Claire County COVID-19 Information Hub - Task Force](#) – Local Information Website

Do you have examples or free resources to add to the list above?

Please send to our Task Force Administrative Support!

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