



Employer Guide for COVID-19 Worksite Exposure

Effective date: 11/16/22

Purpose: To provide guidance to local businesses in the event employees may have been exposed to COVID-19 at their worksite

Audience: Employers – Human Resources, Occupational Health, Managers/Supervisors

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A Vibrant and Healthy Berkeley for All

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E-mail: cobcd@cityofberkeley.info - <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/covid>

Key Terminology

- **Case:** A person with a positive COVID-19 lab or someone who was diagnosed by their provider as having COVID-19.
- **Close Contact:** In indoor spaces 400,000 or fewer cubic feet per floor (such as home, clinic waiting room, airplane etc.), a close contact is defined as sharing the same indoor airspace for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three separate 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes) during an infected person's (confirmed by COVID-19 test or clinical diagnosis) infectious period
- In large indoor spaces greater than 400,000 cubic feet per floor (such as open-floor-plan offices, warehouses, large retail stores, manufacturing, or food processing facilities), a close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period during the infected person's infectious period
- **Infectious period:** The period of time when a positive case can infect other individuals. Infectious period starts 2 days before either; symptom onset if symptomatic or first positive test if asymptomatic, until they meet criteria for [release of isolation](#)
- **Exposure:** The potential for COVID-19 transmission at the worksite
- **Exposure Dates:** The dates a positive employee was onsite during their infectious period.
- **Quarantine:** period of time a person identified as a close contact need to stay home and away from others to monitor for symptoms and/or test and to avoid potential transmission.
- **Isolation:** period of time a confirmed case needs to stay home and away from others to avoid infecting others.

1. Instructions: Identifying Employees Potentially Exposed to COVID-19 when there is ≤2 confirmed case(s)

If an employer learns that an employee has tested positive or when a possible exposure to COVID-19 occurs in the workplace, employers need to be prepared to respond.

Once a COVID-19 case is identified among employees, the employer should conduct an investigation to identify all close contacts associated with the workplace (both employees and non-employees who spent time at the site) who had exposure to the case during the infectious period. The employer will need to determine the day and time the COVID-19 case was last present on site, activities the case completed and location where activities were performed. With this information the employer will determine which, if any, employees were exposed to COVID-19.

The employer will need to report the case as soon as possible to City of Berkeley, and information on all confirmed cases and close contacts involved in exposure. Please go to <https://cdph.force.com/SPOT/s/IntakeForm> for initial incident reporting. It is critical that the employer select Berkeley as the jurisdiction, **NOT** Alameda. This form will require input of basic information such

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as location and point of contact, along with case information. Once this initial information is submitted by the employer, City of Berkeley will email a link for the employer to directly input details of additional cases and contacts into the SPOT database.

Within one business day from when the employer becomes aware of an exposure, employers must provide a written notice to close contacts who were on the premises at the same worksite as the person who was infectious with COVID-19. Employers should maintain the affected employee's confidentiality and should be particularly careful not to disclose the affected employee's name. Please refer to "**Section 3 Instructions: Recommended Steps for Exposed Close Contacts**" to review the guidance for those exposed.

Per [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Standards](#) employers must "make COVID-19 testing available at no cost, during paid time, to all employees of the employer who had close contact in the workplace." [COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards Frequently Asked Questions \(ca.gov\)](#)

Over the counter (OTC) tests may be both self-administered and self-read if verification of the results, such as a time and date stamped photograph of the result or an OTC test that uses digital reporting with time and date stamped results, is provided.

Close contacts **MUST** wear a well-fitting mask around others indoors for a total of 10 days from last date of contact to the infectious individual(s).

It is important that employers do not use testing to impermissibly discriminate against employees who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 (such as preventing them from resuming work after they can do so in a manner consistent with public health and safety). An employee who is currently infectious and completing their isolation period should not be allowed to return to work. Please review the [Exclusion Requirements for Employees Who Test Positive for COVID-19](#), to determine when an employee is eligible to return to the worksite.

2. Instructions: Possible Worksite Outbreak with ≥ 3 confirmed cases

If an employer learns that there are ≥ 3 confirmed cases of COVID-19, please fill out the SPOT intake form, and then contact the City of Berkeley Communicable Disease Prevention & Control Program (CDPCP) immediately (within 1 business day) at 510-981-5292 or email cobcd@cityofberkeley.info with the subject line "Berkeley Worksite Exposure – possible outbreak".

To help expedite your Outbreak response, please be prepared to provide the following information and documentation to the CDPCP:

- **Case and Contact information** will be entered by employer into SPOT database (CDPCP will send the employer a link with instructions upon report of an Outbreak)
- A **site map** with the workspace of the cases and/or symptomatic employees noted
- Written **COVID-19 Prevention Plan**

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- **Vaccination Status** (including booster doses) of impacted employees
- **Masking policy**
- **Testing policy/plan**

Once CDPCP receives this information you will be contacted by the assigned investigator within 1 business day. The investigator will review the information provided, conduct interviews as needed, and provide the employer with guidance on next steps. This may include site closure. CDPCP's recommendations for closures will be made on a case-by-case basis.

[Assembly Bill 685 \(2020\):](#)

Requires employers to notify employees who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and to report workplace outbreaks to the local health department.

Per [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Standards](#) employers must immediately institute testing if there is an outbreak:

Testing must be offered to all employees within an exposed group, at least once a week, except for employees who were not at work during the relevant period and symptom-free employees who recently recovered from COVID-19.

During outbreaks (3-19 cases) and major outbreaks (20+ cases), employers must now make weekly testing (outbreaks) or twice-weekly testing (major outbreaks) available to all employees in the exposed group, regardless of vaccination status. ([FAQs](#))

Employees who are not tested within 3-5 days after close contact must be excluded from the workplace until the return to work requirements for COVID-19 cases are met. See [release from home isolation](#) criteria.

Within one business day of exposure, employers must provide a written notice to all employees, and the employers of subcontracted employees, who were on the premises at the same worksite as the person who was infectious with COVID-19. Employers should maintain the affected employee's confidentiality and should be particularly careful not to disclose the affected employee's name. Please refer to "**Section 3 Instructions: Recommended Steps for Exposed Close Contacts**" to review the guidance for those exposed. Employers may use the attached letter template to notify the close contacts of the potential exposure. Employers may use the attached letter template to notify the close contacts of the potential exposure.

3. Instructions: Recommended Steps for Exposed Close Contacts

For all employees, regardless of vaccination status, of non-healthcare settings with no COVID-like symptoms; there is no need to quarantine following an exposure as long as they remain asymptomatic.

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Exposed employees should be tested 3-5 days post exposure and continue to participate in routine screening testing (if present) or after a known exposure in the worksite.

Refer to table below for close contact guidance

All Exposed Employees with COVID-19 Symptoms	
Everyone, regardless of vaccination status or previous infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-isolate and test as soon as possible to determine infection status. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ For symptomatic persons who have tested positive within the previous 90 days, using an antigen test is preferred. • Remain in isolation while waiting for test results. If not tested, continue isolating for 10 days after the day of symptom onset, and if they cannot isolate, should wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days. • Consider continuing self-isolation and retesting in 1-2 days if testing negative with an antigen test, particularly if tested during the first 1-2 days of symptoms. • Continue to self-isolate if test result is positive and follow recommended actions for case isolation.
Asymptomatic Employees Who are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (No Quarantine Required)	

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<p>Everyone, regardless of vaccination status. Persons infected within the prior 90 days do not need to be tested, quarantined, or excluded from work unless symptoms develop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test within 3-5 days after last exposure. • Per CDPH masking guidance, close contacts should wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings and when near those at higher risk for severe COVID-19 disease. • Strongly encouraged to get vaccinated or boosted. • If symptoms develop, test and stay home AND • If test result is positive, follow isolation recommendations of a positive case.
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4. Instructions: Previously Positive

Individuals who have recovered from an active COVID-19 infection, are within three (3) months of the infection and do not have any symptoms, do not have to quarantine following exposure to an active case. However, if someone develops COVID-19 symptoms within three (3) months from their first infection, the individual should be evaluated by a healthcare provider and tested if indicated.

5. Template: Letter from Employer to Employees Potentially Exposed to COVID-19

This letter template is to be used on the business's letterhead.

Dear [Employee Name],

[Business Name] has been notified that one of our employees has been diagnosed with COVID-19. We conducted an investigation to determine co-workers who may have had close contact with the confirmed-positive employee. As such, you have been identified as an employee who may have been exposed to this virus between [Exposure Dates]. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the virus is spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Please see below instructions regarding work exclusion, sick leave and testing.

Sick Leave & Pay

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Please note if you become ill you will be able to use your sick leave [insert link or attachment to relevant worksite policies as applicable]

Per the California Department of Industrial Relations covered employees in public or private sectors who work for employers with 26 or more employees are entitled to up to 80 hours of 2022 COVID-19 related paid sick leave from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022, immediately upon an oral or written request to their employer, with up to 40 of those hours available only when an employee or family member tests positive for COVID-19. For more information go to: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/COVID19Resources/2022-SPSL-FAQs.html>

During this time if you experience symptoms of respiratory illness (fever, coughing or shortness of breath), please inform human resources at [contact information] and contact your health care provider. [Business Name] will keep all medical information confidential and will only disclose it on a need-to-know basis, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the ADA, we are required to maintain the confidentiality of any medical information we receive, including the name of any affected employee.

Testing

[Employer provided testing information here]

You can also, contact your health care provider to inquire about testing. If you do not have a health care provider or want to be connected to a testing site please visit <https://berkeleyca.gov/safety-health/covid-19/get-tested-covid-19>

If at any point you develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, night sweats, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness, muscle or body aches, headaches, confusion, or loss of sense of taste/smell), do not come to work, obtain a test if possible, and contact your employer accordingly.

If you have any immediate questions or concerns, you may contact [Employer contact information]. For more information on COVID-19, visit the City of Berkeley website at <https://berkeleyca.gov/safety-health/covid-19>

Sincerely,

[Employer Name]

[Title]

6. Resources: Employer/Employee

- CalOSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards

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<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/ETS.html>

- COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards Frequently Asked Questions
<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/COVID19FAQs.html>
- Department of Fair Employment and Housing
<https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/covid-19-resources-and-guidance/>
- Department of Industrial Relations, Labor Commissioner's Office
[https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\)-Information.htm](https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/Coronavirus-(COVID-19)-Information.htm)
- Fall Playbook for Businesses to Manage COVID-19 and Protect Workers
[Fall-Playbook-for-Businesses-to-Manage-COVID-19-and-Protect-Workers.pdf \(whitehouse.gov\)](#)
- Labor & Workforce Development Agency
[LWDA | Labor & Workforce Development Agency \(ca.gov\)](#)
- OnwardCA, State Employment & COVID-19 Resources
<https://onwardca.org/>
- Safer At Work / California for All
[Safer At Work | California for All](#)

7. Resources: Testing, Therapeutics, & Vaccines

- CA's free telehealth provider via Sesame Care: **1-833-686-5051** (free COVID-19 medical consultation and medication if necessary)
<https://sesamecare.com/covidca>
- CDPH list of COVID testing laboratories
<https://testing.covid19.ca.gov/covid-19-testing-task-force-laboratory-list/>
- CDPH COVID-19 Test to Treat Program
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Test-to-treat-locations.aspx#>
- City of Berkeley Testing Information
<https://berkeleyca.gov/safety-health/covid-19/get-tested-covid-19>

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- City of Berkeley Vaccine Information
<https://berkeleyca.gov/safety-health/covid-19/covid-19-vaccines>
- Color lab
<https://www.color.com/covid-testing-programs-for-employers>
- Find a Test-to-Treat location
<https://covid-19-test-to-treat-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Statewide COVID-19 hotline : **1-833-422-4255**
- Visit an Optum Serve location
<https://lhi.care/covidtesting>

8. Other Resources

- Alameda County COVID-19 Food Distribution
<http://www.acgov.org/maps/food-services.htm>

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