

COVID-19 Quick Reference for Supervisors

December 2020

What to do when an employee tests positive for COVID-19

- **Send the employee home immediately** to self-isolate if they have come to work.
- **Tell the employee to stay home and self-isolate** if they inform you of their status from home. To self-isolate is to stay at home and physically apart from others to avoid spreading COVID-19.
- **Ask the employee to call VDH (540-267-8240) and contact Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) Case Management at reportacase@vt.edu to report their situation, and to also contact their health care provider** if they have concerning symptoms.
- **If the employee is unable/fails to notify the EHS Case Management Team in a timely manner, promptly email reportacase@vt.edu.** Include the employee's contact information, work location, supervisor information, and dates the employee last worked.
- **Tell the employee they are required to inform you of their beginning and end-of-isolation dates.** The Case Management Team can recommend dates. VDH or the employee's health care provider must confirm dates. The isolation minimum is 10 days. The return-to-work date may be extended due to positive results of additional testing, or prolonged illness.
- **Tell the employee they cannot return to work until the day that follows their last isolation day. To return to work, they must also be symptom-free or have improving symptoms, AND fever-free for 24 hours** without the use of fever-reducing medication (aspirin, Advil, Tylenol).
- **Notify your department's HR team** of the employee's situation promptly. Ask the employee to

communicate with HR to review leave benefits.

What to do when an employee has been in contact with a known or suspected COVID-19 case, and may need to/i told to quarantine

- **Close contact** means being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a person with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour time period, OR having direct contact with infectious COVID-19 secretions (e.g., being coughed on). If the employee is a close contact, they will have to quarantine.
- An employee may or may not be sure if they are a close contact. In either case, **the employee should contact VDH at 540-267-8240 for guidance** and to set quarantine dates if needed. **Employees should also confirm their status by contacting EHS Case Management at reportacase@vt.edu.**
- **The CDC recommends that close contacts quarantine for 14 days.** However, quarantine may end after day 10 if the employee has had no symptoms of COVID-19 during quarantine. In some cases, an employee may be able to end quarantine and return to work after day 7, **ONLY IF** 1) They have had no symptoms of COVID-19 during quarantine; 2) They schedule a PCR test to occur days 5 – 7 (or later) of quarantine; and 3) they receive a negative test result.
- **Tell the close contact employee that they are required to inform you of their beginning and end-of-quarantine dates**, once they learn when these are. Advise the employee to contact HR to review leave benefits.
- Ensure that the close contact employee understands that **they are required to quarantine at home (stay physically apart from others) and not come to work, and to self-monitor for COVID symptoms (fever, cough, loss of taste/smell, aches, GI distress, etc.) for 14 days from start of quarantine. The employee can return to work on the day that follows their last quarantine day if they are symptom-free.**
- **If symptoms occur during quarantine, the employee should, 1) Self-isolate for 10 days; 2) Seek advice by contacting their health care provider or VDH; and 3) Report their status to**

the EHS Case Management Team at reportacase@vt.edu, and to you, their supervisor.

What to do when an employee experiences possible COVID-19 symptoms, but has had no known contact with a positive case (they may have been tested and are awaiting results, or may not have been tested)

- **Send the employee home** if symptoms develop at work.
- **Tell the employee to stay home if they call in** to report having symptoms.
- **If the employee has not been tested, advise them to contact their health care provider or VDH (540-267-8240) for guidance.** Testing may be recommended and scheduled.
- **If the employee has already been tested and is awaiting results,** tell them to stay home and quarantine (stay apart from others) until test results are known.
- **Ask the employee to update you on their status and test results.**
- **If the employee tests negative and symptoms are improving and determined to be non-COVID and non-infectious (i.e. allergies), the employee can return to work. If infectious (flu, cold, etc.), it is safest for the employee to stay home** until they feel better and have improved symptoms.
- **If the employee tests positive, follow the guidance above for positive employee cases.**

What to do when an employee worked in shared areas/used shared equipment with a COVID-19 case, but was not in close contact with the case

- The employee can continue to report to work, and should self-monitor for symptoms.
- Ensure that preventive measures are taken in shared spaces:

- Follow cleaning/disinfecting procedures and schedules for shared equipment and common or high-touch surfaces.
- Encourage compliance with mask-wearing and physical distancing among employees.
- Encourage handwashing for 20 seconds on a regular basis (or use of hand sanitizer) and avoid contact with face, eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

What to do when an employee has been around a person who is a close contact with a COVID-19 case (the employee is a contact of a close contact individual)

- **Advise the employee** to 1) Evaluate whether they were in actual close contact with that individual, exactly when and for how long; 2) Stay informed about that individual's status (has the individual developed COVID-19 or tested positive within 10 days of their contact with positive case?); and 3) Stay physically removed from that individual during quarantine. **No notifications or other actions are needed at this time.**
- **While waiting to see what happens during that individual's quarantine, the employee can report to work,** giving top priority to physical distancing, wearing face coverings, and regular handwashing.
- **If the individual develops COVID-19 and/or tests positive, the employee needs to report their situation to VDH (540-267-8240) or EHS Case Management (reportacase@vt.edu).** The employee must quarantine if it is confirmed that they were a close contact to the COVID-19 case, and follow quarantine guidance provided above.

What to do when employees work in a building where there has been a COVID-19 case, but they have had no contact with the case

- Employees are at no higher risk of exposure to the virus in this situation than when visiting other public spaces in the community (e.g., grocery stores).
- Exposure risk can be reduced by practicing physical distancing, avoiding large groups, wearing face coverings, regular handwashing, and cleaning/disinfection of high-touch surfaces.