

<b>HUMAN RESOURCES MEMORANDUM 22-016</b>		DATE ISSUED: 09/16/2022
SUBJECT: <b>UPDATED GUIDANCE FOR STATE EMPLOYEES ON CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19), FACE COVERING/MASK REQUIREMENTS, AND WEEKLY TESTING</b>		REFERENCE: <a href="#">Cal/OSHA</a> <a href="#">CDPH</a>
TO: All Department of General Services (DGS) Employees		SUPERCEDES: HR Memo <a href="#">21-009</a> and <a href="#">21-016</a>

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS SHARED WITH ALL EMPLOYEES**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide employees with updated direction from the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) regarding State employee coronavirus (COVID-19) testing and provide reminders of information provided in previous HR Memorandums.

**Termination of Mandatory Weekly COVID-19 Testing Update**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to update their [guidance](#) and California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has [amended COVID-19 policies](#). As a result of these changes, the last day for State employee COVID-19 testing in non-high-risk settings and/or other than acute health care and long-term care settings is **September 16, 2022**.

Relevant CDPH or federal orders outlining vaccination and/or testing requirements for workers in high-risk and/or acute health care and long-term care settings remain in effect.

**Termination of Vaccination Status Collection Update**

Effective **September 19, 2022**, the Department of General Services (DGS) will no longer collect employee's vaccination status.

**Reminders-COVID-19 Guidance**

**Self-Screening**

Employees are required to self-screen prior to entering the worksite and should not enter if they are experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#) such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or any other symptoms that can be attributed to COVID-19 for 10 days following the last date of exposure.

**Physical Distancing**

- During an outbreak (three or more employees in an exposed group), employers are required to evaluate whether physical distancing is necessary to control the transmission of COVID-19.

- Physical distancing must be used in a major outbreak (20 or more employees in an exposed group) for all employees, regardless of vaccination status except when an employer demonstrates that maintaining six feet of distance is not feasible. When it is not feasible to maintain six feet of distance, persons must be as far apart as feasible.
- Employers are under an ongoing requirement to assess workplace hazards and implement controls to prevent transmission of disease. There may be circumstances in which employers determine that physical distancing is necessary in their workplace.

### Face Coverings

- Face covering requirements are the same for all employees regardless of vaccination status.
- Face coverings are no longer mandatory for unvaccinated workers in all indoor locations.
- Employees should follow the local county public health guidance.
- Per CDPH, there is a strong recommendation that all persons, regardless of vaccine status, mask in indoor public settings and businesses. More information on face coverings is available in the [CDPH Face Covering Guidance](#) and your local county ordinance if applicable.

### Respirators

- N95 masks must be available to **all** staff upon request regardless of vaccination status and without fear of reprisal. If you have any questions, please reach out to your manager/supervisor.

### Where can State employees get COVID-19 testing?

State employees can receive COVID-19 testing through state run testing sites such as:

- [California COVID-19 Testing Task Force](#), [Verily](#), other local county based sponsored testing sites, or via their personal health care provider. If a test is required per the DGS Return to Work Unit, the test should be done during state time and if there is a charge to test, the employee shall be reimbursed.

### Close Contacts-Employees Who Are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19.

For employees who are **asymptomatic**.

Applies to all employees, regardless of vaccination status.

- Exposed employees must test within three to five days after their last close contact. Persons infected within the prior 90 days do not need to be tested unless symptoms develop.
- Employees must wear face coverings around others for a total of 10 days after exposure. Please refer to the FAQs on face coverings for additional information.
- If an exposed employee tests positive for COVID- 19, they must follow the isolation requirements in [Table 1: Exclusion Requirements for Employees Who Test Positive for COVID-19.](#)

- Employees are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated and boosted

## Definitions

- Close Contact\* - The detailed prescriptive requirements for exclusion of employees after close contact have been deleted. Instead, review [CDPH guidelines](#) for employees who had close contact and implement quarantine and other measures in the workplace to prevent COVID-19 transmission in the workplace. This allows for greater flexibility in the regulations (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 8, § 3205(c)(9)). For more information, please refer to the section on [CDPH's Isolation and Quarantine Guidance](#) in the [general FAQs](#), and to [Cal/OSHA's fact sheet on quarantine and isolation](#).
- [Infectious Period](#)\*
  - For COVID-19 cases who develop COVID-19 symptoms, the "infectious period" is from two days before they first develop symptoms until 10 days after symptoms first appeared, and 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptoms have improved.
  - For COVID-19 cases who test positive but never develop COVID-19 symptoms, the "infectious period" is from two days before until ten days after the specimen for their first positive test for COVID-19 was collected.
- Full Vaccinated was deleted as this term is no longer used in the regulations. All protections now apply regardless of vaccination status and Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) requirements do not vary based on an employee's vaccination status.
- Isolation-Recommendations related to isolation of individuals who have tested positive remain unchanged (Reference [Isolation Period](#)).

\*The definitions of "close contact" and "infectious period" are now defined so that their meaning will change if CDPH changes its definition of the term in a regulation or order. This will allow more flexibility and consistency with CDPH.

## Reporting a Positive COVID-19 Case and Exclusion from Work

The requirements outlined below to report a positive COVID-19 case and Exclusion from Work remain in effect.

### Employee Responsibilities

Employees shall report a positive COVID-19 test result to their manager/supervisor immediately upon notification from the testing provider. This includes testing performed at DGS facilities, as well as medical and community providers.

### Manager/Supervisor Responsibilities

Once notification is received, the manager/supervisor shall follow the steps outlined below:

1. Report the positive COVID-19 test result of a DGS employee to the Office of Human Resources (OHR) Return to Work (RTW) unit, by completing the [DGS](#)

[Employee COVID-19 Positive Submittal](#) survey and answering the questions after gathering the necessary information from the employee.

2. Report the positive COVID-19 test result of a DGS employee to the weekly [Absenteeism Survey](#) through the Service Now portal.

### **Both**

1. The manager/supervisor will be asking the employee a series of questions. It is extremely important the questions are answered thoroughly and timely.
  - Employee Name
  - Employee Classification
  - DGS email address
  - Employee phone number (phone number where employee can be contacted at)
  - Date of the test
  - Date of positive test result
  - Type of COVID-19 test
  - Did employee test through Color Health provider for the State of California?
  - Were they symptomatic, and that is why they got tested?
  - When did they become symptomatic?
  - Date employee was last working in the State facility/building
  - Building name(s) and address(es) of all facility building(s) the employee last reported
  - What common areas of the work location(s) did the employee frequent (for tracing purposes during the infectious period)
  - Who did they have close contact with on their last day at the facility? (Close contact" means being within six feet of a COVID-19 case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or greater in any 24-hour period within or overlapping with the infectious period defined by this section, regardless of the use of face coverings, unless close contact is defined by regulation or order of the CDPH. If so, the CDPH definition shall apply)
  - Was the employee hospitalized?
  - If yes, what facility and what date were they admitted?
2. Discuss potential leave options. Questions: [OHRReturnToWork@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:OHRReturnToWork@dgs.ca.gov).

### **Notification**

Employees will receive a memorandum via email by Office of Human Resources (OHR) within 24 hours of reporting the position COVID-19 test result. The notification memoranda will be sent via email by OHR directly to the employee and will include exclusion and return to work details.

Within 24 hours Return to Work Unit (RTW) will also notify all individuals determined to be a close contact within the infectious period will include exclusion and return to work details.

The name of the COVID-19 positive employee shall not be disclosed.

### **Return-to-Work Testing Criteria**

The following [Cal/OSHA](#) guidance is specific to the return-to-work testing criteria for COVID-19 cases and employees excluded from work:

- COVID-19 tests may be self-administered and self-read only if independent verification of the results can be provided such as a time-stamped photograph
- Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test results will continue to be accepted.

#### Questions and Answers for Return-to-Work Testing Criteria

Question: What is considered time-stamped photograph of self-administered and self-read COVID-19 test results?

Answer: Time-stamped photogram is an indication of the date and time recorded as part of a digital signal or file:

- ❖ Such as an email, digital photograph or text message indicating the time of creation, transmission, etc.

Question: When is an employee required to submit COVID-19 test results to their manager/supervisor?

Answer: When an employee tests positive for COVID-19.

When an employee is returning early from the 10 days after testing positive for COVID-19.

When an exposed employee is identified as close contact and must test within three to five days after their last close contact.

Employees must submit positive COVID-19 test results to their manager/supervisor promptly.

### **Leave Directives**

According to the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR), the following leave directives apply:

- At any time, the employee becomes symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19, the employee shall be eligible for Supplemental Paid Sick Leave (SPSL) expires on September 30, 2022. If employee has exhausted SPSL and unable to telework, they can use their available leave credits or dock? (e.g., sick leave).

### **Reimbursement for Face Covering or Respirator**

- DGS will provide reimbursement for face coverings for employees who are still physically reporting to an assigned work locations and where a face covering, or respirator is requested, and one is not available. Please follow reimbursement directions below:
  - This is a one-time only reimbursement and must be submitted through a Travel Expense Claim form [STD 262](#).
  - The face covering amount shall be identified in the "Business Expense" column (11) on the TEC.

- Reimbursement amounts for \$5.00 or less do not require a receipt, an amount greater than \$5.00 up to maximum of \$10.00 requires a valid receipt.
- Due to the minimal dollar amount, an effort should be made by employees to combine this expense with other TEC expenses claimed to minimize the number of TECs submitted, unless the claim is being submitted at the end of the fiscal year (June). Employees shall follow their standard program procedure when submitting a TEC.

### Continuous Requirements

All other requirements to comply with CDC, California Department of Industrial Relations Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA), CDPH and local county public health department requirements remain in effect.

DGS will continue to minimize COVID-19 exposure and address COVID-19 concerns and reported hazards as outlined in the DGS [COVID-19 Prevention Plan \(CPP\)](#).

To reduce the risk of becoming infected and potentially spreading COVID-19 virus at work, DGS employees must adhere to the following guidance and information regardless of vaccination status:

- If experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#), employees should **not** report to their DGS work location, and should notify their supervisor and discuss leave options.
- Employees are **not** permitted to report to their DGS work location for COVID-19 testing purposes if experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

### Questions

If employees have questions regarding the guidance and information in this memorandum, they are encouraged to contact their supervisor and/or employee representative as appropriate.