

EMPLOYEE EXPOSURE GUIDANCE

Note: This document offers guidance in addition to the document entitled “EMPLOYEE AND SUPERVISOR GUIDANCE: What Steps To Take For A Possible Or Confirmed Covid-19 Illness In A Non-clinical, Non-housing University Building” published on coronavirus.utah.edu.

As COVID-19 continues to spread across the nation and Utah, there is an increased likelihood you will come in contact with someone in the workplace who either has confirmed they have the virus, or who you suspect may have it.

In instances like this, there are protocols in place to help you determine the best course of action. First, you need to determine if you have been in close contact with the person who has or is suspected of having COVID-19 (the person under investigation or PUI).

For COVID-19, a [close contact](#) is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

Close contact also includes instances where there was direct contact with infectious secretions (like being coughed on), direct physical contact with the person (touching, hugging, or kissing), or if you touched a surface or object that may have been contaminated with the virus (shared door handles or tables, eating or drinking utensils, for instance) without proper PPE.

Close contact generally does not include brief interactions, such as walking past a person.

If you have had close contact with someone, or if you are a member of the same household or residence as someone, who is confirmed positive for COVID-19, then you must do the following:

If you are asymptomatic you must:

- Quarantine at home, beginning on the date that the person tested positive.
- You should monitor your health for fever, cough and shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19, during the 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away others, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19.
- Contact your healthcare provider or call either the U Health COVID-19 hotline (801-587-0712) or the State of Utah COVID-19 hotline (801-456-7707) for testing advice. The Health Department

may also ask you to get tested for COVID-19 if you were in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, even if you don't feel sick.

If you are symptomatic (coughing, fever, respiratory distress, flu or cold symptoms) you must:

- Self-isolate at home, beginning on the date that the person tested positive or you become symptomatic (whichever is sooner).
- Contact your health care provider for advice.
- Obtain a test for COVID-19.

For people diagnosed with COVID-19 or sick contacts of COVID-19 patients, current CDC guidance is that you can discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:

If you think or know you had COVID-19, and had symptoms

You can be with return to work after:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication **and**
- Symptoms have improved

If you had severe illness from COVID-19 (you were admitted to a hospital and needed oxygen), your healthcare provider may recommend that you stay in isolation for longer than 10 days after your symptoms first appeared (possibly up to 20 days) and you may need to finish your period of isolation at home. If testing is available in your community, your healthcare provider may recommend that you undergo repeat testing for COVID-19 to end your isolation earlier than would be done according to the criteria above. If so, you can be around others after you receive two negative tests results in a row, from tests done at least 24 hours apart.

If you tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can return to work after:

- 10 days have passed since test

If testing is available in your community, your healthcare provider may recommend that you undergo repeat testing for COVID-19 to end your isolation earlier than would be done according to the criteria above. If so, you can be around others after you receive two negative test results in a row, from tests done at least 24 hours apart.



If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for “If you think or know you had COVID-19, and had symptoms.”

If you have received a COVID-19 test, complete the University of Utah COVID-19 reporting form (<https://coronavirus.utah.edu/#general-information>) as soon as possible.

If you have had close contact with someone who is a person under investigation (PUI), then you must do the following:

If you are asymptomatic you should:

- Monitor your health for fever, cough and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with the person.
- Quarantine and practice physical (social) distancing.

If you are symptomatic you must:

- Self-isolate and practice physical (social) distancing.
- Seek health advice to determine if medical evaluation is needed.
- If sought, medical evaluation and care should be guided by clinical presentation; diagnostic testing for COVID-19 should be guided by CDC’s [PUI definition](#).
- Postpone travel on commercial conveyances until no longer symptomatic.

Response from facilities and custodians

Since initial reports of COVID-19 on campus custodians have been doing enhanced sanitation in all buildings. When reports of confirmed cases of COVID-19 come in facilities will post a warning sign preventing entry to the space and wait for at least 24 hours from the last entry of the affected person and then perform a deep sanitation of hard surfaces. This will include door handles, elevator buttons, handrails, etc.

Breakrooms

After 24 hours, breakrooms will be sanitized by custodians. However, they will not touch personal items (cups, plates, silverware, etc.), as well as food or drink. Cups, utensils, etc., could be washed with soap and water by staff, as long as they wear gloves while they are doing it, and then removed from the room. Alternatively, they can be discarded. Non-porous food containers could be surface decontaminated, again by staff wearing gloves, and removed. Open or porous containers must be discarded.

Office areas

Office areas, as well as desks that students and post docs use, for example adjacent to (but separate from) lab areas, the custodians will only clean the hard surfaces. They will not move papers, clean computers, staplers, pens, etc. Therefore, areas will be cordoned off to prevent access. Enclosed offices, such as those used by faculty, will be closed. Areas that are closed will remain closed for seven days from the last date of entry of the affected individual. The CDC has stated that after seven days areas are safe to re-enter with routine cleaning and disinfection.

Laboratories and areas containing equipment, computers, etc.:

These areas will not be sanitized, but shut for seven days from the date of last entry of the affected individual, for the following reasons;

- Custodians only routinely clean/sanitize floors, sinks, door handles, etc.
- Custodians do not touch lab benches or shelves housing chemicals because of the risks that these chemical pose to them.
- The use of chemical disinfectants could result in adverse chemical reactions if containers are not appropriately sealed and stored and if the disinfectant residue is not removed prior to the container being opened again.
- Equipment could be harmed through the inappropriate exposure to disinfectants.
- The sheer area of surfaces in labs (benches, shelves, bottles, equipment, boxes, etc.) would make complete disinfection challenging.

During the lab shutdown, essential operations can continue, as described in the laboratory “Continuity of Operations Plan” for Red conditions.

Once areas are cleared for re-opening/reoccupation, custodians will go in and perform general sanitation prior to re-opening of the area to staff or students.

What should staff do upon re-entry?

Once custodians have completed their sanitation procedures, staff will sanitize benches and equipment while wearing gloves (nitrile or latex). This will include all touch points not sanitized by custodians, such as freezer doors and handles, external surfaces of biosafety cabinets, keyboards, control panels, etc.

Always review the Operating Manual for recommendations on cleaning and sanitation. A freshly prepared 1:10 dilution of bleach is an excellent multi-purpose disinfectant. In general, 70% ethanol solutions can be used to sanitize delicate surfaces, such as computer keyboards. QUAT-based disinfectants are an alternative for hard surfaces. Confirm that they are listed on the EPA list N for registered disinfectants or confirm that they have efficacy against hard to kill viruses, such as parvovirus or adenovirus.

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after removing gloves.