

Protocol for Isolation for First Responders

(Law Enforcement; Fire; Paramedics; Social Service Workers (Child Welfare and Assisted Living))

Departments/Organizations may choose to be more restrictive than the County and the State.

Additional restrictions may apply during an outbreak or during an increase in local cases.

Persons Who Test Positive for COVID-19 and are having Symptoms (Isolation)

Required Action:

- Remain in isolation until you have not had a fever for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication AND other COVID-19 symptoms are mild and improving. See important Links and Information below for details and FAQs.
- Consider isolating for additional days to reduce risk of exposures, in line with the potential infectious period.
- After ending isolation, must continue to wear a well-fitting mask when sharing indoor airspace for a total of 10 days.
- Avoid contact with people at higher-risk for severe COVID-19 for 10 days. Higher risk individuals include the elderly, those who live in congregate care facilities, those who have immunocompromising conditions, and that put them at higher risk for serious illness.

Persons Who Test Positive for COVID-19 and are not having Symptoms (Reducing Exposures)

Asymptomatic persons who test positive for COVID-19 can still spread disease to others. See potential infectious period.

Required Action:

- Isolation is not required for asymptomatic COVID-19 positive cases; however, testing positive is a marker of contagiousness and individuals should consider isolation to reduce risk of exposures, in line with the potential infectious period. See Important Links and Information below for details and FAQs.
- Individuals must continue to wear a well-fitting mask when sharing indoor airspace for a total of 10 days.
- Avoid contact with people at higher-risk for severe COVID-19 for 10 days.

Persons Who are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19

Required Action:

- Asymptomatic are **not required to stay home** from work. If you are at high risk for severe COVID-19 infection and would benefit from treatment, you should test within 5 days.
- Wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days, especially in indoor settings.
- If symptoms develop, **test, and stay home**. If testing positive, see "Persons Who Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolation)" and Important Links and Information below.

Persons Who Display Symptoms of COVID – 19 with No Known Exposure

- Self-isolate, test and mask as soon as possible.
- If test result is negative but you are still symptomatic, continue self-isolation and retest in 1-2 days if initially testing negative with an antigen test, particularly if tested during the first 1-2 days of symptoms.

Important Links and Information:

- [Follow CDPH Isolation Guidance](#)
- Follow the appropriate regulation for your workplace.
- Some employers are subject to the [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Non-Emergency Regulations](#) or in some workplaces the [Cal/OSHA Aerosol Transmissible Diseases \(ATD\) Standard \(PDF\)](#) and should consult those regulations for additional applicable requirements.
- Additional information about how CDPH isolation guidance affects covered workplaces may be found in [COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations FAQs](#).
- [Order of the State Public Health Officer Beyond Blueprint \(ca.gov\)](#)
- [Public Health Order Questions and Answers: COVID-19 Disease Control and Prevention \(ca.gov\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Isolation Guidance \(ca.gov\)](#)
- [Isolation Q&A \(ca.gov\)](#)
- [Updated COVID-19 Testing Guidance \(ca.gov\)](#)
- COVID-19 FAQs <https://www.ruhealth.org/covid-isolation-and-quarantine-instructions>

Masking:

- During the days following isolation or exposure when masks are worn, all persons should optimize mask fit and filtration ideally through use of surgical masks or respirators.

COVID-19 Symptoms:

- People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.
- Possible symptoms include, but are not limited to: Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
- Symptoms may change with new COVID-19 variants and can vary depending on vaccination status.
- If you have symptoms, particularly if you are at [higher risk](#) for severe COVID-19, speak with a healthcare provider as soon as you test positive to explore your options for [treatment](#).

Close contact exposure:

- 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 a confirmed case's 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 confirmed case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period during the confirmed case's infectious period.
- Spaces that are separated by floor-to-ceiling walls (e.g., offices, suites, rooms, waiting areas, bathrooms, or break or eating areas that are separated by floor-to-ceiling walls) must be considered distinct indoor airspaces.

Potential Infectious Period:

The potential infectious period is 2 days before the date of symptoms began or the positive test date (if no symptoms) through Day 10. (Day 0 is the symptom onset date or positive test date). For more information please refer to: [Public Health Order Questions and Answers: COVID19 Disease Control and Prevention \(ca.gov\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/COVID19/Pages/COVID19-Disease-Control-and-Prevention.aspx)

Some individuals with immunocompromise may continue to be able to spread disease longer, as long as 20 days or longer.

For more information, please refer to [People Who Are Immunocompromised | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s1119-immunocompromised.html).

Individual Case and Outbreak Reporting:

- Employers are to report outbreaks of 20 or more cases to Public Health by calling 951-955-6912 and to CalOSHA's Outbreak Division.
https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Non_Emergency_Regulations/
 - Secondly, employers may report outbreaks of 3 or more epi-linked cases (shared indoor airspace) to Public Health in an effort to best facilitate discussion of prevention and mitigation strategies in the workplace.
- Records must be retained for two years beyond February 3, 2026.
- **For county workers, the reporting instructions under the Protocol for Isolation for County Workers should also be followed.**