



CDC Shortens COVID Isolation Guidelines for Confirmed Positive Cases with Mild Symptoms

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has updated guidance regarding how long employees should isolate at home after testing positive for COVID-19. The summary of changes outlined below are **updates as of July 20, 2020**.

What Happened?

The CDC has updated guidance regarding how long employees should isolate after a positive COVID-19 test. For most persons with COVID-19, isolation and precautions can generally be discontinued 10 days after symptom onset and resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement of other symptoms. For persons who never develop symptoms, isolation and other precautions can be discontinued 10 days after the date of their first positive test for COVID-19.

Updated CDC Recommendations as of July 20, 2020

Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:

- At least 10 days* have passed since symptom onset and
- At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Other symptoms have improved.
- Persons who never develop COVID-19 symptoms may discontinue isolation and other precautions 10 days after the date of their first positive test.
- Those who tested positive and have severe illness may need to continue isolation for a full 20 days.
- Those who were exposed to the virus but were never tested and have no symptoms should continue to quarantine for the full 14 days.

**See CDC updated guidelines webpage [here](#) for more information.*

Test-based Strategy No Longer Recommended

An additional change to the most recent CDC updates is the role of testing for discontinuing quarantine after a positive test. Requiring an employee who tested positive for COVID to produce a negative test before returning to work is no longer recommended. Testing should be used to end quarantine in limited circumstances only (see CDC website for more detailed information), and, in those cases, two tests should be administered at least 24 hours apart to ensure accuracy.

What Do I Have to Do?

Employers who currently require a negative COVID test before an employee returns to work may wish to strongly consider using a symptoms-based approach outlined by the CDC instead. We recommend employers to continuously monitor the CDC website to stay on top of changes to guidance as the agency continues to learn about the coronavirus.

Contact Us if You Have Questions

Cottingham & Butler is prepared to assist you through this process. If you have any questions, please contact your Cottingham & Butler representative.

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