



# Timeline for Responding to a Positive COVID-19 Diagnosis in the Workplace

Important measures must be taken when an employer receives confirmation that an employee has received a positive COVID-19 diagnosis. A calm, deliberate and swift response is vital in order to protect other employees from contracting the virus. Additionally, careful consideration should be given to whether coworkers, customers and others who may have had close contact with the individual should be notified that they may have been exposed.

The below timeline was created utilizing guidance from the CDC and EEOC Pandemic and provides recommendations for a response if an employee tests positive for COVID-19.

## To Prepare

- » Prepare planned communications for if/when someone tests positive.
- » Communications may include all employees, those likely to have had close contact with the infected employee, customers/vendors, and the media.

## Immediately After Diagnosis

- » If the employee is currently in the facility, quickly determine a strategy for the employee to safely leave.
- » Avoid exposure to others while simultaneously protecting the dignity and privacy of the individual.

## One to Two Hours

- » Hold meeting with employee's manager / supervisor, key executives, and HR.
- » Assess whether to send all employees home for the day/close the building where the employee worked.
- » Identify person to obtain additional information from infected employee and conduct telephone interview (assuming employee is medically able to participate).
- » Develop list of individuals likely to have had close contact with infected employee for communication.
- » Determine compensation (including benefits) for employees sent home.
- » Identify person to arrange for thorough cleaning/disinfecting per CDC Guidance.
- » Assign individuals to implement response plan and action items.

## Two to Five Hours

- » Assess work impact of closure of facility.
- » Determine whether remote work is possible and set up systems/equipment.
- » Execute communication plan for coworkers and others who had close contact with the infected individual.
- » Communicate with workforce about closure and anticipated return to work timing.
- » Per CDC guidelines, businesses are strongly encouraged to coordinate with state and local health officials so timely and accurate information can guide appropriate responses.
- » Send out all necessary planned communications as appropriate.
- » Confirm arrangements for cleaning/disinfection of facility.

## Within 24 to 48 Hours

- » Conduct cleaning of facility. For facilities that do not house individuals overnight, CDC recommends:
  - Closing off areas used by an infected person and waiting as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets.
  - Opening outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- » Develop plan for ongoing compensation of impacted employees, taking into account any governmental leave mandates.
- » Develop plan to address impact on production of goods and provisions of services to customers.

*Our expert team is here to help you understand and apply the guidance provided by the CDC and EEOC. If you have questions regarding your organization's specific circumstances, please [contact us](#) today or visit our [COVID-19 Resource Center](#) for more information.*