

## COVID-19 Exposure Guidance Algorithm for Health Care Worker or First Responder Exposures

### Summary 2-3-21

**Asymptomatic** health care workers (HCW)/first responders who have had prolonged exposure with a confirmed COVID-19 case (while not wearing recommended PPE) at work or in the community should quarantine for 14 days after last exposure. \*These individuals should be tested prior to release from quarantine.

**Symptomatic** health care workers (HCW) or first responders who have had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case REQUIRE immediate testing and quarantine.

#### Those who test positive:

- Isolate until 10 days have passed from onset of symptoms, AND 24 hours since last fever without the use of fever reducers, AND other symptoms have improved significantly. Wear a facemask upon return to work.
- Persons with severe to critical illness should isolate until 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. Wear a facemask upon return to work.

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html)

#### Those who test negative:

Quarantine for 14 days and should be retested prior to release from quarantine. Return to work after 14 days and 24 hours since last fever without use of fever reducers, and other source of illness ruled out. Wear a facemask upon return to work.

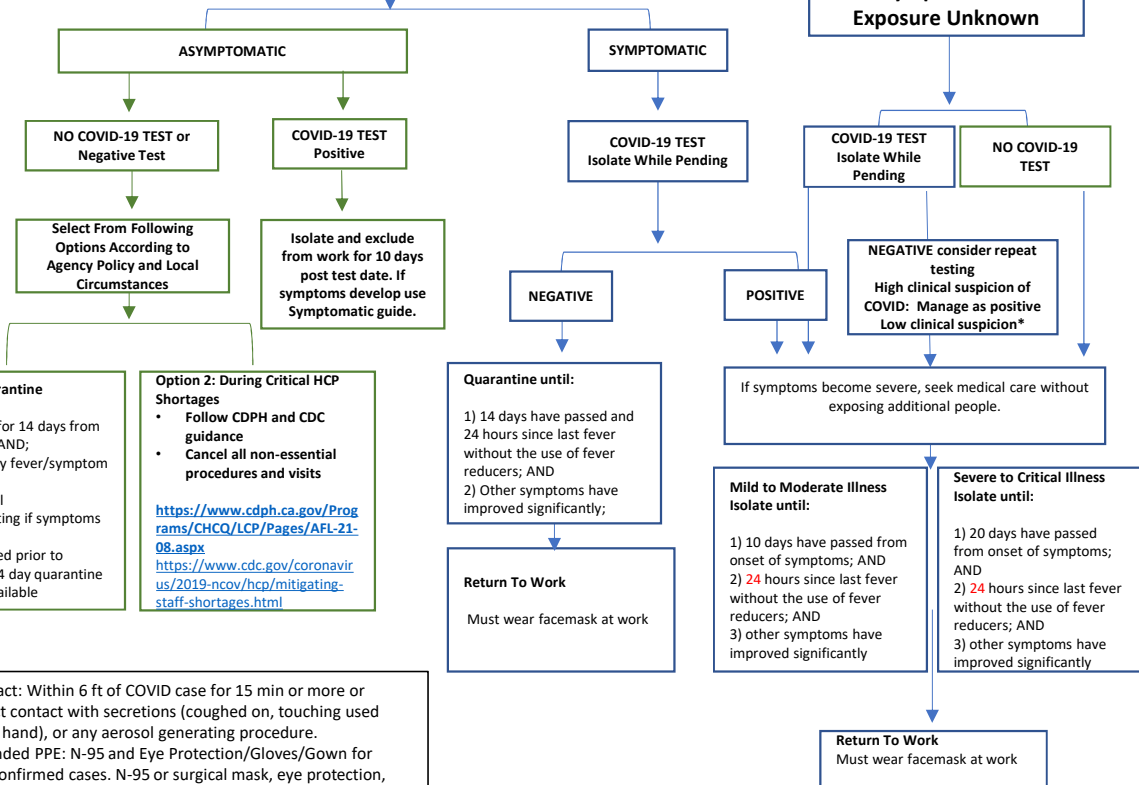
**During critical staffing shortages** that affect safe patient care, facilities may use contingency strategies with shortened quarantine periods, as described in CDPH and CDC guidance:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-21-08.aspx>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/mitigating-staff-shortages.html>

**For isolation of HCW or First Responder due to exposures in community settings see CDC:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>

**HCW or First Responder with prolonged close contact to confirmed COVID-19 case (or suspect-case pending results) without wearing recommended PPE\***  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html>



**Option 1: Quarantine**

- Quarantine for 14 days from last exposure, AND;
- Perform daily fever/symptom check, AND;
- Seek medical evaluation/testing if symptoms present
- May be tested prior to release from 14 day quarantine if resources available

**Option 2: During Critical HCP Shortages**

- Follow CDPH and CDC guidance
- Cancel all non-essential procedures and visits

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-21-08.aspx>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/mitigating-staff-shortages.html>

\*Close contact: Within 6 ft of COVID case for 15 min or more or having direct contact with secretions (coughed on, touching used tissues bare hand), or any aerosol generating procedure.  
 \*Recommended PPE: N-95 and Eye Protection/Gloves/Gown for suspect or confirmed cases. N-95 or surgical mask, eye protection, and gloves for other patient/resident encounters.

- [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html)



\*Negative Results with Low Clinical Index of Suspicion: May return to work 24 hours after all symptoms resolved without fever reducers. Must wear facemask at work, daily symptom check, diligent hygiene/infection control practices.