

# COVID-19

## Return to Work Guidance for staff with Direct Patient Contact: **Updated 4/16/2020**

**For the purposes of this document, symptoms of COVID are defined as having ANY of the following:**

Subjective fevers/chills, fever >99.9F, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, trouble breathing, body/muscle aches, diarrhea, or severe fatigue

### **Employees with a POSITIVE COVID test who have had any SYMPTOMS OF COVID:**

Work recommendation: Off duty minimum of **7 days** from onset of symptoms.

Return to work criteria (must meet all):

- Resolution of fever (<100.0) without the use of fever-reducing medications
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected ≥24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens)

### **Employees with a POSITIVE COVID test who have NEVER had symptoms of COVID:**

Work recommendation: Excluded from work until **10 days** have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and criteria below is met. If the patient develops symptoms at any time, they should use criteria outlined above.

Return to work criteria: Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected ≥24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens)

### **Employees without a COVID test who have had any SYMPTOMS OF COVID:**

Work recommendation: Off duty minimum of **7 days** from onset of symptoms.

Return to work criteria (must meet all):

- Must be afebrile (<100.0) without the use of fever-reducing medications
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected ≥24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens)

### **Employees with a negative COVID test who have had any SYMPTOMS OF COVID:**

If an alternate diagnosis has been made (e.g., tested positive for influenza), criteria for return to work should be based on that diagnosis. Otherwise, follow criteria below:

IF Patient has had objective fever at any point (>99.9F)

Work recommendation: Off duty minimum of 7 days from onset of symptoms

Return to work criteria (must meet all):

- Must be afebrile off antipyretic and have improving symptoms for 3 days
- Must wear mask for 14 days from onset of symptoms

IF Patient has never had objective fever (>99.9F)

Work recommendation: Off duty while symptomatic

Return to work criteria (must meet all):

- May return 24 hours after improvement in respiratory symptoms
- Must wear a mask if persistently coughing

### **Employees with a pending or negative COVID test who have NEVER had symptoms of COVID:**

If this employee was tested following an exposure, employee should remain on duty but must wear a mask for 14 days. If employee has no known exposure, employee can return to work and should follow current GLA masking policy.

**\*\*\*NOTE: All employees are encouraged to wear a mask throughout the day. However, for employees where specified above, masking is mandatory.\*\*\***

**Contact Employee Health for return to work clearance: 310-268-3522 OR**  
**VHAGLAEmployeeHealthTeam@va.gov**

Approved by Dr. Goetz