



TO: All Employers in Alameda County

FROM: Nicholas J. Moss, MD, MPH, Health Office

SUBJECT: Return to Work Guidelines for Cases and Close Contacts

The Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) is committed to ensuring the health and safety of everyone who lives or works in Alameda County. We appreciate your compliance with State and local requirements for workplace safety, including requiring the use of face coverings, ensuring everyone stays 6 feet apart, conducting regular symptom checks, and supporting sick employees in staying home.

COVID-19 is widespread in our community, and you may have employees who get the virus. Per our Health Officer Orders, people with COVID-19 are required to stay home and isolate away from others for a duration of time – regardless of symptoms or vaccination status.

Similarly, our Health Officer Orders require many people who are exposed to COVID-19 to stay home and quarantine away from others, unless they meet specific criteria.

The following links should be utilized to orient employers to current isolation and quarantine requirements. Employers are encouraged to follow instructions found at the webpages below when deciding if/how to use COVID-19 tests to determine if an employee should be able to return to the workplace.

- Current isolation and quarantine instructions for the general public can be found on the following webpage: <https://covid-19.acgov.org/isolation-quarantine>
 - **Note:** Some workplaces have requirements or guidance that are specific to that industry (e.g., schools, medical facilities, correctional facilities) and employers should seek further information from the Health Officer Orders linked immediately below.
- You can find our Health Officer Orders for both Isolation and Quarantine here: <https://bit.ly/AC-HOO>
- Workplaces must also keep current with and follow Cal/OSHA requirements, which can be found here: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/>

ACPHD does not provide clearance letters for people to return to work and notes from doctors or medical providers are also not advised. If a COVID-19 test is being used to determine if someone already known to have COVID-19 can leave isolation after 5 days, an antigen test should be used. PCR/NAAT tests can remain positive for several weeks to months after an infection, but do not indicate that a person is still infected or contagious. Obtaining a negative antigen test is only recommended if an individual is leaving isolation prior to Day 11. If someone positive with COVID-19 completes a 10-day isolation and meets symptom criteria (no symptoms/resolving symptoms and no fever), we do not recommend further testing, and a test should NOT be required to return to work.

Thank you for your cooperation and the important role that you play in keeping our communities safe.