

# COVID-19 Updated Guidance from Mass.gov

Revised: 1/5/22

## For Charles River Center Staff

**COVID-19** is a disease caused by a virus named SARS-CoV-2. It is very contagious and can spread easily.

**COVID-19** most often causes respiratory symptoms that can feel much like a cold, a flu, or pneumonia.

**COVID-19** may attack more than your lungs and respiratory system. Other parts of your body may also be affected by the disease.

- Most people with COVID-19 have mild symptoms, but some people become severely ill.
- Some people including those with minor or no symptoms may suffer from post-COVID conditions – or “long COVID”.
- Older adults and people who have certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
- Hundreds of thousands of people have died from COVID-19 in the United States.
- Vaccines against COVID-19 are safe and effective. Vaccines teach our immune system to fight the virus that causes COVID-19.

**Isolation and quarantine** are important steps to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

An infected person can spread COVID-19 when they cough, sneeze, or even by talking, singing or breathing. COVID-19 spreads very easily between people who are near each other. Staying at home when you are contagious keeps you from giving it to other people.

### What do you do if you test positive for COVID-19 or are considered a close contact to someone who tested positive?

**ISOLATION:** If you **test positive** for COVID-19 you must isolate **whether you are vaccinated or not**. This means you must be alone, without direct contact with anyone else until you can no longer spread the virus.

You must self-isolate for **5 days** and wear a mask if others could come into contact with you. Tell close contacts that you tested positive for COVID-19. A person with COVID-19 can begin spreading it starting **2 days** before the person has any symptoms or tests positive. **On day 5**, staff must perform a rapid antigen test and have negative results **before being allowed to return to work**. If test results **are positive**, then a **PCR test** with **negative** results must be performed before returning to work. If PCR test not performed, then staff can return to work **after 10 days** have passed. **If staff DO return** anywhere between days 6 and 10, then **A KN95 OR double surgical masks MUST** then be worn on shift for **5 days** upon return to work if staff return to work on day 6, **OR** the remaining days until the 10-day monitoring period has ended.

### Protocol for staff who test Positive for Covid-19:

- **Day 0:** First day of symptoms **OR** day the positive test was taken
- **Days 1-4:** Self Isolate
- **Day 5:** **Perform a rapid antigen test.** If results negative, you can return to work. **If results positive,** then **perform a PCR test.** Stay out of work **until PCR results are negative OR day 10,** whichever comes first.
- **Days 6:** Exit isolation and return to work **ONLY if:**
  - Rapid antigen test taken on day 5 is **negative**
- **Days 7-10:**
  - Return to work **ONLY IF** previous rapid test was positive and **THEN subsequent PCR test is negative**
  - **OR After day 10** if PCR test is not performed after previous positive rapid antigen test results were obtained

**A KN95 OR double surgical masks MUST** then be worn on shift for **5 days upon return to work** if staff return to work on day 6, **OR the remaining days until the 10-day monitoring period has ended.**

**Quarantine:** Is for individuals who have been exposed and are considered a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 **OR individuals who start to exhibit symptoms of COVID-19.**

- **Vaccinated:** **You can still work and do not have to quarantine** if you are exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are vaccinated. However, you should then continue to **monitor your symptoms for 10 days.** If you experience symptoms, you must immediately quarantine, seek testing, and contact your healthcare provider. You must notify your supervisor and HR immediately. **You may return to work ONLY with a negative PCR test.**
  - **A regular surgical mask** must be worn for 10 days (**typical mask CRC requires**)
- **Unvaccinated:** **You can still work and DO NOT have to quarantine** if you are exposed to someone with COVID-19 and you are unvaccinated. You **MUST** though, **get tested 72 hours (3 days)** following exposure. A rapid viral test can be performed, and if negative, can continue to work. If rapid viral test is **positive,** then you must quarantine at home and **obtain a PCR test.** You may return to work **ONLY** with a **negative PCR test.**
  - **A KN95 OR double surgical masks MUST** be worn for **10 days on shift.** You should then continue to **monitor your symptoms for 10 days.** If you experience symptoms, stay away from others (quarantine), seek testing, and consult your healthcare provider.

Protocol for staff who are **Unvaccinated** and are considered an Exposure/Close contact to an individual who tested positive for Covid-19:

1. **A KN95 OR Double surgical masks MUST** be worn for **10 days** following an exposure

- **Day 0:** First day of exposure to close contact
- **Day 3: Perform a rapid test.** If results negative, you may continue to work. If rapid viral test is **positive**, then you must quarantine at home and **obtain a PCR test.**
- **Days 3-10:** If PCR test negative, continue to monitor for symptoms

**NOTE: Unvaccinated staff are NOT ALLOWED to work with Covid-19 positive individuals at any time.**