

Updated CDC Guidance for Critical Employees Suspected or Confirmed Exposed to COVID-19

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The CDC has updated its recommendations for certain critical employees to continue working even if they have a known or suspected exposure to a COVID-19 positive case. The interim guidance states:

“To ensure continuity of operations of essential functions, CDC advises that critical infrastructure workers may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to COVID-19, provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions are implemented to protect them and the community.”

Additional precautions outlined by the CDC include:

- **Pre-Screen:** Employers should measure the employee’s temperature and assess symptoms prior to them starting work. Ideally, temperature checks should happen before the individual enters the facility.
- **Regular Monitoring:** As long as the employee doesn’t have a temperature or symptoms, they should self-monitor under the supervision of their employer’s occupational health program.
- **Wear a Mask:** The employee should wear a face mask at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure. Employers can issue facemasks or can approve employees’ supplied cloth face coverings in the event of shortages.
 - *Note: Starting May 1, all essential business employers in Illinois are required to provide cloth face coverings to their workers to wear when they cannot maintain the 6-foot social distancing rule.*
- **Social Distance:** The employee should maintain 6 feet and practice social distancing as work duties permit in the workplace.
- **Disinfect and Clean workspaces:** Clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment routinely.

This interim guidance pertains to critical infrastructure workers in 16 different sectors of work including:

- Federal, state, & local law enforcement
- Emergency Services
- 911 call center employees
- Hazardous material responders from government and the private sector
- Water and Wastewater Services
- Janitorial staff and other custodial staff
- Workers – including contracted vendors – in food and agriculture, critical manufacturing, informational technology, transportation, energy and government facilities

The CDC defines a potential exposure as "being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. The time frame for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic."

Resources:

- [CDC Interim Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to COVID-19](#)
- [Essential Critical Worker Dos and Don'ts](#)
- [Article Summarizing CDC Interim Guidance For Critical Employees Returning to Work](#)
- [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings FAQ's](#)
- [World Health Organization - Videos and Printable Resources](#)
- [CDC Guidance - Printer Friendly Version](#)
- [Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission](#)
- [EEOC Article Regarding Temperature Taking at Work During Pandemic](#)