Reopening Brown County

Recommendations from Public Health

August 2020

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Health & Human Services

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Appendix K: COVID-19 FAQ Toolkit

Q: What does close contact mean?
A: Close contact according to CDC is being in contact with a positive COVID-19 case within 6 ft for more than 15 minutes, had direct contact with the person (e.g. kiss, handshake, hug, etc.), had contact with the person's respiratory secretions (e.g. coughed/sneezed on, contact with dirty tissue, sharing a drinking glass, etc.), or stayed overnight for at least one night in the same household as the positive person.

Q: Do I need to quarantine if I am exposed to a positive COVID-19 case while wearing a mask, but not social distancing?
A: Yes. If you were within 6 ft with a confirmed positive COVID-19 case for more than 15 minutes, that is considered close contact. You should quarantine for 14 days after your last close contact with the positive case.

Q: Do I need to quarantine if I am exposed to a positive COVID-19 case while social distancing, but not while wearing a mask?
A: No. If you were able to maintain a 6 ft distance or greater from the positive COVID-19 case, you are not considered a close contact, and would not need to quarantine. However, it is recommended to wear a mask to protect others and to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Q: Do I need to quarantine if I am exposed to a positive COVID-19 case while wearing a mask AND social distancing?
A: No. If you were able to maintain a 6 ft distance or greater from the positive COVID-19 case, you are not considered a close contact, and would not need to quarantine.

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Q: One of my employees tested positive. Do I need to shut down my facility?
A: It is recommended to close off, clean and disinfect any areas where the employee may have been for a prolonged period of time. If the area was the primary location where public gather (i.e. dining area, bar), it is recommended to close the facility and follow cleaning and disinfecting protocol.

Q: Should I test my entire staff if an employee tested positive?
A: Assess which employees were in close contact with the positive employee during the infectious period. Those individuals should quarantine for 14 days and request to be tested by a healthcare provider.

Q: What is an infectious period?
A: For a symptomatic individual, the infectious period starts 2 days prior to symptom onset. For an asymptomatic individual, the infectious period starts 2 days prior to the COVID-19 test date.

Q: When should I inform my clients of a potential exposure to COVID-19 in my business?
A: Consider waiting for a positive testing result before informing clients of potential exposure. The Brown County Public Health Contact Tracing Team will also follow up with further information on this case if positive test results are obtained.

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Q: Should customers be required to wear masks? Can I require my customers to wear mask or face coverings before entering my business?
A: Governor Tony Evers has released Emergency Order #1 (https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/EmO01-FaceCoverings.pdf) which outlines who should wear a mask and in which settings. Please see the FAQ from the Governor's office if you have questions about the order: https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/FaceCoveringFAQ.pdf.

The Governor's Emergency Order #1 is meant to be a minimum bar for facial covering requirements. If your local government has stricter requirements, those requirements must be followed.

As is the case with any employer implementing any policies and/or rules regarding its employees, you should check with your Human Resources Department and seek the advice of legal counsel prior to implementing any policies and/or rules in order to ensure that you possess the legal authority to do so, and that your policies and/or rules comply with other laws, such as the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and allow for any applicable exceptions. It is also important to consider that some people are unable to wear masks due to medical conditions, fear of being profiled, or young children.

Q: What do I do if I see someone not wearing a mask, even though they should be?
A: Nothing. Some people have conditions or circumstances that would make wearing a cloth face covering difficult or dangerous. Just wear you mask and stay six feet away.

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Q: Should an employee who took the COVID-19 test because they may have been exposed to a positive COVID-19 case return to work if their result came back negative?
A: Even with a negative test result, employees should self-quarantine if they were in close contact with a positive COVID-19 case and should continue to monitor for symptoms. You should consider having the potentially exposed employees should quarantine for 14 days from the last exposure date regardless of negative results. Symptoms may not develop for 2-14 days after an exposure to a positive COVID-19 case.

Q: How and where do I get tested?
A: If you are experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms such as new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sudden loss of smell/taste, fever >100.4˚F, etc. call your primary care provider to get more information on testing. Healthcare providers have posted testing information on their respective websites.

Q: How many days do I have to stay under isolation if I test positive for COVID-19?
A: We recommend isolating for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset AND have at least three days symptom free (24 hours). This means all symptoms are gone without using any fever reducing medications for three days. If you are asymptomatic, you must isolate for 10 days after your test date.

Q: Are employers required to report any positive COVID-19 cases involving their employees to Brown County Public Health?
A: Potentially, yes. Wisconsin State Statutes outline specific situations where you may need to notify public health of a positive case of COVID-19. We recommend consulting with your Human Resources and/or legal counsel to ensure that appropriate reporting policies are in place and are consistent with state statutes.

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Q: If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, can the employer share information related to this employee with other employees in the facility?

A: According to CDC guidance, if an employee has a confirmed COVID-19 infection, employers should inform employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, but maintain confidentiality by not disclosing personal identifying details about the positive COVID-19 employee, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These recommendations and considerations are based upon information available at the time of publication and are subject to change. You should consider having these employees quarantine or self-monitor for symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath), based on exposure (i.e. if they are a close contact).

Q: Do my employees have to quarantine for 14 days if they travel out of state?

A: No. Travel is not recommended; however, if someone must travel, after returning they should monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days and stay home as much as possible. If they develop symptoms, they should contact their health care provider for testing.

Q: If a household contact of an employee is in close contact with a COVID positive case, does my employee have to quarantine?

A: No, your employee does not have to quarantine at this time but we recommend they self-monitor for symptoms. Their household contact is a close contact with the positive COVID-19 case and should quarantine for 14 days. If your employee's household contact becomes symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19 your employee should quarantine at that time.

"As is the case with any employer implementing any policies and/or rules regarding its employees, you should check with your Human Resources Department and seek the advice of legal counsel prior to implementing any policies and/or rules in order to ensure that you possess the legal authority to do so, and that your policies and/or rules comply with other laws, such as the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and allow for any applicable exceptions. Also, these recommendations and considerations are based upon information available at the time of publication and are subject to change."

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