



Testing Guidance for Businesses and Employers During COVID-19

Businesses and employers can prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 within the workplace. Businesses and employers are encouraged to coordinate with the Division of Public Health (DPH) and Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) to determine the most appropriate recommendations for employee testing based on a variety of factors including risk category and size.

The below guidance and recommendations are based on State of Delaware requirements, Division of Public Health guidance and information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Employers who want to discuss options for employee testing, or develop a testing or infection control plan for their organization are asked to fill out this contact form: <https://arcg.is/qDPPe>. You will be contacted within 72 hours of submitting the form.

All employers should implement (or update) a COVID-19 mitigation plan that:

- identifies all areas that may create potential exposures to COVID-19 (such as common gathering areas/breakrooms)
- identifies employees who may have increased exposure to COVID-19 based on their job duties
- details strategies to reduce COVID-19 exposures, using administrative controls (shift scheduling/desk spacing), safe work practices, and use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- outlines instructions for what to do if employees become symptomatic at work
- encourages testing based on risk and the symptoms
- identifies a contact to assist the Division of Public Health with contact tracing

General Guidance for Employers

- Staff should be directed to self-monitor for symptoms daily and stay home when sick or experiencing symptoms such as fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle fatigue, chills, shaking with chills, loss of smell or taste.
- Staff must wear face masks or cloth face coverings while at work when interacting with members of the public or when social distancing (even between employees) is impossible.
 - Customers over the age of 12 must wear face coverings as well. Face coverings are recommended for children ages 2 – 4, and strongly recommended for children ages 5 – 12, as long as there are no medical reasons a child cannot wear one. Children under age two must not wear face coverings.
- Staff should work as socially distant as possible - maintaining at least 6 feet separation from others.
- Staff should continue to work from home whenever possible.
- Businesses should close common areas where staff may gather.
- Staff regularly wash or sanitize their hands during their shift. Have hand sanitizers available for employees and customers.
- Staff should frequently disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Businesses must post any required COVID-19 signage.

OCCUPATIONAL COVID-19 EXPOSURE RISK LEVELS

Workers' job duties affect their level of occupational risk, although risk varies based on specific duties. OSHA has divided job tasks into four risk exposure levels: very high, high, medium, and lower risk. Most American workers will likely fall in the lower exposure risk or medium exposure risk levels.

Lower Exposure Risk

Jobs in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public, other coworkers or people known to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. Includes remote workers or low-contact socially isolated work environments such as office and industrial facility workers who do not have frequent close contact with coworkers or the public.

Medium Exposure Risk

Jobs that require frequent/close contact with people who are potentially infected. Includes contact with international travelers or contact with the general public or other workers, such as in high-population density work environments, manufacturing, cosmetology, transport workers, the hospitality industry including food service and some high-volume retail settings.

High Exposure Risk

Jobs with a high potential for exposure to known or suspected COVID-19 positive persons. Includes health care direct care and support staff, medical transport workers (EMS), and mortuary workers.

Very High Exposure Risk

Jobs with a very high potential for exposure to known or suspected COVID-19 positive person during specific medical, postmortem, or laboratory procedures requiring close contact with aerosolizing secretions or samples.* Includes direct health care, laboratory and mortuary personnel.

*CDC defines close contact as being within about 6 feet of an infected person while not wearing recommended PPE. Close contact also includes instances where there is direct contact with infectious secretions while not wearing recommended PPE. Close contact generally does not include brief interactions, such as walking past a person.

COVID-19 TESTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Testing Frequency for Employees

Routine testing is not recommended for those in the lower exposure risk and most people in the medium exposure risk categories. **Staff in any occupation should get tested if they develop symptoms.**

Staff in some occupations have more frequent contact with members of the general public who may not be social distancing or wearing face coverings, like in the retail or hospitality (food/hotel) industries. Testing on a routine basis (once a month) should be considered for employees in these occupations. Increased testing may be needed if an outbreak occurs:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Retail operations▪ Food Service▪ Cosmetology, tattoo and massage▪ Dentistry▪ Postmortem care▪ Social services and home visitors▪ Meat and poultry processing▪ Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Manufacturing▪ Laboratory▪ Airline and other transport operations▪ Volunteers providing frontline services▪ Border protection and transportation security▪ Correctional facility operations▪ Solid waste and wastewater management▪ Environmental (i.e., janitorial) services
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Most health care workers and first responders are recommended to be tested once every 4 weeks, and most other critical infrastructure personnel are recommended to be tested at least once a month, however an employer may decide employees should be tested more frequently.

Workforce and Community	Risk Category	Frequency	Notes
Health care Workers and First Responders without symptoms	Very High or High	At least once every 4 weeks	Consider testing on a rotating basis (e.g., 25% of staff each week)
*Long-Term Care Staff without symptoms	Very High or High	Once a week (as directed by DPH, a reduced testing schedule may be implemented)	Testing on a rotating basis (e.g., 20% of staff daily)
Critical Infrastructure Personnel such as manufacturing, meat-packing plants and others in the bulleted list above	Some Medium - involving frequent close contact with others	Once every 4 weeks	Consider testing on a rotating basis (e.g., 25% of staff each week)

**Regulations for mandatory LTC facility staff testing effective June 1, 2020*

Testing Options

COVID-19 testing may be considered part of a business' strategy to keep customers and/or employees safe. Testing should be prioritized for employees of businesses in the high, and very high, exposure risk categories, as well as for some workers in businesses in the medium risk category based on job duties.

A variety of testing options exist. Testing is available for everyone regardless of symptoms or insurance coverage. Employers should encourage workers to get tested through their occupational health services (if available) or through primary care providers (if experiencing symptoms). Hospital, community, and pharmacy testing sites throughout the state are also available. Visit de.gov/gettested for a list of testing sites.

Employers may choose to provide their own testing events, or coordinate employee testing, in partnership with commercial laboratories or health system partners (such as ChristianaCare, Bayhealth or Beebe). Some employers may be interested in partnering with LabCorp or other online providers to provide COVID-19 at-home tests for their employees. Further information about commercial lab and home testing kit options can be found on de.gov/gettested under Testing Resources.