



Essential Services Screening Recommendations for COVID-19 Pandemic

To help protect the public against the spread of COVID-19, Governor John Carney and Delaware Division of Public Health Director Karyl T. Rattay, MD, MS, are requiring that high-risk businesses, and strongly recommend that all other employers, screen employees each day before work by following these steps:

Note: This document was updated on December 26, 2020 to reflect [recently updated guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- All employees who are able to work from home should continue working from home at this time.
- For those employees who must report to work: If an employee self-reports or is noted to have body temperature **at or above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit**, that employee should not report to work, or should be sent home if temperature is identified upon arrival at work, and will require further evaluation by a medical professional before re-entering the workplace.
- For those employees who must report to work: each employee **must be asked about and report body temperature at or above 99.5 degrees Fahrenheit**. If the facility has the capability to perform active temperature monitoring, they may do so. Temperatures at or above 99.5 require discussion with the employee to determine if there is an underlying cause, followed by monitoring throughout the day to ensure the temperature does not increase or additional symptoms do not develop.
 - It is best to use touchless thermometers (forehead/temporal artery thermometers) if possible, but if you must use oral or other types of thermometers, make sure to clean the thermometers thoroughly between each employee, as to not spread infection.
 - Follow the manufacturer's directions to disinfect the thermometer.
 - If no directions are available, rinse the tip of the thermometer in cold water, clean it with alcohol or alcohol swabs, and then rinse it again.
 - If you do not have thermometers on site, have your employees take their temperatures at home. They should stay home if they have an elevated temperature at or above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit and follow the same protocol.
 - Personnel screening employees for fever should consider wearing gloves and face masks per CDC recommendations.
- Employers must screen each incoming employee with a basic questionnaire, which should include at least the below, however can be made more comprehensive and/or employer-specific in consultation with medical professionals:
 - Do you have symptoms of respiratory infection (fever or shaking chills, cough, shortness of breath, severe sore throat, loss of taste or smell, or muscle aches) or nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or headache, congestion or runny nose?
 - If YES, but symptoms have a known cause (allergies, asthma, COPD, chronic sinusitis, etc.), employer or medical personnel should weigh risks for COVID-19 exposure and may consider sending employee home.

- If YES (**for fever of 100.4 or higher**), or employee otherwise symptomatic and considered at risk for COVID-19 exposure, the employee should isolate at home.
 - The employee should remain at home for a total of one (1) day (24 hours) **after symptoms have resolved** defined as the resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and** at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared before being permitted to return back to work.
 - *Health care personnel with severe to critical illness **or** who are severely immunocompromised should extend the period of isolation and may return to work when at least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and** at least 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.*
 - After discontinuation of home isolation, persons should continue to limit sustained [close contact](#) with others and maintain strict social distancing and hand hygiene due to the possible risk of continued infectiousness. Persons may return to work however should continue to recognize the risk of infectiousness and self-monitor for symptoms.
- Employees returning from isolation should still report temperature and absence of symptoms each day prior to starting work. Facilities should have employees wear an appropriate face covering (i.e. medical facemask for direct patient care workers or cloth face covering for all others) while at work for the 14 days following fever resolution and improvement in symptoms. If the employee develops even mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they must cease work activities, wear a face covering (if not already wearing), and notify their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.
- Employees should consult medical professionals if desired or needed and may adhere to screening decisions made by on-site medical personnel as appropriate.
- Alternate symptoms including abdominal pain, and lack of appetite and others have been identified as potential COVID-19 symptoms and may prompt further screening, action, or investigation.
- If at any time a doctor confirms the cause of the employee's fever or other symptoms is not COVID-19 and approves them to return to work, then the employee can return.
- If NO, proceed to next step
- Have you been in [close contact](#) (e.g., within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes cumulative within a 24 hour period) with a person with confirmed COVID-19 infection? (note: this does not apply to health care workers using appropriate PPE—see DPH guidance DHAN #429 for Management of Potential Exposure for Healthcare Personnel)
 - If YES, employee will be required to stay at home for 10 days from the time they were exposed to confirmed COVID-19, or 7 days with a negative diagnostic test performed between 5-7 days following exposure. While the test can occur on Day 5 or later, quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than the end of Day 7.

Facilities could consider allowing asymptomatic employees who have had an exposure to a person infected with COVID-19 to continue to work after options to improve staffing have been exhausted and in consultation with their occupational health program (if available). These employees should still report

temperature and absence of symptoms each day prior to starting work. Facilities should have exposed employees wear a facemask while at work for the 14 days after the exposure event if there is a sufficient supply of facemasks. If the employee develops even mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they must cease patient care activities, don a facemask (if not already wearing), and notify their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.

Remember to continue to follow preventative measures no matter how many employees are in the office – physical distancing, stay home when sick, use cough and sneeze etiquette, and practice hand hygiene as often as possible. Clean all high-touch surfaces regularly. For more information, visit de.gov/coronavirus.

Individuals with questions about COVID-19 should call Delaware 2-1-1; individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211, or email delaware211@uwde.org. Medically related questions regarding testing, symptoms, and health-related guidance can be submitted by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.

