



Guidance for COVID-19 Diagnosed and/or Exposed Healthcare Personnel

Date: March 30, 2020

Public Health Message Type: Alert Advisory Update Information

Intended Audience: All public health partners Healthcare providers Infection preventionists
 Local health departments Schools/child-care centers ACOs
 Animal health professionals Other:

Key Points:

- SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) is currently circulating in New Jersey and the surrounding areas with many healthcare workers and facilities being heavily impacted.
- When overburdened, healthcare facilities may consider having asymptomatic staff who were considered HIGH and MEDIUM risk exposures to COVID-19 continue to work while masked.

Immediate Action Items:

- Healthcare facilities should continue to **assess the risk of exposed healthcare personnel to COVID-19** using the NJDOH Healthcare Personnel (HCP) Exposure to COVID-19 Case Risk Algorithm, which would include a 14-day furlough from work, while actively monitoring for symptoms.
- In facilities where staff attendance is strained by excessive callouts and furloughs, healthcare facilities **may consider allowing asymptomatic HCP who have had a HIGH or MEDIUM risk exposure to a COVID-19 patient to continue to work provided the following:**
 1. HCP should **report temperature and absence of symptoms each day** prior to starting work (at least every 12 hours while at work) for the 14-day period after their exposure.
 - If HCP develop 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.
 2. **HCP wears a facemask while at work for the same 14-day period.**
- **Asymptomatic HCP who tested positive for COVID-19** should continue home isolation for 7 days after their first positive COVID-19 test AND have had no subsequent symptoms. Out of an abundance of caution they should follow masking guidance below.
- **Symptomatic HCP who have tested positive for COVID-19** may return to work 7 days after symptoms first developed AND 72 hours (3 days) after fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications with a significant improvement in symptoms (whichever period is longer). HCP who have tested positive for COVID-19 shall be:
 1. Masked at work until symptoms have completely resolved or until 14 days after illness onset/positive test (whichever is longer) and;
 2. Restricted from caring for severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after illness onset/positive test (whichever is longer).

Contact Information:

- Jason Mehr, Healthcare-associated Infections Coordinator or Rebecca Greeley, Infectious Disease Team Lead at haiar@doh.gov, (609) 826-5964
- The Communicable Disease Service at (609) 826-5964 during business hours

References and Resources:

- NJDOH COVID-19: Information for Healthcare Professionals
https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_healthcare.shtml
 - NJDOH Healthcare Personnel (HCP) Exposure to COVID-19 Case Risk Algorithm
 - Frequently Asked Questions: Healthcare Personnel and COVID-19
 - Guidance for Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation for Patients Diagnosed with COVID-19
- CDC Interim U.S. Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure in a Healthcare Setting to Patients with Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>