



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

COVID-19
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Last Updated: July 18, 2020
Last Updated By: Matthew Goetz, MD

Return to Work Policy for Healthcare Personnel (HCP) Infected by SARS-CoV-2

Audience: All Employees

Background:

VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System will follow [VHA](#) and [CDC](#) guidance for return to work of employees infected by SARS-CoV-2 (persons with COVID-19). Both VHA and CDC guidance allow for the use of time-based and symptom-based or test-based and symptom-based strategies to determine when healthcare personnel can return to work. Neither VHA nor CDC guidance prefers one strategy over the other.

Policy

Return to work for persons with direct patient care responsibilities (e.g., clinical nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians, physician assistants, respiratory therapy therapists, physical therapists, etc.)

- A. At least 3 days have passed *since* resolution of fever, if any (without the use of antipyretics)
and
- B. There has been improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
AND either
- C. **14 days** have passed since the onset of symptoms or time of diagnosis (whichever period is longer) **or**
- D. SARS-CoV-2 RNA is undetectable in two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart

Responsible Section/Service: Infectious Disease

Authorized to Update: Matthew.Goetz@va.gov OR [As delegated by Incident Management Team](#)



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

COVID-19
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Last Updated: July 18, 2020

Last Updated By: Matthew Goetz, MD

BOTH criteria A and B plus EITHER criteria C or D must be satisfied before isolation is discontinued.

After returning to work, persons with direct patient care responsibilities should always wear a facemask for source control while in the healthcare facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or at baseline. *A facemask instead of a cloth face covering should be used by these HCP for source control during this time period while in the facility.*

Return to work for persons WITHOUT direct patient care responsibilities (e.g., administrative personnel, dietary personnel)

- A. At least 3 days have passed *since* resolution of fever, if any (without the use of antipyretics) **and**
 - B. There has been improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
- AND either**
- C. **10 days** have passed since the onset of symptoms or time of diagnosis (whichever period is longer) **or**
 - D. SARS-CoV-2 RNA is undetectable in two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart

BOTH criteria A and B plus EITHER criteria C or D must be satisfied before isolation is discontinued.

References

1. Memorandum from Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations (10N). Subject. COVID-19: Updated Guidance for Return-to-Work Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel after Exposure to Infection or with Confirmed or Suspected Infection from Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). May 29, 2020
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 (Interim Guidance). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>. May 5, 2020.

Responsible Section/Service: Infectious Disease

Authorized to Update: Matthew.Goetz@va.gov OR [As delegated by Incident Management Team](#)