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FAQ'S FOR COVID PROTOCOLS

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS – PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Updated January 14, 2022

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

Isolation and quarantine both mean an individual stays home and away from others to limit the spread of the virus.

- The term "*isolation*" is applied to individuals who are infected with and/or test positive for the virus.

- The term "*quarantine*" is applied to individuals who have been exposed to the virus (close contacts) but who not are infected and/or have not tested positive.

What should I do if I test positive for COVID-19?

Isolation Guidance for COVID Positive Individuals		
	Experiencing COVID Symptoms	**No COVID-19 Symptoms**
Contact Human Resources	X	X
Isolate for 5 days	X	X
Optional antigen (not PCR) testing* on Day 5 *Testing is not required to return to the workplace	**Positive Result:** Isolate for an additional 5 days **Negative Result:** End isolation and wear mask for an additional 5 days	**Positive Result:** Isolate for an additional 5 days **Negative Result:** End isolation and wear mask for an additional 5 days
End isolation after 5 days	Only if your symptoms are improving **AND** You have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication	Only if you have remained symptom-free
Wear a mask for 5 days after isolation ends	X	X
Monitor symptoms for 10 days	X	X

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What should I do if I learn I am a close contact?

Guidance for Close Contacts						
If you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, what you are required to do is directly based on your vaccination and booster status.						
	Not Vaccinated	Vaccinated without Booster				Vaccinated with Booster
		Moderna or Pfizer		Johnson & Johnson		
		Last dose more than 5 months ago	Last dose less than 5 months ago	Last dose more than 2 months ago	Last dose less than 2 months ago	
Contact Human Resources	X	X	X	X	X	
No quarantine			X		X	X
Quarantine for 5 days	X	X		X		
Wear a mask for 10 days around others	X	X	X	X	X	X
Get Tested on Day 5 (if possible)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Monitor symptoms for 10 days	X	X	X	X	X	X

How do I know if I am considered a close contact?

You are considered a close contact if you have been less than 6 feet away from infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, ***even if you have been wearing a mask***. The cumulative total of 15 minutes includes shorter durations of time if the total amount of time is equal to or greater than 15 minutes (for example, *three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes)*.

How do I count the number of days since exposure?

The day of exposure is considered Day 0. First day after exposure is considered Day 1.

For example, John is in the office on Monday, October 1, and has a meeting with Jane. Jane tests positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday, October 2. John is vaccinated and has received a booster so is not required to quarantine, but will get tested on Day 5 (October 6), and will wear a mask when around other people, and monitor his symptoms for 10 days (through October 11).

If I am vaccinated and not required to quarantine, should I come to work or stay home?

In accordance the guidance, if a close contact is not required to quarantine, then they can be at the workplace. The close contact must wear a mask in all public locations and when with other people for 10 days.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19 and how soon might they begin after exposure?

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and may include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Symptoms may be mild and can feel like a common cold or mild flu. Please do not ignore these symptoms and report to the workplace; rather contact your healthcare provider to be tested and stay home until you receive your test results.

The most up-to-date information on COVID-19 symptoms can be found on the [CDC website](#).

How do I isolate or quarantine?

- Stay at home and use a separate bedroom and bathroom if possible.
- Do your best to stay at least 6 feet away from other people in the house.
- Do not leave your house to go to school, work, or run errands.
- Do not have any visitors to your house during this time.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Do not share eating or drinking utensils with anybody.
- Monitor your health every day.
- If you need to seek routine medical care, call your doctor before you go and tell them you are under COVID-19 quarantine.
- Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares to get to your appointment.

What if I have traveled recently?

Please refer to CDC guidance for [domestic](#) and [international](#) travel.

What is the "Massachusetts COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Act" and am I eligible?

The law went into effect on June 7, 2021, and has been extended until April 1, 2022. It provides employees with five (5) days of sick leave that can be used for the following qualifying reasons:

- Self-isolation on the advice of a healthcare provider due to COVID-19
- Getting vaccinated, or recovering from injury, disability, or illness related to such vaccination
- Seeking diagnosis, care or medical treatment for COVID-19

- Complying with a quarantine order from a public official, health authority, employer, or a healthcare provider
- Inability to telework due to COVID, because they have been diagnosed with COVID and the symptoms inhibit their ability to telework

The law also allows employees to take this leave to care for family members in the following situations:

- Caring for a family member who: (i) is self-isolating due to a COVID diagnosis; (ii) needs medical diagnosis, care or treatment for COVID symptoms; (iii) or is obtaining a vaccination relating to COVID-19 or is recovering from an injury, disability, illness or condition related to such immunization (part iii is a new qualifying reason to take this leave)
- Caring for a family member due to a quarantine order from a public official, health authority, the family member's employer, or a healthcare provider
    - Employees who need to take leave to care for a child under a quarantine or isolation order from school may utilize this leave

How do I code my time in HR Direct if I utilize the Massachusetts COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Act?

Use the ALT (allowed time) pay code. In addition, add a secondary row and use the CV-19 code to indicate that the leave is related to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Act.

Additional Resources:

www.mass.gov/covid

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html