

Frequently Asked Questions for Employers

Q1: Do employees need to isolate if they have COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms?

Yes. Isolation is used to separate people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 from those without COVID-19. Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, who tests positive for or has symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home and isolate from other people for at least 5 full days (day 0 is the first day of symptoms or the date of the day of the positive viral test taken for asymptomatic persons). If symptoms persist, further isolation will be required; otherwise, they may attend work or school after the 5-day isolation. They should wear a mask when around others at home, at work, and in public for an additional 5 days.

Q2: Do employees need to quarantine if they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19?

If an employee came into close contact with someone with COVID-19 and is in one of the following groups, **they do not need to quarantine.**

- Employee is age 12 or older and has received all [recommended vaccine doses](#), including [boosters](#) when eligible and [additional primary shots](#) for some immunocompromised people.
- Employee had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a [viral test](#)).

These employees should wear a [well-fitting mask](#) around others for 10 days from the date of their last close contact with someone with COVID-19 (the date of last close contact is considered day 0) and [get tested](#) at least 5 days after they last had close contact with someone with COVID-19. If they test positive or develop COVID-19 symptoms, the employee should isolate and follow recommendations for Isolation.

If an employee comes into close contact with someone with COVID-19, **they should quarantine** if they are in one of the following groups:

- They are ages 12 or older and completed the [primary series](#) of recommended vaccine, but have not received a [recommended](#) booster shot when eligible, THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO ATTENDING OR WORKING AT SCHOOL. Fully vaccinated individuals (teachers, students, and staff) ages 12 and older who were exposed and have completed the primary series of recommended vaccine may attend school. See below.
- They received the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine (completing the primary series) over 2 months ago and have not received a [recommended](#) booster shot.
- They are not vaccinated or have not completed a [primary vaccine series](#).

Q3. Are school employees treated differently regarding quarantine?

- School employees who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19 may continue to work at school, including on the bus, regardless of booster status, while quarantined outside of school (see below). This recommendation continues previous guidance in place prior to January 4, 2022. Continued attendance applies only to participation in classroom activities and taking the bus to and from school.

- Extracurricular or after school activities: Individuals 12 years and older who are eligible for a booster but not boosted, and who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19, cannot participate in extracurricular or after school activities and, aside from school attendance for instruction and bus travel, must adhere to a 5-day quarantine at home.
- Teachers, and staff who are not vaccinated or have not completed a primary vaccine series who came into close contact with someone with COVID-19 should quarantine for at least 5 days (day 0 through day 5) after their last close contact. These individuals may be eligible for [Test to Stay](#) programs that would allow them to stay in the school setting during the quarantine period. Outside the school setting, quarantine recommendations would apply.

Q3: How does an employer know if an employee needs to isolate or quarantine due to testing positive for, having symptoms of, or being exposed to COVID-19?

Employees may report this information to their employer through the employer's HIPAA-compliant Human Resources protocol. Employees may attest to their isolation or quarantine status by completing an [Isolation or Quarantine form available](#) on the New York State Department of Health or Local Health Department website.

Q4: If an employee develops COVID-19, will the Local Health Department do an investigation and order exposed employees into quarantine?

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms should isolate and notify their close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms should refer close contacts to the state or local health department website to learn about the steps they should take because of the exposure.

The Local Health Department may or may not do a case investigation. Isolation and quarantine attestation forms, and related information are available [at state and local health department websites](#).